



Equality Analysis Report

Title of activity:

CSSF 1(c) School Improvement

Summary of activity:

The School Improvement Service provides support and challenge to schools and settings through a risk assessment process which is based on a combination of data analysis and other intelligence and information. The resultant categorisation of schools gives access to a differentiated programme of support from a team of improvement advisers and strand leaders across the curriculum to ensure that all schools have plans in place to improve and to work intensively with those who are not demonstrating the capacity to be self improving and /or those vulnerable to or having received adverse Ofsted judgments. The role of the service is also to act as broker for school-to-school support through the deployment of National and Local Leaders in Education and Lead Teachers. The proposal is to streamline the service and move to 5 Improvement Advisers and 8 Adviser Teaching and Learning supported by an Officer for Governor Training and a Children's Centre Teacher. This service, working alongside, the Teaching School and National and Local Leaders in Education and Lead Teachers will provide support to enhance School Improvement in targeted schools.

Lead officer:

Geoff Bent and Ruth Wilkes, Heads of School Improvement

Equality analysis team:

Geoff Bent and Ruth Wilkes, Heads of School Improvement
Sharon Simpson, Head of Strategic Commissioning & Resource Allocation

Relevance

An equality analysis of this activity is required.

This activity has no relevance to Bedford Borough Council's duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations. An equality analysis is not needed.

Explanation why equality analysis is not needed:

Level 1 Equality Analysis

Scope of equality analysis

Impacted by activity:

Reductions in capacity and changes to the scope of the service will mean activity that is currently provided will change or cease completely; and will potentially have the most impact on the children and young people who currently are most at risk of underachievement. Schools not in our targeted group will have to rely on support from the Teaching School and purchasing support from other providers.

Protected equality groups:

The impact is likely to be most significant in schools with the highest number of pupils from vulnerable groups where the service currently focuses its resources.

General Equality Duties:

This activity proposed under CSSF1 relates to the Bedford Borough Council's equality duties to:

- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This is because the activity proposes to reduce or cease provision of services and activities to support schools; representing a change from the current universal provision to providing a service on a more targeted basis for schools with the greatest need. These schools are likely to include those with the highest number of pupils deemed to belong to 'vulnerable groups'.

Evidence

What relevant evidence is there about the activity?

For the activity proposed under CSSF 1 there is significant statistical evidence about the attainment and progress of all pupils including the gaps in performance of those belonging to vulnerable groups. There is evidence of underperformance in the area of pupils in receipt of free schools and Looked after Children and in schools where these populations are large we have underachieving schools. This is exemplified by Beauchamp Middle School in special measures, Stephenson Lower School in special measures and Robert Bruce Middle School having recently been subject to a notice to improve.

What does this evidence tell you about the different protected groups?

At this stage, the evidence we have does not tell us a great deal about the different protected equality groups in relation to service users will be affected by activity proposed under CSSF 1.

We know that the proposed activities could potentially have an impact on one or more different protected equality groups and Bedford Borough Council's equality duties to:

- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

What further research or data do you need to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known effects of the activity?

As a result of the activities proposed under CSSF 1, there is potentially an impact on service users who may be from one or more of the different protected equality groups. Through engagement and the collation of more information and evidence, the extent of any impact can be considered further.

Have you thought about commissioning new data or research?

Through the engagement and consultation which is being undertaken, specific information and evidence will be collated to allow us to better understand the impact of the proposed activity under CSSF 1 on service users.

Adverse affect on equality

Age

By virtue of the fact that children and young people are the predominate service users for the Directorate – the activity proposed under CSSF 1 will have an impact on those in the protected equality group with the characteristic of age. However, from the evidence we have so far, the extent of this impact is not known; and this would be further explored through the consultation work.

Disability

There may be children and young people who access the services as proposed under CSSF 1 who would be included in this protected equality group; however, from the evidence we have so far – the impact of the proposals on this protected group is not known, and therefore more work is needed to understand this.

Gender reassignment

For the children and young people who access the services, is it not appropriate to consider the impact of this protected equality group.

Pregnancy and maternity

There may be some young people who are protected by this equality group, but from the evidence we have so far the extent of any impact is not known. Therefore there needs to be consideration of the activity proposed under CSSF 1 to determine this.

Race

Under CSSF 1, all children or young people who receive the services could be considered in this protected equality group. It is not known at this stage what the impact would be of the proposed activity and whether this would have a particular impact on one or more of the groups with this characteristic.

Religion or belief

Under CSSF 1, all children or young people who receive the services could be considered in this protected equality group. It is not known at this stage what the impact would be of the proposed activity and whether this would have a particular impact on one or more of the groups with this characteristic.

Sex (gender)

Under CSSF 1, all children or young people who receive the services could be considered in this protected equality group. It is not known at this stage what the impact would be of the proposed activity and whether this would have a particular impact on one or more of the groups with this characteristic.

Sexual orientation

Under CSSF 1, some young people who receive the services could be considered in this protected equality group. It is not known at this stage what the impact would be of the proposed activity and whether this would have a particular impact on one or more of the groups with this characteristic.

Marriage & civil partnership (in relation to eliminating discrimination)

For the children and young people who access the services, is it not appropriate to consider the impact of this protected equality group.

Other identified groups (e.g. carers, different socio-economic, other groups experiencing barriers to access)

There are children and young people who access the services as proposed under CSSF 1 who would be included in this protected equality group; there is a risk that the group of children in receipt of free school meals (FSM), which is the most commonly used indicator of socio-economic disadvantage, could experience an adverse effect from the changes since they are disproportionately represented in schools and settings which currently receive the greatest focus and resource where support is likely to diminish. At the same time the gaps in their attainment compared with all other groups is widest in schools with relatively low numbers of pupils in this group (FSM) and these schools and settings are likely to only a minimum of engagement with the service .

Positive affect on equality

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advance equality of opportunity
3. Foster good relations (including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between different protected groups)
4. Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
5. Take account of disabled people's disabilities

Summary of analysis

The evidence we have so far would suggest that the activity proposed under CSSF 1 will have an impact on the different protected equality groups and Bedford Borough Council's equality duties to:

- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

What is not known is the extent of any impact as a result of the activity, adverse and positive, and specifically on which protected equality groups. Work needs to be done under the activity proposed in order to address this in more detail. Therefore, the most appropriate course of action would be to carry onto a level 2 analysis.

In relation to the activity in CSSF 1 there are gaps in the relevant equality information preventing an evidence led analysis of the effects on equality. By completing the level 2 analysis, and through the proportionate engagement with service users, staff and other stakeholders, we can determine the impact of each, whether this is positive or adverse and any mitigating actions

Level 2 Equality Analysis

Engagement All schools were invited to take part in a discussion about this proposal with senior officers at the Bedford Borough Learning Exchange Conference (17.11.11). 28 schools attended, a number took up the opportunity to discuss the proposal with Officers, however none chose to

make a written response on the response form provided for all.

Concerns were expressed about the loss of valuable professional colleagues and the work they have done in schools. Further concern was raised about the capacity of the proposed structure and its ability to provide anything more than targeted support and challenge.

Age

Plus discussions with key stakeholders such as head teachers and governors of schools and settings.

Disability

None stated.

Gender reassignment

Not stated

Pregnancy and maternity

Not stated

Race

Not declared

Religion or belief

Not Specified

Sex (gender)

Not specified

Sexual orientation

Not specified

Marriage & civil partnership (in relation to eliminating discrimination)

Not specified

Other identified groups (e.g. carers, different socio-economic, other groups experiencing barriers to access)

Not specified

Engagement findings

Age

The reduction in school improvement services will impact upon children and young people in schools and settings, age 3 – 19, particularly those in schools that should secure their own improvement but fail to do so. Head teachers were confident in their ability to move forward under new national policy guidance working in partnership to secure continuous improvement.

Disability

Within the structure there is an Improvement Adviser for Special Educational Needs who will provide support and challenge to our two maintained Special Schools. The Head teachers of both Special Schools have raised no concerns about this.

Gender reassignment

Nothing identified relevant to this protected equality group.

Pregnancy and maternity

Nothing identified relevant to this protected equality group

Race

There will be a reduction of impartial support and challenge to schools and settings in addressing the needs of this protected group

Religion or belief

Nothing identified relevant to this protected equality group

Sex (gender)

There will be a reduction of impartial support and challenge to schools and settings in addressing the needs of underperforming pupils identified by gender

Sexual orientation

Nothing identified relevant to this protected equality group

Marriage & civil partnership (in relation to eliminating discrimination)

Nothing identified relevant to this protected equality group

Other

Nothing identified relevant to any other protected equality groups

Analysis of engagement

<p>What further adverse impact on each protected equality group was identified?</p> <p>The body of schools in the Borough will have less challenge and as a consequence the performance of the identified groups by race and gender may not be so intensively scrutinised.</p>
<p>If the activity is likely to have a negative impact, what are the reasons?</p> <p>The support and challenge programme and curriculum advice to schools will have to become more differentiated and therefore less significant in some schools because of the loss of a number of strand leader specialists and consultants in curriculum areas.</p>
<p>What does your activity currently do to address the issues highlighted by engagement?</p> <p>Engagement is with schools and settings and not with individual members of the community</p>
<p>What practical changes will help reduce any adverse impact on the relevant protected equality groups?</p> <p>Developing partnerships with other providers of school improvement such as teaching schools will enable schools to add to their own capacity to make improvements. Schools also have the ability to purchase additional support from any external provider.</p>
<p>What are the resource / budget implications of these actions?</p> <p>Within resources post policy option implementation</p>
<p>What will be done to improve access to, and take-up of, services and understanding your activity by relevant protected equality groups?</p> <p>Work with schools and settings to retain a mandate to continue a support and challenge programme on a reduced basis.</p>
<p>What impact will the activity have on helping different groups of people to get on well together and foster good relations?</p> <p>Not known</p>
<p>What can you do to advance equality and eliminate discrimination when you procure goods and services?</p> <p>Ensure procurement procedures are followed</p>
<p>How will the activity meet the different needs of relevant protected equality groups?</p>

Ensure services continues to use data analysis to identify risk and underachievement of vulnerable groups.

What risk to equality / adverse impact would there be if your activity was not implemented?

The service would potentially be less well equipped to meet the needs of schools and thereby the needs of children and young people in protected equality groups because the resources that would remain available to us would be spread too thinly across the current structure.

Analysis Findings

Analysis findings

No major change required.

Bedford Borough will continue to work with schools and settings to deliver a service that meets the needs of all children and young people. By

- Continuing to support and challenge schools through a differentiated programme.
- Targeting schools and settings most in need of improvement.

Monitoring and review

The Head of Service 1 and the Chief Education Officer, with the help of the Performance Team, monitor the performance of all schools paying particular attention to the impact that these proposals have on the protected equality groups.

Action plan

Issues	Actions	Target date	Lead	Resources required
Adverse impact	Produce new service plan for School Improvement which prioritises support for disadvantaged and protected groups.	Implement before September 2012	Head of Service 1	None above existing
Opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations	Ensure focus on disadvantaged and protected groups through the development of revised delivery models.	Ongoing	Head of Service 1	None above existing
Engagement and involvement	Involve schools/academies and users in the planning process.	Ongoing	Head of Service 1	None above existing
Dissemination of analysis	Keep stakeholders up to date	Ongoing	Head of Service 1	None above existing
Equality information, data and evidence	Keep accurate records	Ongoing	Head of Service 1 and Head of Performance Team	None above existing



Sign off

Name of Executive or Assistant Director: Brian Glover

Date: 24 December 2011

Review date: September 2013