

# Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening



As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

<b>Directorate: Children's</b>	<b>Service area: Learning, Skills and Universal Services</b>
<b>Lead person: Jancis Andrew</b>	<b>Contact number: 07891272298</b>

## 1. Title: Virtual School Team Structure

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

Service / Function

Other

If other, please specify

## 2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

**The Virtual School forms part of the local authority's statutory duties in regard to the educational achievement of children looked after.**

**The current structure comprises a Head of the Virtual School with two additional postholders. Their functions must be carried out in relation to approximately 1300 children and young people as the Virtual School also plays a role in securing educational attainment and progression in the early years and post 16.**

**Leeds' Virtual School benchmarks relatively low compared to other local authorities in terms of overall posts within the school and the attainment gap for children looked after, despite good progress in recent years, remains unacceptable in a city that seeks to be child friendly and the best city in the**

country.

The structure proposals are based on the re-designation of existing/budget postholders with relevant job descriptions to increase from a team of 2 (excluding the head of Virtual School) to a team of 5. There is no displacement of staff and the job evaluations have also realised no detriment and have, in fact, brought about a lift across each level of post within the structure.

### 3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

All the council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).

Questions	Yes	No
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?		X
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?		X
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?	X	
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		X
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment</li><li>• Advancing equality of opportunity</li><li>• Fostering good relations</li></ul>	X	

If you have answered **no** to the questions above please complete **sections 6 and 7**

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above and;

- Believe you have already considered the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

#### 4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you have carried out an impact assessment.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).

- **How have you considered equality, diversity, cohesion and integration?** (think about the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

These proposals impact on a number of staff. Two members of staff are already employed in the Virtual School and these proposals serve to update their job descriptions, provide clarity of role and function following a period of uncertainty and will realise a lift in salary (for the lowest level post in the structure this will be a move from a C1 to C3).

Two other members of staff will be moved from the 11-19 Quality Team. One is already leading on a significant piece of work on behalf of the Virtual School. The other member of staff has less direct experience within the Virtual School setting but has excellent experience in the quality assurance processes that will be required to achieve excellent educational outcomes for children and young people.

The Applications and Information post will be an internal recruitment in order to provide the Virtual School with all the relevant data and reporting requirements.

All members of staff concerned have been kept up-to-date (with the exception of one who is on long-term sick) with the proposals. Further discussions need to take place when staff have seen job descriptions and in order to plan for business continuity where staff are moving out of a service area.

Discussion has already taken place with the 11-19 Quality Team about how the reduction within their service area and continuity of function would be addressed. No significant risks have been highlighted and an agreed transition phase has been discussed with further detail required to ensure staff are thoroughly engaged and supported with any training and development requirements that arise.

- **Key findings** (think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

The re-designation of roles and revised job descriptions do not cause any displacement, risk or detriment to existing staff. Working in the statutory functions around the educational achievement of children looked after is a significant priority for the city. The proposals represent an opportunity to create and build a very strong Virtual School team, providing a meaningful, challenging and rewarding working context where strong and positive relationships within the team and across a range of children's services, including

schools, will be nurtured and promoted.

- **Actions**

(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/ reduce negative impact)

**We will promote a positive impact by ensuring that transition is explained, described and planned at each stage and that any concerns arising can be addressed through the relevant support mechanism e.g. training and development, 1-1 and supervision processes, consultation meetings including HR and union representatives if required.**

**Postholders with specific expertise moving away from service areas will be permitted to retain matrix links to staff remaining to provide support and advice for a transitional period, to be agreed with staff.**

**Staff will be able to contribute to the development of a team plan which identifies a clear vision and strategy for the Virtual School and the part each individual member of staff will play plus their training and development entitlement.**

**5. If you are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you will need to carry out an impact assessment.**

Date to scope and plan your impact assessment:	
Date to complete your impact assessment	
Lead person for your impact assessment (Include name and job title)	

**6. Governance, ownership and approval**

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening

Name	Job title	Date

**7. Publishing**

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given. If you are not carrying out an independent impact assessment the screening document will need to be published.

If this screening relates to a **Key Delegated Decision, Executive Board, full Council** or a **Significant Operational Decision** a copy should be emailed to Corporate Governance and will be published along with the relevant report.

A copy of **all other** screenings should be sent to [equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk). For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file (but not published).

<b>Date screening completed</b>	7 November 2014
If relates to a Key Decision - <b>date sent to Corporate Governance</b>	
Any other decision – <b>date sent to Equality Team (equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk)</b>	12 November 2014