

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration (EDCI) 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 or has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

Directorate: Children and Families	Service area: Learning Systems
Lead person: Tracy Waud	Contact number: 0113 3787231

1. Title: Expansion of early years and wrap-around childcare - Request to accept capital and revenue funding and future arrangements for the allocation of funds

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

Service / Function

Other

If other, please specify

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

Capital and revenue grant funding has been provided to all local authorities to support the development of schemes that create/expand funded childcare and wraparound (before/after school) places.

The approach taken in Leeds to distributing this funding has been to invite childcare providers to bid for a share of it and to assess applications to determine which are suitable to progress. An initial application round closed on 31 July 2024, and it is intended that more rounds will follow.

Screening is required to ensure that the processes that are being proposed to allocate this funding consider equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

All the council's strategies and policies, service and functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater or 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. Also those areas that impact on or relate to equality: tackling poverty and improving health and well-being.

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">• Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment• Advancing equality of opportunity• Fostering good relations		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)

An application round for capital and revenue grant funding for funded childcare and wraparound places opened on 8 July 2024 and closed on 31 July 2024. This was widely advertised via emails to all registered childcare providers in Leeds along with all primary schools to help ensure fairness and transparency. Other interested parties such as ward members, school governors and education trusts were also contacted.

The application round was also promoted on platforms such as the Family Information Service and Leeds for Learning. As part of this process, information was provided to support potential applicants to develop their bids, and this included the expectation that there should be a clear focus on inclusivity within their proposals.

Principals of equality, diversity, cohesion and integration were used to inform the assessment of bids. Successful schemes need to be accessible to all children who meet eligibility criteria, including those with SEND, and no group should be disadvantaged from being able to access the provision.

- **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)

It is widely accepted that having access to good quality childcare supports children to thrive and prepares them for entry to reception. Wraparound care can be a key factor in parents/carers being able to access employment and training opportunities which in turn can benefit children and more widely, have a positive impact on tackling poverty and improving health and well-being. It is anticipated that the grant funding currently available for providers to bid for would help to support more children to have access to funded childcare and wraparound places by increasing the availability of it and providing more choice for families. The grants also provide more opportunities for the development of places in areas where take-up is historically relatively low, for example across the more deprived neighbourhood in the city, and it is hoped that this will encourage some families to take up an offer when they otherwise might not have done.

Funded early years places are available to all children that meet eligibility criteria, and these depend on the age of the child. Currently there is a universal offer of 15 hours per week for all 3-4 year olds (for up to 38 weeks per year). Families who meet working parent criteria are also able to access an additional 15 hours. Children who are two who

meet eligibility criteria are currently able to access 15 hours of funded childcare and from September 2024, this will be extended to include eligible working parents with a child from 9-months-old. From September 2025, support will reach 30 hours for eligible working parents with a child from 9-months-old up to school age. Funded places created through the capital grant funding stream will be available to any family who meets the criteria.

Although any offer of new places should be open to all eligible families, there is a potential risk that the number of places available to certain groups, for example children with SEND or disadvantaged 2-year-olds could decline if providers seek to focus on places for other groups. Also, wraparound places are not funded, so will only be accessible to families who can afford to pay for them. Some providers may seek to subsidise the cost of wraparound care but the grant funding currently available cannot be used for this.

- **Actions**

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

The delivery and take up of places created through these grant funding streams will be monitored over time to help inform an understanding of what their impact has been. The DfE is asking all Local Authorities to periodically submit returns showing how many wraparound places have been created through grant funding. A key outcome of the wraparound scheme is that all primary aged children will have access to a full offer and progress on this is being monitored via a Local Authority delivery plan. Any shortfalls in wraparound provision will be addressed.

Funded childcare places created will be in addition to what is already available. Delivery and take up of them will be closely monitored against the total take up of funded places by disadvantaged 2-year-olds on an area-by-area basis to understand if there are any potential negative impacts. For example, if the take up of places by disadvantaged 2-year-olds starts to decline, this will be highlighted, and we will subsequently work with providers to address it at a local level.

Regarding take up of places for children with SEND, we would work with the Family Information Service to monitor feedback from families. We periodically survey families to seek feedback on the types and range of childcare options available, what families are accessing, whether the childcare available locally meets their needs and adheres to the SEND Local Offer. Based on the results of these surveys, we may seek to encourage providers to focus on SEND places.

Wraparound places created are expected to have a positive impact on families, enabling parents/carers to access work and training opportunities. The take up of these places created by grant funding will be monitored, and some of the providers will be invited to give feedback on the impact of the scheme. If any negative impacts emerge, for example if any group(s) are seen to be disadvantaged, then we will work with the provider to address this for example by looking for more effective ways to promote the offer to families.

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
Tracy Waud	Sufficiency Manager	6/11/24
Date screening completed		5/11/24

7. Publishing

Though **all** key decisions are required to give due regard to equality the council **only** publishes those related to **Executive Board, Full Council, Key Delegated Decisions** or a **Significant Operational Decision**.

A copy of this equality screening should be attached as an appendix to the decision making report:

- Governance Services will publish those relating to Executive Board and Full Council.
- The appropriate directorate will publish those relating to Delegated Decisions and Significant Operational Decisions.
- A copy of all other equality screenings that are not to be published should be sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk for record.

Complete the appropriate section below with the date the report and attached screening was sent:

For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to Governance Services	Date sent:
For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational Decisions – sent to appropriate Directorate	Date sent: 6/11/24
All other decisions – sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk	Date sent: