

## Appendix 3: Equality Impact Analysis

**Department:** Children and Young People (Forward Planning, Performance and Partnerships)

**Person Responsible:** Tanuja Saujani, Senior Commissioning and Market Insight Manager

**Created:** 07/09/2018

**Status:** Screened

**Next Review** 12 months

### Stage 1 Screening Data

#### 1. What are the objectives and expected outcomes of your proposal? Why is it needed?

This Equalities Impact Assessment is in respect of re-commissioning the provision of Speech and Language Therapies (SLT) supporting children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). These services include SLT for children in mainstream schools (5-19 years) and Children's Centres and linked early years settings (0-5 years).

**Local Authority responsibilities** - under the Children and Families Act 2014 (paragraph 24) local authorities have the statutory responsibility to meet the needs of children and young people as stated in Education Health and Care Plans (or Statements of Special Educational Need, as was the predecessor). This will often include speech and language therapy.

The current SLT service in children's centres supports children aged 0 to 5. The service works with parents, practitioners and children to encourage age appropriate communication development and to prevent speech delay. The service provides advice, guidance and training to improve parents' understanding of child communication development.

The current SLT contract in mainstream schools support pupils attending Brent mainstream schools and pupils in some out of borough mainstream schools in Harrow, Ealing, Westminster and Barnet and a small number in further education colleges. The service provides assessment and therapy interventions, as well as guidance for staff in schools on how to implement programmes that assist speech, language and communication development.

#### **Needs Analysis for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

Under the Children and Families Act 2014, local authorities have a responsibility to meet the educational needs of children and young people as stated in a child or young person's Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

It is estimated that between 1% and 2% of the UK's population at any one time has a severe speech, language and communication disability, requiring specific assistance in order to have their needs met, including enabling children to access education. Nationally, speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) are the most

common type of need in primary-aged children with EHCPs and for 26.5% of this group it is their primary need.

Demand for SLT services provided by Brent Council is high. The numbers of children and young people with an EHCP in Brent is continuing to rise. The total number of children and young people with an EHCP increased from 1,804 to 2,076 (15%) between January 2016 and January 2018 and the number of children identified as having SLCN in their EHCPs increased from 296 to 316 (7%) over the same time period.

In 2017/18 (Quarter 4) 308 pupils received SLT, with an average of 20 new cases per quarter, as part of the current mainstream education contract. Through children's centres and linked early years settings, in 2017/18 2,879 under 5s received universal SLT support, 1,221 under 5s received targeted SLT support and 237 under 5s were identified as needing specialist SLT support.

## **2. Who is affected by the proposal? Consider residents, staff and external stakeholders.**

SLT services seek to improve the communication skills of children and young people and to identify children with additional needs who would benefit from referral to specialist services. The service is intended to provide support at the earliest opportunity to reduce communication related disabilities as children grow older through providing children/young people and their families with strategies to support age appropriate communication skills development.

Services are therefore designed to reduce any adverse impact on children and young people by identifying and working with children who would benefit from early intervention speech and language support. The additional support they receive increases pupils' and parents' understanding of their needs, and will equip them with the relevant tools and aids to allow them to realise their potential.

### **3.1 Could the proposal impact on people in different ways because of their equality characteristics?**

SLT services seek to improve the communication skills of pupils and to identify children with additional needs who would benefit from specialist support.

The proposed new service does not impact differently on any groups on the basis of their equality characteristics. The service is designed to reduce any adverse impact of speech and language difficulties on children and young people, including those with Education and Health Care Plans. The specification for the new service has been revised to ensure and promote access for vulnerable groups.

Service provision will assist in building young people's confidence and supporting them to realise their full potential. As an early intervention and prevention service it will allow children and young people the best start in life.

### **3.2 Could the proposal have a disproportionate impact on some equality groups? If you answered 'Yes' please indicate which equality characteristic(s) are impacted**

No. The proposal supports a vulnerable pupil population. The specification for the new service has been revised to ensure and promote access for vulnerable groups.

**3.3 Would the proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?**

The new service will cover the same specification as current services.

**3.4 Does the proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?**

This service will be available across the Borough and will support a vulnerable population of children and young people, responding to speech and language needs related to the education section of Education Health and Care Plans or identified through the Early Help Assessment Process.

**3.5 Is the proposal likely to be sensitive or important for some people because of their equality characteristics?**

The service will be sensitive to some children and young people because of their age and disability. Under the Children and Families Act 2014 (paragraph 24), local authorities have the statutory responsibility to meet needs as stated in Education Health and Care Plans. This will often include speech and language therapy, particularly for younger children (0-5) who are identified in early year's settings, including children's centres.

**3.6 Does the proposal relate to one of Brent's equality objectives?**

This proposal relates to Objective 4: To ensure that local public services are responsive to different needs and treat users with dignity and respect.

**Recommend this EA for Full Analysis?**

Yes

**4. Use the comments box below to give brief details of what further information you will need to complete a Full Equality Analysis. What information will give you a full picture of how well the proposal will work for different groups of people? How will you gather this information? Consider engagement initiatives, research and equality monitoring data.**

**Stage 2: Analysis**

**5. What effects could your policy have on different equality groups and on cohesion and good relations?**

**5.1 Age (select all that apply)**

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

**Please give details:**

SLT services seek to improve the communication skills of children and young people and to identify children with additional needs who would benefit from referral to specialist services. The new service will ensure that children and young people have their special educational needs met as appropriate regardless of their age and phase of education.

**5.2 Disability (select all that apply)**

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

**Please give details:**

The service relates to the provision of speech and language therapy for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

**5.3 Gender Identity (select all that apply)**

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

**Please give details:**

The service is fully inclusive and aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people and their parents and carers regardless of gender identity.

**5.4 Marriage and civil partnership (select all that apply)**

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

**Please give details:**

The service is fully inclusive and aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people and their parents and carers.

**5.5 Pregnancy and maternity (select all that apply)**

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

**Please give details:**

The service is fully inclusive and aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people and their families.

**5.5 Race (select all that apply)**

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

**Please give details:**

The service will impact equally upon all children and young people and their parents and carers regardless of race.

**5.7 Religion or belief (select all that apply)**

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

**Please give details:**

The service will impact equally upon all the children and young people and their parents and carers regardless of religion or belief.

**5.8 Sex (select all that apply)**

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

**Please give details:**

The changes will impact equally upon all the young people and their parents and carers regardless of their gender.

**5.9 Sexual orientation (select all that apply)**

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

**Please give details:**

The changes will impact equally upon all the young people and their parents and carers regardless of sexual orientation.

**5.10 Other (please specify) (select all that apply)**

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

**Please give details:**

This proposal will not have any socio-economic impact upon families. Interpreters will be provided for young people and their parents and carers with limited English language skills.

**6. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010? Prohibited acts include direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failure to make a reasonable adjustment.**

- Yes
- No

**7. Please provide a brief summary of any research or engagement initiatives that have been carried out to formulate your proposal.**

Parents and carers have been involved in the revision of therapy service specifications through parent/carer representation on a Children's Trust Joint Commissioning therapy workstream alongside special school representation, as well as through the Brent Parent/Carer Forum, Brent Health Partners Forum and Healthwatch. A programme of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities engagement workshops has taken place with parents and carers to capture their views in the development of services. These have shaped the development of enhanced service specifications.

**STAGE 3: ACTION PLANNING**

**Now, you will respond to your findings from the analysis stage and complete an action plan. At this stage you need to think about how to remove or reduce all the negative impacts that you have identified and how to maximise any opportunities to promote equality. This might mean making changes to your proposal or to the way that it is implemented.**

**8. What actions will you take to enhance the potential positive impacts that you have identified?**

Any new provider will be required to maintain and improve diversity monitoring arrangements in order to increase the levels of declaration. This will in turn provide an improved evidence-base to inform future equalities analysis in planning service development.

Activity will ensure that the voice of children and young people and feedback from stakeholders continues to inform provision, helping to ensure that the new service offer meets identified local needs and responds swiftly to changing trends and issues.

**9. What actions will you take to remove or reduce the potential negative impacts that you have identified?**

N/A

**10. Please explain how any remaining negative impacts can be justified?**

N/A