

Equality Impact Assessment

Team or Service Area Leading Assessment: Children and Young People's
Dept (CYPD), Targeted Services
Division

Title of Policy/ Service or Function: Children¹ Missing from Education (CME)

Proposals: To Equality Impact Assess existing policy.

Date of proposals: October 2008

Committee/Team: Eva Perkin, Julie Smith, Jane Gray and Steve Cook

Lead Officer: Julie Smith, Pupil Welfare Manager

STEP 1 - IDENTIFYING THE PURPOSE OR AIMS

1. What type of policy, service or function is this?

Existing

2. What is the aim and purpose of the policy, service or function?

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| i. | Ensure that robust multi-agency systems are in place to identify and track children missing from education or at risk of doing so, under Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme. |
| ii. | Ensure that fewer children in Blackpool become disengaged with education and those that do are drawn back and re-engaged quickly with lasting success. |
| iii. | Meet statutory duties relating to the provision of education and safeguarding the welfare of children missing from education. |
| iv. | Ensure that monitoring and reporting systems are in place in order to identify a lead agency and a key worker for all children missing from education. |

3. Please outline any policy / proposals being considered.

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| New policy and guidance introduced in 2008, jointly between CYPD and the Police. It is monitored through the line management systems of both services. |
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4. Why are the proposals being made - for what reason?

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| To ensure the consistent quality of practice across all children's settings with particular regard to the safeguarding of children. |
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¹ In this document children will be used to refer to children and young people of statutory school age

5. What outcomes do we want to achieve

- i. To ensure all children of compulsory school age, as follows, are identified and tracked into suitable provision:
 - not on a school roll, or
 - who do not receiving a suitable education otherwise, such as at home, privately or in alternative provision,
- ii. To meet statutory duty of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that places on all Local Authorities to identify CME.
- iii. A robust mechanism for an early identification of children missing from education.
- iv. CME are identified, located and re-engaged faster.
- v. Improved co-ordination and multi-agency working both locally and nationally.
- vi. Targeted support given to children and family members based on their assessed needs.
- vii. Gaps are identified and appropriate provision put in place.
- viii. Better outcomes for ALL children.

6. Who is the policy; service or function intended to help/ benefit?

- i. All staff who work with children in Blackpool.
- ii. Blackpool Children and their parents / carers, who receive services from all partners of the Children's Trust.

7. Who are the main stakeholders/ customers/ communities of interest?

- i. Children and young people
- ii. Parents / carers
- iii. Staff and carers, including volunteers and foster parents
- iv. Governors of Schools
- v. Children's Agencies including the Police

8. Does the policy, service or function have any existing aims in relation to equality, social inclusion or community cohesion?

Yes, see policy specifically considers children who are :

- committing offences;

- living in women's refuges;
- runaways;
- privately fostered;
- young carers;
- teenage mothers;
- excluded from school – permanent and fixed term;
- from homeless families
- from families of refugees and asylum seekers;
- from a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller background;
- from transient families.

9. How is the resulting service or function delivered/ administered?

- i. The CME policy and procedures should be used in conjunction, where appropriate, with:
 - Blackpool's Child Protection Procedures;
 - Joint Protocol for Young People Missing from Care', and
 - Protocol for Missing Person Alerts.
- ii. The policy identifies:
 - the Local Authority accepts its responsibility to locate, assess, monitor and track children in the target group as the safety of the child is paramount;
 - the responsibility for CME should be carried out through a strategic and multiagency framework, where:
 - all agencies share information for the purpose of identifying children missing from education, and
 - child protection procedures are triggered where there are any concerns that a child may be at risk of harm or suffering harm;
 - the Local Authority and its partners recognise this duty as an integral part of governance and strategic planning for discharging duties under sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004;
 - the distinct needs of groups of children who are at risk of CME and thereby not fulfilling their potential;
 - a range of preventative measures to ensure a reduction of the likelihood of CME;
 - the requirement to produce, monitor and evaluate data on CME for Elected Members and Senior Officers in Children's Services.

STEP 2 - CONSIDERING EXISTING INFORMATION AND WHAT THIS TELLS YOU

10. Please summarise the main data/ research and performance management information in the box below.

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| Data/ information |
| Blackpool Policy / Guidance has been based on: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. National Guidance on CME (Department for Children, Schools and Families); ii. Education and Inspections Act 2006; iii. Local data, i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of school register; • Panel meetings for BERA (Blackpool Exclusions, Out of School Register and Admissions); iv. Children's consultation exercise involving Youth Access and Participation Unit v. Links to Priorities 4 and 9 of the Children and Young People's Plan, 2006 - 8 |
| Research or comparative information |
| See above. Every Child Matters website is used to inform ongoing practice. |
| Key findings of consultation and feedback |
| Good practice guidance and children's feedback have informed the development of the policy. |

11. What are the impacts or effects for communities?

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| Race or ethnicity |
| Challenges pertaining to access and participation for some minority ethnic groups are being addressed with the support of the Diversity Learning Team and Pupil Welfare Service |
| Gender and transgender |
| None specifically identified at this stage. |
| Age |
| Different legislation in Scotland affects the timetable for Year 11 pupils, i.e. they formally leave school at a different stage in the school year. Thus, young people moving from Scotland to Blackpool may be restricted in accessing education, training and employment options. |
| Disability |
| None specifically identified at this stage. |
| Religion or belief/ faith communities |
| Also, see race / ethnicity. Some religious festivals are extended and can occasionally cause children to be out of school, particularly if the festival is abroad. Most families, however, are co-operative about agreeing levels of acceptable |

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| absence. |
| <i>Lesbian, gay, bisexual people</i> |
| None specifically identified at this stage. |
| <i>Other socially excluded communities or groups</i> |
| None specifically identified at this stage. |
| <i>Relationships between or within communities</i> |
| None specifically identified at this stage. |

12. What do you know about how the proposals will impact on different communities?

The policy aim is to implement best practice across all groups. Any impact should be positive for children.

STEP 3 - ASSESSING THE IMPACT

13. Is there any evidence of higher or lower take-up by any group or community, and if so, how is this explained?

The target is universal entitlement to education for all Blackpool children. As previously identified there are specific issues of CME around the travelling community, Year 11 pupils from Scotland and those who are homeless. Otherwise, groupings can change over differing periods.

14. Does the geography or demography of service users reveal anything?

CME cases are referred by all Blackpool schools but CME is more prevalent in the schools in areas whose catchments areas have higher levels of transience - i.e. the secondary schools of Beacon Hill, Bispham and Collegiate and primary schools of Claremont and Thames. Collaborations between schools, such as combined schools councils groups, focus on transition issues. The new approaches taken by secondary schools, in particular to the KS3 curriculum, should support children at the transition to high school, with a smaller number of staff working with groups of pupils. The transience centres support the reintegration of the most vulnerable, transient pupils into mainstream schooling, e.g. the meeting the needs of transient pupils who have had many moves, or who have been out of school for long periods. These ensure that integration rates into mainstream schooling are improved for the most vulnerable children

15. Do any rules or requirements prevent any groups or communities from using or accessing the service?

No

16. Does the way a service is delivered/ or the policy create any additional barriers for any groups of disabled people? (DDA duties arising out of DDA 1995)

No, it is appropriately differentiated and the messages are the same?

17. Does the way a service is delivered/ or the policy create any additional barriers for any other groups or communities, for example, due to limited income or because of the time during the week or day when the service is available? E.g. women, cultural reasons.

No

18. Do any of these limitations amount to unlawful discrimination? No

If yes, please explain (referring to relevant legislation)

19. If No, do they amount to a differential impact, which should be addressed? No

If yes, please give details in the boxes below.

20. If the impact or effects are adverse for any community or group, can they be defended in order to provide equality for another community under legislation or policy? Yes
Please give details below.

1996 Education Act decrees that all children of statutory school age, resident in England and Wales, must be in full time education.

21. Do you have enough information to make a judgement? Yes

If no, what information do you require, about which communities?

22. Is it possible to get the information quickly and easily or is it recommended that the collection of such data be included as an action for the action plan that will be developed? Please detail below.

N/A

STEP 4 - DEALING WITH ADVERSE OR UNLAWFUL IMPACT

23. What can be done to improve the policy, service, function or any proposals in order to reduce or remove any adverse impact or effects identified?

- i. Use of Department for Children, Schools and Families guidance to update practice and procedures.
- ii. Original CME practice and procedures for Blackpool was received an award from the Local Government Association in 2003, this then utilised as a good practice example for others on the Dept for Education and Skills website.
- iii. See Action Plan – Step 6.

24. What would be needed to be able to do this? Are the resources likely to be available?

Staff training on the policy and equality and diversity is already included as part of the Pupil Welfare Services' programme. Improving attendance is incorporated in the Children and Young People's Plan as a priority area.

25. What other support or changes would be necessary to carry out these actions?

Not applicable.

STEP 5 – CONSULTING THOSE AFFECTED FOR THEIR VIEWS

26. Please outline the steps taken to test out your findings and possible courses of action below.

Consultation undertaken with draft policy was shared with head teachers, governing bodies, professional; associations and Children's Trust membership.

27. What feedback or responses have you received to the findings and possible courses of action? Please give details below.

See previous comments in section 10. Comments incorporated into the policy.

28. If you have not been able to carry out any consultation, please indicate below how you intend to test out your findings and recommended actions.

Not applicable.

29. If you are impact assessing some proposals, what steps have been taken to ensure that stakeholders have been able to voice their opinions on the proposals or the need for change?

Consultation with the Youth Participation Unit, Children and Young People's Dept, and Young People's Council. Value of involvement for children queried because the policy is a weighty document, so required because of the complexity of the practice area. However, a brief summary document is available. Recent consultation undertaken by DCSF, on statutory CME guidance, included Blackpool as one of all Children's s Services nationally.

STEP 6 - ACTION PLANNING

Please outline your proposed action plan below.

| Issues/ adverse impact identified | Proposed action/ objectives to deal with adverse impact | Targets/Measure | Timeframe | Responsibility | Indicate whether agreed |
|---|--|---|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| a) Children Participation | One off consultation with a representative group of children, i.e. including those from equality strands | Appropriate involvement of children | When Policy reviewed in June 2009. | Pupil Welfare Manager | Agreed |
| b) Young People moving from Scotland at Year 11 | Opportunities for young people in this target group to receive input from Connexions Personal Advisers. | To monitor issues with information to be produced in line with the policy review. | When Policy reviewed in June 2009 | Head of Integrated Youth (re Connexions)? | Agreed |

STEP 7 - ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND REVIEW

Please outline your arrangements for future monitoring and review below.

| Agreed action | Monitoring arrangements | Timeframe | Responsibility | Added to Service Plan etc. |
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| Policy Review in 2009 | To be reviewed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil Welfare Manager and Senior Practitioner / Integration Officer. • Diversity Learning Manager, Learning and Achievement Division, CYPD. | By June 2009 | Pupil Welfare Senior Practitioner / Integration Officer | Links to priorities in the current and future Children and Young People's Plan |

Date completed: October 2008

Signed:

Name: Julie Smith

Position: Pupil Welfare Manager

S.R.Cook 13/1/09