

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

Title of strategy / policy / service being assessed:	Buckinghamshire Children's Short Break Strategy 2018 – 2022 and Recommissioning Activity
Contact Name and Telephone Number:	Alison Byrne, Commissioner, 01296 383937
Date assessment completed:	30.01.2018
Signature and name of Head of Service signing off this impact assessment and equalities improvement plan.	Name:
	Signature:
	Service:
<p>Good impact assessment can help us manage demand and be a more successful, efficient organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the impact of our actions will help us to deliver services fairly, target resources where they are most needed and avoid unintended negative impacts for residents, other parts of the council or other service providers. • Communities with wide inequalities are less likely to self-help and more likely to be higher users of public sector services. • Cohesive, resilient and integrated communities are able to cope better with economic and environmental crisis and more likely to be able to provide services, take over community assets or volunteer. <p>Impact assessment also helps us meet our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Act says people should not be discriminated against because of one or more relevant protected characteristic(s), when using, or seeking to use, any service provided publicly or privately, whether that service is paid for or not. Neither should they be discriminated against in employment, when seeking employment, or when engaged in occupations or activities related to work because of the relevant protected characteristic(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 33%;">• Age (18+) <li style="width: 33%;">• Disability <li style="width: 33%;">• Gender Reassignment <li style="width: 33%;">• Pregnancy & maternity status <li style="width: 33%;">• Race <li style="width: 33%;">• Religion or belief <li style="width: 33%;">• Sex <li style="width: 33%;">• Sexual orientation <li style="width: 33%;">• Marriage and civil partnership (employment related only) 	
More detailed guidance has been produced to accompany this proforma see intranet under A to Z>Community Cohesion and Equalities.	

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

Section A. To Assess or Not to Assess

To determine whether an EIA is required, please read the questions below and indicate your answer by putting an X in the box to the right of the “Yes” or “No” at the end of each question.

Does the service affect the public or staff directly?	Yes	X	No	
Does it affect how other services are provided?	Yes	X	No	
Is there information e.g. survey data or complaints that suggests that it is affecting particular groups of people?	Yes	X	No	
Does it have employment implications?	Yes		No	X

If you have answered “Yes” to one or more of the questions listed above, you will need to continue with a full equalities impact assessment (EIA).

However, if you have carried out an assessment of this strategy/policy or service in the past two years, for example, as part of the transformation programme, or there has been an external audit of the service, which has resulted in explicitly stated equalities outcomes, you will not need to continue with an in depth EIA. You will, instead, need to consider any gaps in relation to the groups identified under “Purpose” and agree actions/targets.

If you have answered “No” to all of the above the statements, you will not need to continue with a full EIA because it is not relevant to the strategy/policy or service.

Please send this document to Angie Sarchet, Manager, Community Engagement & Development Team, New County Offices or via email to asarchet@buckscc.gov.uk. Ensure you do this prior to final sign off by the Head of Service to enable the challenge process to be applied effectively.

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

Section B. Reviewing the design	
Questions to consider	The Findings
<p>1. Why is the strategy/policy or service necessary? What are the key aims and objectives? What outcomes is it designed to achieve and for whom?</p>	<p>Legal Framework for Short Breaks: Legal duties in relation to short breaks include both duties owed to individual children and families in relation to assessment and care planning and wider commissioning obligations on local authorities. The appendices to the Short Breaks Strategy set out the full legal framework for short breaks. The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations (2011) is the key legislation in this respect. The Regulations require local authorities to not only provide crisis care, but to provide short breaks that help parents / carers care more effectively for their disabled children. Short breaks should also enable family carers to study or undertake leisure activities, meet the needs of other children or carry out household tasks (Regulation 3)</p> <p>The Regulations also require local authorities to provide a range of services ‘sufficient to assist carers to continue to provide care or to do so more effectively’. This ‘sufficiency duty’ means local authorities must know the number of disabled children in their area and their level of need for short breaks, as well as the level of service available to meet that need, and exercise their judgement about whether provision is sufficient (Regulation 4).</p> <p>Local authorities must also publish a ‘Short Breaks services statement’ setting out the range of services provided, any eligibility criteria and (importantly) ‘how the range of services is designed to meet the needs of carers in [the] area’. The statement must now be published on the website for the ‘local offer’ introduced under section 30 of the Children and Families Act 2014 (Regulation 5).</p> <p>The Short Breaks Duty does not create an individual right to short breaks for disabled children and their families. An individual right to short breaks is established under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, when they are assessed as necessary to meet that child’s needs.</p> <p>Strategy and Recommissioning of Short Breaks To meet these statutory duties and to improve outcomes for disabled children, young people and their families, Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) and the Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) commission a range of short breaks provision for disabled children and young people</p>

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

within the county. The current provision is delivered across a number of contracts and includes community short breaks (commissioned by BCC) and residential short breaks (jointly commissioned with the CCGs). Existing contracts are due to expire at the end of September 2018 with plans currently being developed to recommission the offer.

To frame the recommissioning of the service, a Short Breaks Strategy has been drafted. This sets out our ambition for short breaks and proposes some shifts in the way we deliver our short breaks offer.

Why do we need to change the way we provide our short breaks?

The Strategy seeks to respond to the following challenges:

- Our current service is generally valued by families but lacks flexibility and choice in terms of how and where families access support. For example:
 - We don't have enough choice for children who need specialist support because our current offer relies heavily on buildings-based residential respite. We need to make sure this option continues to be available to those who need it, but also want to provide other choices to these families such as increased access to domiciliary care. This could help families to access support and respite whilst enabling the child to remain in the family home.
 - We want to do more to help children access support within their local community. This will help children to make friends and support the development of natural networks of support for parents.
 - We want to do more to support disabled children to access universal provision (for example youth clubs, brownies, scouts) where this is possible. At present, the short break offer keeps children with disabilities separate and does not promote support which enables inclusion or provision where children with and without disabilities can interact with each other. We will need to facilitate this type of access by understanding the training and support needs of universal service providers.
- We sometimes find it difficult to meet levels of demand within our residential short breaks service, but at the same time our community based provision is not always full. We need to look at how we provide a better range of options across the spectrum of need and in locations across the county; so that families can have timely access to support that meets their level of need.
- Benchmarking with other authorities indicates that comparatively our provision is expensive. At a time when there are continued pressures on the resources available for public services, we must think differently about our offer to make sure that we are able to support children and families in a way that meets their needs. This is particularly important as data shows that demand for short breaks is likely

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

to increase in the future and we know that in some areas of the service we are already finding it difficult to meet demand.

What outcomes do we want to achieve?

The draft Short Breaks strategy sets out our ambition for our short breaks offer. Following the implementation of the strategy and recommissioning of the short breaks offer, the outcomes we would want to achieve are:

Children and young people will say that:

- I have different options available to me in choosing the type, location and time of short break that I would like to do
- The short break has helped me to become more independent by teaching me skills that can help me in school, building relationships, travelling independently and using own money
- My experience of the short break is positive because my voice was listened to and I helped to influence planning and the way the service was designed
- My short breaks are helping me to reach my full potential by developing new friendships, skills, self-confidence and links to other activities
- Short breaks have focused on my strengths and what I could do rather than my difficulties or disabilities.

Parents and carers will say that:

- I am well informed about what short breaks are available and how to access them
- There is choice across the type, time and location of the short breaks available
- I receive clear communication from providers to inform my family's choices
- I feel more resilient and able to deal with caring responsibilities because my child attends a short break
- My child receives a quality short break and they are being cared for by trained, professional staff in a safe environment.

Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group:

- The Local Authority is meeting its statutory duties in relation to the provision of short breaks
- Our short breaks offer provides support which is of high quality, value for money and allows us to make the best use of available resources
- We have good evidence that our short breaks offer is achieving positive outcomes for children and

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

	families.
<p>2. Consider your answers at question 1. How have the needs of different groups of people, where relevant/appropriate, been taken into account? What does needs assessment data tell you about who should be benefitting from the strategy/policy or using the service? What else do you know about people’s needs or views? What information do you have from consultations/focus groups, national or local published research reports, satisfaction surveys, service monitoring data, benchmarking with other providers, demographic data or other information that has been used to formulate the design and delivery of the strategy/policy/ or service. Also refer to the council’s “Research” information on the website.</p> <p>If you identify a gap in information, for example, about the needs of a particular group of people, include this as an action point in the equalities improvement plan.</p>	<p>A needs assessment has been undertaken for all disabled children in Buckinghamshire and took account of local and national data. As part of this our service data has been benchmarked against a variety of other local authorities. This needs assessment has informed the development of our draft Short Breaks Strategy and is summarised in the appendices to the strategy. Key headlines are also provided here.</p> <p>National Data</p> <p>Various sources estimate the number of disabled children to be from 6% - 8%. For Buckinghamshire this would mean an estimated 8,280 - 10,720 disabled children based on estimated child population (aged 0 - 19 years) for 2018 of 134,000.</p> <p>Disabled children aged 0-16 are the fastest growing group among the population of disabled people - Disability in the United Kingdom Facts and Figures - Papworth Trust (2016)</p> <p>Our population of disabled children and young people</p> <p>There is no single source of information on the number of disabled children and young people in Buckinghamshire. Headlines from key data sources are provided below (data analysed includes the 2011 Census, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2016-20, information held by Buckinghamshire County Council on disabled children, and take up of Disability Living Allowance)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,609/ 3.1% Buckinghamshire children have a Statement of Special Educational Need (SEN) or Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) compared to 2.8% nationally. (Source BCC SEN data summary Summer Term 2017). Across this group, children will have a range of needs, including children who would be able to access universal provision, through to those needing more targeted and specialist support. • There are 2,905 Buckinghamshire children aged 0 - 16 years in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (Dept. Work & Pensions, 2017). The number of children and young people receiving this welfare benefit has been increasing year on year, with the largest rise in the Aylesbury Vale area. This population is one indicator of how many disabled children and young people may be eligible for short breaks across Buckinghamshire, and potential eligibility has risen by 21.3% to 2,905 since 2012. Again, across this group there will be a wide range of needs. • As of 31/08/17 there are 975 children and young people registered on the Buckinghamshire County Council Disabled Children's Register(pinpoint database).

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

As of 30/06/17 there were 594 disabled children and young people being supported by the Children with Disabilities Team within Children's Social Care (Source BCC). This is the group of children that is likely to need access to targeted and specialist short breaks.

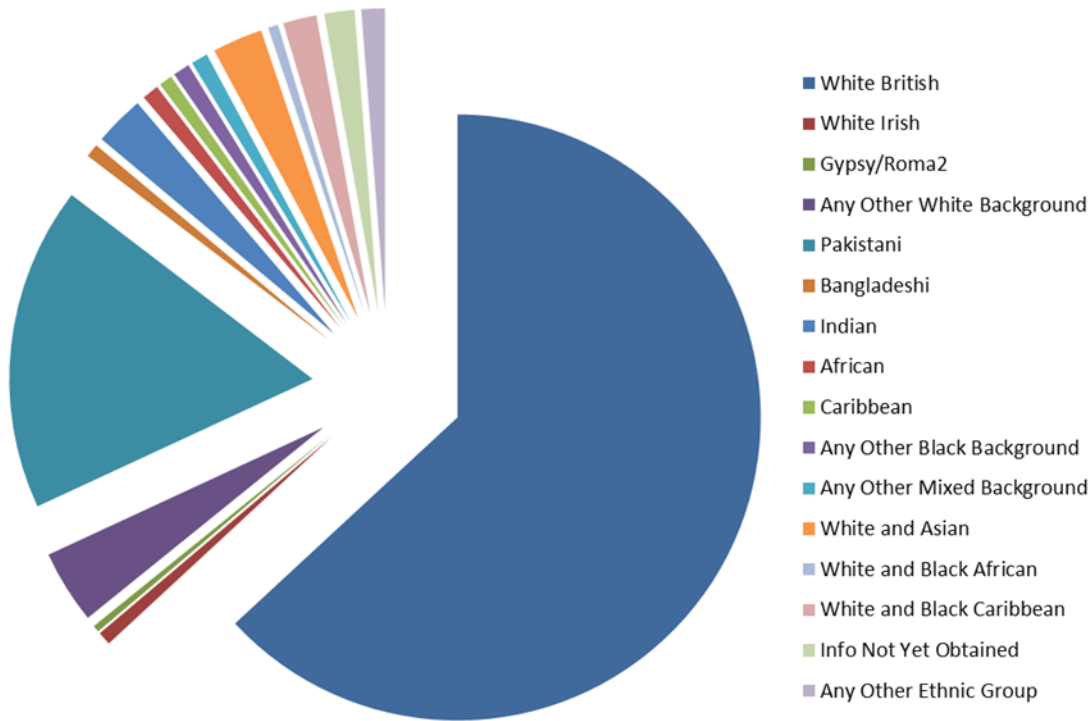
Gender Data Taken from Above Sources:

- In line with national data, there are a greater number of male pupils with statements/EHCPs' compared to female pupils. Data shows that in Buckinghamshire, boys are over 2½ times more likely to have a statement of SEN/EHCP than girls. 72% of the pupils with statements of SEN/EHCPs' are male (2612) while they account for 51% of the whole school population (Jan 17). This is reflected nationally with 4.0% of boys and 1.6% of girls having a statement of SEN.
- From Pinpoint Database - 659 children are male and 316 are female (this is consistent with national data from Thomas Coram Research Unit of 70% / 30% split and local SEN data).
- 91% of children registered on the Pinpoint Database have a female primary carer. This is higher than the national data on carers, which suggest 65% of women are parent carers of disabled children.
- 66% of the Children with Disabilities caseload is male, which is consistent with demographic data from SEND and national data.

Ethnicity Data Taken from Above Sources:

- From Pinpoint Database - 57% of children are recorded as White British, with the largest next group being 6% Pakistani. As nearly 28% have no recorded ethnicity category we cannot assess whether these % are what would be expected for differing ethnic groups, which we would expect to be demographically higher.
- 66% of the Children with Disabilities caseload has a White British Background. The next largest group is Pakistani, which is 17% (which is in line with what we might expect demographically:

Ethnicity Breakdown (number) - Children with Disability Social Work Team (CWD) Caseload Q4 2017/18 (Total 576)



Siblings Data Taken from above Sources:

- Taken from the Pinpoint Database - 80% of registered children have siblings

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

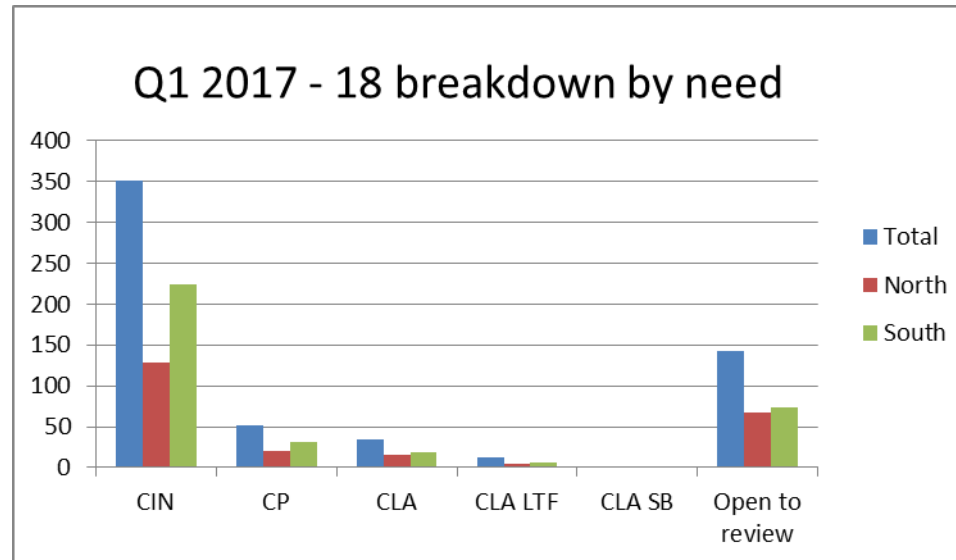
- 25% of the Children with Disabilities caseload is siblings of disabled children and young people. This is not the total % of caseload children having siblings, which is higher but the number of siblings that require their own social work intervention/Plan.

Needs Data taken from Above Sources:

- Pinpoint Database records disability categories (these are not unique child numbers, many have more than one type of need recorded:
 - ❖ 25% of children and young people are recorded as having a physical disability, of which 18% are recorded as having a severe physical disability
 - ❖ 54% of children and young people are recorded as having a learning disability, of which 14% are recorded as having a severe learning disability
 - ❖ 47% of children and young people are recorded as having Autism Spectrum Disorder
 - ❖ 10% of children and young people are recorded as having Aspergers Syndrome
 - ❖ 24% of children and young people are recorded as having Attention Deficit Disorder
 - ❖ 11% of children and young people are recorded as having a visual impairment
 - ❖ 8% of children and young people are recorded as having a hearing impairment
 - ❖ 2% of children and young people are recorded as having a brain injury
 - ❖ 40% of children and young people are recorded as having behavioural issues
 - ❖ 7% of children and young people are recorded as having epilepsy
 - ❖ 10% of children and young people are recorded as having no formal diagnosis
- Records of Children with Disabilities caseload are not reported on by types of disability but on the

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

type of Plan a child and family has:



Key: CIN - Child in Need
 CP - Child Protection
 CLA - Child Looked After
 CLA LTF - Child Looked After Long Term Fostering
 CLA SB - Child Looked After (Short Breaks being provided under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989)
 Open to Review - allocated to a Child and Family Worker and subject to 60 days reviews.

- Local Data on Rurality:

Breakdown of all pupil numbers in Bucks state-funded schools from the October 2016 school census compared with pupil numbers in special schools

	% All Pupil Numbers in Bucks State-funded Schools	% Pupil Numbers in Bucks Special Schools from
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*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

	from October 2016 School Census	October 2016 School Census
Urban major conurbation	1%	0.6%
Urban city or town	71.8%	73.7%
Rural town and fringe	16%	15.7%
Rural village and dispersed	11.2%	9.9%
ALL PUPILS - Number	83,043	1,277

The % of pupils in special schools who live in urban city or town is nearly 2% higher than for all pupils. One explanation for this may be that more families choose to live in urban areas as they would expect to get more services available to them than in a rural location.

Current usage of short breaks services

Service	Level (specialist, targeted or universal)	Numbers Accessing
Residential Short Breaks (Grove, Merryfields, Kite Ridge / The Vines)	Level 3 – Specialist access through Child & Family Assessment	67 plus a waiting list of 5
Domiciliary Care	Level 3 – Specialist access through Child & Family Assessment	77
Community Childminding	Level 3 – Specialist access through Child & Family Assessment	14
Direct Payments	Level 3 – Specialist access through Child & Family Assessment	113
Befriending	Level 3 – Specialist access through Child & Family Assessment	4
Fostering short breaks	Level 3 – Specialist access through Child & Family Assessment	14
Community Short Breaks for Disabled children and young people aged 0 - 19	Level 2 – Targeted (no child and family assessment required)	400

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

Range of Small Voluntary Organisations Providing Short Breaks	Level 2 – Targeted (no child and family assessment required)	350+
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Some children and young people attend more than one short break service. There are approximately 600 unique children and young people attending our short breaks services.

23 children and young people access over 75 nights per year in the service (this is the level that consideration is given in regards to becoming a Looked After Child under Section 20 of the Children's Act 1989). At the same time, the majority of children accessing residential respite have no recorded support at home, so the care package is being provided solely through residential respite.

Chart to Show % and Number Breakdown of Disability of Children and Young People Accessing Short Breaks 2016/17

Key messages from this data are:

- We have seen an increasing number of children with disabilities who may need access to short breaks.
- There are opportunities to look providing wider options for children who need access to specialist support, including better access to support in the home (for example domiciliary care).
- There are opportunities to diversify our range of support options and to increase access and usage of some options that are currently under-used (for example befriending and fostering short breaks).
- There are opportunities to include access to universal provision within our offer, which might help us to reach a wider number of families and ensure we are providing targeted and specialist support to those children and families who are not able to access universal provision with support.

What does national research tell us?

National research shows that quality short breaks can improve life chances for disabled children and young people by helping them and their families to achieve the following:

- Better established peer groups and friendships
- Increased enjoyment and achievement
- New and improved skills and abilities that support transition into adulthood

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

- Improved connections with local community
- Improved physical health
- Improved emotional health and well-being
- More sustainable caring arrangements
- Improved communication, confidence and self-esteem
- Increased knowledge about where to access advice and support when they need it most
- Improved quality of family life
- Increased co-production, choice and control

There is a body of research in this respect. However, key research includes Every Disabled Child Matters, [‘Short Breaks in 2015: An Uncertain Future’](#). This found that.

- 76% of parent carers experience stress or depression and 72% suffer from lack of sleep.
- 80% of parent carers of children with learning disabilities say they have reached or are close to reaching ‘breaking point’; a moment of emotional, psychological or mental crisis where they feel they can no longer cope with their caring responsibilities.
- There is a direct relationship between the level and range of short breaks **and** ‘lower levels of psychological distress, higher levels of life satisfaction and better health’ **and**
- Short breaks have a direct positive impact on the disabled children and young people that benefit from them, leading to improved confidence and independence.

This research gives us some important drivers for providing a short breaks offer that meets the needs of families, and provides some possible outcomes against which to measure our recommissioned service. We have taken account of this research in developing our Short Breaks Strategy.

What have children, young people and families told us?

As part of our current commissioned services we regularly collect the view of parents, carers and of children and young people who use our services. This forms a key part of current contract monitoring arrangements. Our main provider, Action for Children, also facilitate a Short Breaks Parent Advisory Group (PAG). This meets regularly, and is facilitated by FACT Bucks our local Parent Forum. This PAG covers residential, community and early years short breaks managed by Action for Children and provides a way for families to give their views and influence service delivery.

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

Key messages from parent and family feedback (collected as part of contract monitoring arrangements) is that overall:

- Our short breaks help parents and carers to cope, make their life a bit easier, help them to be less isolated and help them continue to care for their child
- Our short breaks have a positive impact for disabled children including increasing confidence, self-esteem, improving communication and building friendships.
- Our short breaks can help improve the relationship between parents / carers and their children
- Our short breaks are high quality

Whilst overall feedback tells us that the services are valued, feedback and complaints to the Local Authority and the provider, also indicates that families can find it difficult to manage if they need to wait to access residential provision or if there are changes to the support that they receive.

This feedback has continued to inform our overall approach. However, a range of specific engagement activities were also held for disabled children and their parents / carers through August and September 2017 to inform the draft Short Breaks Strategy. The Disabled Children and Young People Participation Officer carried out visits to short break services to seek views and feedback in regards to short breaks. This involved meeting disabled children and young people with a wide range of needs, including those with profound and multiple learning disability and those whose behaviour can be challenging. The majority of the children and young people were non-verbal, so engagement was done with communications aids such as pictures and observation. Parent engagement sessions were co-facilitated by the short breaks commissioner and the FACT Bucks parent representative. Four sessions took place across the county during September 2017 and although small numbers of parents/carers were able to attend the sessions, there were additional responses in writing. Detailed feedback reports were produced and shared with the short breaks strategy group in order to inform the drafting of the strategy. The key headlines from the engagement are included in the strategy with more detailed feedback included in the appendices. Key messages from this engagement were:

What works well and what else could we try?

- Familiarity of staff is key factor for enjoyment for children and young people attending services
- Families generally want more support, not less
- Youth club provision works well as it is young person led and young people want to try and access more universal activities

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

- Children and young people enjoy activities where the staff member is able to use their 'talents' e.g. drama, magic
- Short breaks residential homes have a safe and warm homely environment
- Parents would like more use of special schools as venues and more support during summer holidays
- Parents are generally willing to pay more for activities
- There is a lack of availability of other childminding, clubs, sports activities etc. suitable for children and young people with greater special needs

What impact do short breaks services have for families?

- There are positive and improved outcomes for children and young people attending short break services
- Both children and young people and their families rely on these services
- Parents and carers really value the time they get from short breaks
- Parents and carers feel that short breaks have a positive impact on their own health
- Parents and carers fed back that opportunities offered through short breaks allow their child to try new activities, improve confidence, self-esteem, self-help skills and make friends

What are families worried or unsure about?

- Potential cuts to services and fears about being able to cope
- Specifically in relation to residential short breaks, parents and carers expressed concern that they were in crisis before they got this support
- There was a lack of understanding of eligibility criteria for short breaks
- There is still lack of knowledge about short breaks and about the Local Offer
- Fear that alternative short breaks would not be available to purchase with a Direct Payment
- Transport is an issue for many so can restrict choice of activities

This feedback has directly shaped the principles in the draft strategy. We are now planning a 3 month consultation period for the strategy which will allow for further engagement with parents, careers, children, young people and other stakeholders. This will allow us to check the ambition and principles set out in the draft strategy and make further refinements where necessary. It will also provide an opportunity for us to continue to engage with parents and carers about their worries and concerns and how these will be addressed under the recommissioned service.

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

	<p>As the new service is developed, we want to ensure that parent engagement and co-production are key features of our offer. This, alongside strong contract monitoring arrangements will need to be used to check that our offer is meeting the needs of children, young people and their families.</p>
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*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

Questions to consider	The Findings
<p>3. Are other organisations responsible for delivering the strategy/policy or service? If yes, how have you incorporated the council's cohesion and equalities priorities into the procurement process or contractual arrangements? How is compliance monitored? What steps have you taken to reduce the council's legal liability where services are being delivered on our behalf? If not relevant, go on to question 4.</p>	<p>This is a joint draft strategy written with input from BCC and its partners Aylesbury Vale Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Chiltern CCG and Families and Carers Together in Buckinghamshire (FACT Bucks - our Parent Carer Forum).</p> <p>Our short breaks services are delivered through both commissioned and in house services. For commissioned services, there are standard clauses in all contracts which relate to the council's cohesion and equalities duties and this would be checked as part of routine contract monitoring arrangements.</p> <p>Our recommissioning activity provides an opportunity to review and strengthen the way cohesion and equalities priorities are embedded within the service specification and the ongoing contract monitoring arrangements. In particular, some of the shifts proposed in the future model for short breaks, will provide improved opportunities to support community cohesion and equalities. For example, our ambition to increase access for disabled children and young people to universal provision, and to support which is in their local community. This will help disabled children and young people to access activities alongside their peers, to make new friends and to develop stronger local support networks for parents.</p>
<p>Section C. Reviewing the implementation/delivery</p>	
<p>4. Does the strategy/policy need to be communicated to the public/our employees or does accessing the service depend on information being communicated to the public? If yes, how will this be achieved? Consider the information we already have about how our residents prefer</p>	<p>It is proposed that the draft strategy will be subject to a 12-week public consultation starting in March 2018. The consultation will be on-line but will also be postal for anyone without internet access. Specific parent and carer engagement sessions are planned, and children and young people engagement sessions will also take place, supported by the Children and Young People Participation Team. A separate consultation strategy has been written and sets out appropriate engagement plans for different stakeholder groups.</p> <p>We have worked with the Local Authority and CCG communications team to ensure that the strategy is written clearly and will be accessible to different stakeholder groups. We will continue to refine the language and presentation based on feedback we receive during the consultation process. Once the strategy has been agreed it will be made available on the BCC website and the Local Offer.</p>

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

<p>us to communicate with them and consider the ways that different groups of people generally find out information. How do you or how will you ensure that communication is appropriate to meet the different communication needs of different groups of people? If not relevant, go to question 5.</p>	<p>We also need to ensure that the Local Authority provides clear and easy to understand information on the short breaks offer, how to access short breaks and any eligibility criteria. This will be done using the Local Offer on the Buckinghamshire Family Information Service (BFIS) website www.bucksfamilyinfo.org. As well as this information being available for families to access directly, we will need to ensure that Social Workers and other professionals working with disabled children and their families know where to find this information and are able to use it to inform their discussion with families.</p> <p>We will work with FACT Bucks (Our parent and carer engagement form) to ensure the information we provide is easily accessible.</p>
<p>5. Is delivery of the strategy/policy or service dependent upon particular buildings, open space or mode of transport being used by the public? If yes, what facilities and transport access arrangements have been put in place to ensure that the needs of different groups of people have been addressed? See the EIA guidance notes for suggested issues that you need to think about. If not relevant, go to question 6.</p>	<p>Our current short breaks services are heavily dependent on residential respite provided through two buildings (The Grove and Merryfields). One of the aims of the strategy is to widen the choice that families have for different types of specialist support including support provided in their own home. This means that over time we want to reduce the dependency we have on buildings based provision. Achieving this will also help us to achieve more with the money we have. However, it will be important that residential short breaks continue to be available for children who have been assessed as needing this level of specialist support, and where this will achieve the best outcomes for the child and their family. Feedback from families (see above) indicated that reduced access to provision is one of the things they are worried about. It will therefore be important that we continue to work closely with families to ensure that they understand how their needs are being assessed, and that they are supported to access short breaks provision that will help achieve the right outcomes for their family.</p> <p>Families have also told us that transport is a key issue. Current access to residential short breaks through buildings based provision can mean some families have long journeys to access support. Our targeted short breaks are also not located across all areas of the county which will make access for some families more difficult. The shifts proposed in the short breaks strategy will mean that we seek to widen the choice and flexibility available to families, including supporting children to access local opportunities where possible. This has the potential to improve some of the current challenges in relation to journey times and access but is something we will need to monitor as the new service is developed.</p>

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

Questions to consider	The Findings
<p>6. Review any processes people need to go through to be able to use the service or to benefit from the strategy/policy. For example criteria that are applied to determine eligibility for receiving the service and the completion of forms. Do these processes/criteria effectively prevent groups of people of people from using the service or benefiting from the strategy/policy?</p> <p>(Ideally you should be aiming to only keep those processes and criteria that are essential to implementation/delivery, for example, because they are a legal requirement.)</p>	<p>Currently some of our short breaks services are accessed via a child and family assessment. Others can be accessed without any kind of assessment (see table above). Our strategy proposes that in the future this model will continue. However, one of the things parents and carers tell us is that they are confused about the eligibility criteria for short breaks. This is something we want to change.</p> <p>We also need to make sure that when social workers and other professionals assess the level of need that children and families have for short breaks that they do this consistently. This will help us to make sure that access is fair.</p> <p>To try and assist with these two points, we will develop and test a resource allocation system (RAS). This will set out some clear criteria to help parents and carers understand the eligibility criteria for short breaks. It will also help professionals to consistently identify levels of need. It will important that this RAS is tested thoroughly before it is agreed and that parents and families are involved in this testing process.</p> <p>The allocation of specialist short breaks is agreed through a panel process. To ensure fair and consistent access to short breaks that meet the needs of children and families, we will need to ensure that decision making through these panel processes is robust and that the packages of support received by children are regularly reviewed. There are already plans in place to ensure that this is kept under review and continued improvements are made where necessary.</p>
<p>7. What particular skills and knowledge will relevant staff need to ensure that the strategy/policy is properly implemented or that the service is delivered appropriately to meet people's individual needs?</p>	<p>As we start the recommissioning process we will need to ensure that the tender process and service specifications are clear on the skill, knowledge and training requirements for staff working in commissioned services. This will then need to be monitored through robust contract monitoring arrangements. These elements are already a key part of our usual practice, but recommissioning provides a good opportunity to review and identify opportunities for improved practice.</p> <p>The draft short breaks strategy proposes a shift in our current delivery model, in particular widening the access the disabled children and young people have to universal settings and activities. This will</p>

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

	require us to work with universal settings to understand any additional training and support needs that would facilitate this access. Achieving this will need to be a key consideration in the tender process, specification and ongoing monitoring of the new contract.
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Section D. Assessing for differential impact and discrimination

<p>Consider the answers given in questions 1 through to 7 and assess whether the strategy/policy or service results, or could result, in differential impacts on particular groups of people. Essentially you are looking to identify and deal with any actual or potential unfairness, disadvantage or discrimination. (See the guidance notes for a more detailed explanation.)</p> <p>If you consider that there is a differential impact, or the potential for a differential impact, you will need to assess whether this constitutes discrimination (i.e. detrimental to a group or particular groups of people) and whether the impact is justifiable as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate business aim. You are required to give your reasons for this.</p>	<p>The strategy proposes a set of key principles that provide us with an opportunity to increase the flexibility and choice families have in relation to short breaks. The intention is to achieve good outcomes for disabled children and young people and their families and to ensure that access to short breaks is fair and transparent. We also want to manage demand better across our system, as our current provision is not always meeting need in the right way.</p> <p>To inform the development of our key principles we have used feedback from local and national data, national research and feedback from disabled children, young people and their families. The 6 week consultation on our strategy will be a further opportunity to check with families and other stakeholders that we have a shared vision and ambition from our short breaks offer.</p> <p>The shift in delivery will mean change to the way that some families access their short breaks. Whilst this is intended to improve access and achieve agreed outcomes for children and families, families tell us that they can find change difficult. Therefore moving forward it will be important that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We continue to engage with families and will carry out a further 3 month consultation to inform the development of our Business Case, preferred service delivery model and review of our Buckinghamshire Short Breaks Statement. We develop strong service specifications and have robust contract monitoring arrangements in place to check that our new services are delivering the right outcomes for children and families. This must include continued engagement with and feedback from children and families themselves and from other professionals working with disabled children and their families. • We develop a Resource Allocation System (RAS) that supports greater fairness and transparency in the allocation of resources with engagement and feedback from children and families.
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*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

If you have identified a differential impact that constitutes illegal discrimination, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately.

If you have identified a differential impact that is justifiable or legitimate, you may need to consider what actions are necessary to mitigate its affect on particular groups of people. This arises out of the duty to promote good relations between people of different groups and is in keeping with the Council’s approach to “Strong & Cohesive Communities in Bucks”.

Ensure that these actions are listed in the attached equalities improvement plan.

If you do not have the authority to take the action required, you will need to alert the relevant service manager to your findings.

Section E. Ensuring continuous improvement

Questions to consider	The Findings
<p>9. What measures will you be using to monitor the impact of the strategy/policy or service over the next three years?</p> <p>The council is committed to mainstreaming equalities, ensuring that it is integrated into our performance management frameworks and subject to continuous improvement through performance monitoring. We also have legal duties to ensure we are not discriminating against groups of people in the provision of goods, services and facilities or in our role as an employer.</p> <p>You should only expect to carry out an equalities impact assessment every three years (unless you are introducing a significant change in the interim). You will, therefore, need to have information systems in place that will enable you to analyse and interpret information to:</p>	<p>The new services will be subject to rigorous monitoring arrangements. We will be taking an outcomes based approach so that we can understand the difference the service is making for children, young people and their families. We will need to ensure that our contract monitoring arrangements are robust and that the right data is collected, and analysed to assess whether there is any discrimination in the way the service is delivered. Where necessary advice will be sought from the Council’s equalities lead to support with this process.</p> <p>Strong engagement with families and co-production will be key principles of the new service so that children, young people and families can tell us directly what they think of the service, and can help us continue to develop the offer.</p>

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

- Show the numbers of particular groups using the services and what outcomes they experience
- Show under-use of a service by an equalities group
- Show over-use by an equalities group
- Reveal discrimination
- Demonstrate that services are not discriminatory
- Measure the effectiveness of service changes
- Identify the need for new or changed services

Please refer to the council's equalities monitoring guidance (see intranet) or contact the Research Team to decide what type of monitoring is appropriate and what information you will need to gather.

Also consider whether you need have some targeted actions with particular groups of people to address the issues identified above.

Please ensure that these are listed in the attached equalities improvement plan.

Section F. Opportunities for community cohesion or promoting good relations between different groups of people

Community cohesion and equalities are priorities for Buckinghamshire County Council.

Community cohesion is the outcome of understanding and respect between different communities and a sense of identification with a wider community. In essence it's about promoting a sense of connection, trust and belonging both within geographical communities and across groups of people. It is at risk where illegal discrimination exists, or is perceived to exist, when stereotypes and disinformation go unchallenged and where lack of knowledge about, or experience of, different groups of people leads to fearfulness and segregation.

Equalities in Buckinghamshire are at risk when we fail in our duty to provide an appropriate and professional service that takes account of the different needs of groups of people as a consequence of their colour, culture and ethnic origin, gender, disability, age, religion/belief or sexual orientation or as a result of living in a rural community, lower socio economic group or being a new group to this country and/or county (migrant worker, refugee or asylum seeker).

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

Questions to consider	The Findings
<p>10. Consider what opportunities and risks to the Council’s community cohesion and equalities priorities could arise, for example:</p> <p>Ensure that the actions you identify are put into the attached equalities improvement plan.</p>	<p>(a) Are there ways in which your service could bring different groups of people together, for example to develop future provision through consultation exercises?</p> <p>and</p> <p>(b) Are there ways in which existing groups could interact with the service, for example, as part of ongoing monitoring of service provision?</p> <p>We will continue to engage with FACT Bucks (our parent and carer engagement group) to monitor the recommissioned services. This will include continued use our PAG, which does bring parents together to give their views on the service and inform future service development. We will also ensure that children and families have different ways to tell us what they think of the services they access. For example, through attending forums, answering surveys / questionnaires, and engaging with the provider about the outcomes being achieved for their children. As with the current service, different mechanisms will be needed to capture the views of children. For example, for non-verbal children methods such as observation will continue to be used.</p> <p>(c) Could the way you provide the service bring different groups of people together to use the service?</p> <p>Our future offer will do more to support disabled children to access universal provision where this is possible. At present, the short break offer keeps children with disabilities separate and does not promote support which enables inclusion or provision where children with and without disabilities can interact with each other. We understand that this option will not be appropriate for all disabled children and that we will need to facilitate this type of access by understanding the training and support needs of</p>

*Buckinghamshire County Council
Equalities Impact Assessment Proforma*

universal service providers.

- (d) Does the way in which your service is provided have the potential to lead to resentment between different groups of people? How can you compensate for perceptions of preferential or differential treatment? Consider the role, or potential role, of the media and extremist groups when formulating your communication actions.

Parents and carers currently tell us that they are confused by the eligibility criteria for short breaks. A key feature of the short breaks strategy and our recommissioned service will therefore be ensuring that access is fair and transparent and that eligibility criteria are understood. This EIA sets out the different ways in which this will be achieved including testing a new resource allocation system, supporting robust decision making about the packages of support that families receive, and providing clear information as part of our Local Officer. It will be important that we engage with families to check that we are achieving fair and transparent access. This will be done as part of routine commissioning arrangements using methods outlined throughout this document.

- (e) If the improvement plan identifies addressing a gap in the service for a particular group of people, have you also addressed the potential for perceptions of preferential treatment for the group? How will you ensure that people will understand the need for the actions proposed as a result of this impact assessment?

Our strategy proposes that access to short breaks should be based on level of need. Clear and transparent eligibility criteria will support this. Again, it will be important that we monitor this to ensure we are achieving this aim.

EQUALITIES IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Please list all the equalities actions and targets that result from the Equalities Impact Assessment (continue on separate sheets as necessary). These also need to be integrated into the relevant service plan for mainstreaming and performance management purposes.

Equalities Targets/Actions	Officer responsible	By when
Run 6 week consultation on draft Short Breaks Strategy. To include targeted work with disabled children and their families.	Commissioning Manager (Alison Byrne)	End July 2018
Adapt strategy, develop business case for short breaks recommissioning and review Short Breaks Statement.	Commissioning Manager (Alison Byrne)	August 2018
Run 3 month public consultation on business case, service model and Short Breaks Statement from 13/08/18	Commissioning Manager (Alison Byrne)	November 2018 (assumes CM decision rather than Cabinet Decision earlier than 10/09/18)
Update business case, service model, Short Breaks Statement and EIA based on feedback from consultation and to reflect final service specification for new short breaks offer.	Commissioning Manager (Alison Byrne)	November 2018
Commission new services in line with the vision of the strategy, including the following specific factors that were raised as part of this EIA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes focus • Strong contract monitoring arrangements • Engagement and co-production with children and families are embedded – including as part of routine contract monitoring • Training, skill and knowledge requirement for staff delivering short breaks, including within universal services. • Review of equalities information that is collected from the provider in relation to service usage • Review the way community cohesion and equalities are included as part of the contract tender, and seek opportunities for this to be embedded as part of routine monitoring processes. 	Commissioning Manager (Alison Byrne)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specification November 2018 • Tender for recommissioned service out December 2018 • Contract evaluation and award to take place to allow for new service to start in June 2019

Equalities Targets/Actions	Officer responsible	By when
These elements will help us to ensure the quality of our service but also allow us to check that the vision set out in the Short Breaks Strategy is being achieved.		
Continue to review effectiveness of decision making and review processes through Resource and Complex Needs Panel.	Service Director – Children’s Social Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued review through each panel meeting with more formal review scheduled for September 2018.
Develop and pilot Resource Allocation System (RAS) to ensure clear and fair access to short breaks and to support consistent assessment of need. To include engagement with parents as part of the development and pilot phase.	RAS Task and finish group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop draft by September 2018 Pilot September – December 2018
Review and update information on Local Offer to reflect agreed Short Breaks Strategy and recommissioned offer. This should include testing with families to ensure the information is accessible.	Alison Byrne	June 2019
Devise plan for embedding knowledge of our offer across relevant frontline teams (including Bucks Family Information Service, Social Workers etc). This should include a communications campaign to coincide with the launch of the new service but also look for longer term methods for embedding knowledge.	Short Breaks Strategy Group	June 2019
Capture data related to equalities (needs, gender of CYP and carer, siblings, age, ethnicity and rurality) to ensure the new short breaks service does not disadvantage any specific group accessing short breaks.	Rona Hopwood	

Once the challenge process has been completed, please return the agreed Equalities Impact Assessment Form (signed by your Head of Service) and equalities improvement plan, to Angie Sarchet, Manager, Community Engagement & Development Team via email to asarchet@buckscc.gov.uk.