

HDC Due Regard (Equality Analysis)

Due Regard (Equality Analysis) is an on-going proactive process which requires us to consider the effect our decisions are likely to have on local communities, service users and employees, particularly those most vulnerable and at risk of disadvantage. This document is designed to assist in the collation of information and evidence required to support the 'Due Regard' process when introducing new policies/procedures/functions and services or reviewing existing ones.

Name of policy being analysed: Harborough District Council Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy and Procedures 2021

Department and section: Communications and Customer Services

Name of lead officer: Julie Clarke, Equality and Diversity Officer

Other people involved (assisting or reviewing – including any service users or stakeholder groups etc.): Leicestershire District and Borough Council Safeguarding Leads, Harborough District Council Corporate Safeguarding and Equality Strategy Group, Harborough District Council Designated Safeguarding Officer Group

Date assessment completed: August 2021

Step 1: Defining the policy/procedure/function/service

Is this a new, amended or reviewed policy? What are the aims, objectives and purpose and how will they be achieved? What are the main activities and which communities are likely to be affected by these activities? What are the expected outcomes?

This is a review of our current policy – Harborough District Council Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy and Procedures 2019. The review is designed to ensure that our policy is up to date with regards to latest legislation and processes, and also that it links to current Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children's Partnership policies. The policy is designed to ensure that Harborough District Council staff recognise when a child or young person is at risk of harm and that they know what to do to help safeguard them against suffering any or further harm.

Step 2: Data collection & evidence

What relevant evidence, research, data and other information do you have and is there any further research, data or evidence you need to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known effects of the policy on different communities? Include quantitative data as well as qualitative intelligence such as community input and advice.

Limited information is held with regard to the characteristics of those children or young people whom employees at Harborough District Council have made safeguarding referrals for. The referral form contains space for gender, date of birth, disability and communication/language barriers, it does not ask for details of other protected characteristics. Due to the nature of safeguarding incidents, it is not always possible to complete all of the information requested on the form as some of this will not be obtained by the 'alserter'. Sometimes information is also sparse due to lack of direct contact with the child or young person who needs safeguarding, as the concern may come from a 3rd party e.g. from a member of the community.

The table below contains information obtained from the 12 referrals Harborough District Council Designated Safeguarding Officers handled in the year 2019/20 and the 15 referrals handled in the year 2020/21, which related to a child or young person aged under 18 years old.

Age	Gender						Total	
	Female		Male		Unknown			
	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21
0-4 years	1	1	1	3	1	0	3	4
5-9 years	1	3	2	1	0	0	3	4
10-17 years	6	3	0	4	0	0	6	7
Age of child unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	8	7	3	8	1	0	12	15

Disability/ Health Condition	Gender						Total	
	Female		Male		Unknown			
	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21
Yes	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	2
No	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Unknown	7	5	3	7	1	0	11	12
Total	8	7	3	8	1	0	12	15

Cause for concern/reason for referral 2019/20

Neglect 5 cases, Domestic Abuse 3 cases, Physical Abuse 2 cases, Care 1 case and 'Other reason' 1 case

Cause for concern/reason for referral 2020/21

Homelessness 7 cases, Neglect 4 cases, Lack of food 2 cases, Modern Slavery 1 case and Mental Ill health 1 case

Harborough District Council staff do not provide many services which are directly aimed at children and young people as these services are generally provided by the County Council or Contractors. Therefore, our referrals are more likely to come to light due to staff working with the parent/carer, staff observing harmful behaviour towards a child on Council premises or at a Council event or a member of the community reporting to a member of staff that they have seen/heard something of concern.

Child abuse research suggests that the three highest risk factors in relation to children who are particularly vulnerable to abuse are:

Children with disabilities, looked after children and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Limited information is known about the numbers of children within the district who fall into one or more of these categories as generally statistics refer to figures relating to the county as a whole, however, we know that the Harborough District Council team who will have the most direct contact with these particular groups of children and young people will be the Physical Activity Team who specifically target children and young people such as these for activity programmes to help improve their access to activities.

The following statistics are from the 2018/19 Leicestershire County Council Harborough School Health Profile (latest version available):

- Deprivation is lower than average in Harborough and life expectancy for both men and women is better than the England average
- Although the proportion of children living in poverty is better than the England average, 1070 children still live under this circumstance
- Harborough has 35 primary and 7 secondary schools. 12876 pupils attend these schools and 51.6% are male
- Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in children are better than the England average in 2017/18
- In Reception, 176 children were classified as overweight or obese in 2018/19. In Year 6, this rises to 247 children
- Levels of teenage pregnancy are better than the England average, however 11 teenagers became pregnant in 2017

Area	% BME	% Pupils eligible for free school meals	% Pupils where English is not their first language	% Pupils registered as SEN with a statement	% Pupils registered as SEN without a statement
Harborough	10.7%	5.4%	3.3%	1.0%	9.2%
Leicestershire	18.6%	9.0%	7.4%	2.9%	10.4%

BME – Black and Minority Ethnic Communities

SEN – Special Educational Needs

Statistics from the Leicestershire and Rutland Local Safeguarding Children Board annual report 2018/19 show that in 2018/19 in Leicestershire there were:

140,307 children and young people aged under 18 live in Leicestershire (20% of the population)

12.0% of children and young people aged 0-17 are from a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) background, slightly above the general population (11.1%)

22,690 contacts to First Response (Children’s services) in Leicestershire

4,612 referrals to Early Help services

5,095 referrals to Children’s social care

25% of referrals to Children’s Social Care were re-referrals

2,866 Children in Need at the end of March 2019
388 Children on Child Protection plans at the end of March 2019
291 Child protection plans during the year where Neglect is a factor – **58%** of all new plans.
76 Child Protection plans were for children who had previously been on a plan – **15%** of all new plans
315 referrals regarding Child Sexual Exploitation
739 children reported missing
58% of missing episodes were followed by a return interview
584 Children in Elective Home Education (EHE) at the end of March 2019
78% of children in Elective Home Education (EHE) during the year received their statutory visits
585 Children in Care
3 notifications regarding Private Fostering arrangements
4,279 referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

From analysis of current and emerging issues the Safeguarding Partnership have identified the following Priorities for 2021/22 onwards:

Safeguarding Babies, improve how we work together with families before and after birth to safeguarding babies

Child Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing, seek assurance that partners are working to support good mental health for children and that mental health and safeguarding are effectively addressed together

Domestic Abuse and Child Safeguarding, seek assurance that partners are responding appropriately to safeguard and support children living with domestic abuse

Harm Outside of The Home, seek assurance that the local approach to safeguarding children from extra-familial threat is effective

Safeguarding Children from Diverse Backgrounds, understand and improve how well partners work together with children and families from diverse backgrounds

Covid 19 (shared with the Safeguarding Adults Board), reflect on and respond to the ongoing impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on safeguarding children and adults

Step 3: Consultation and involvement

Have you consulted and if so outline what you did and who you consulted with and why.

This policy has been reviewed as part of a joint collaboration with the other District and Borough Councils in Leicestershire. Harborough District Council Corporate Safeguarding and Equality Strategy Group and Designated Safeguarding Officers have also provided valuable feedback to inform the policy.

Step 4: Potential impact

Considering the evidence from the data collection and feedback from consultation, which communities will be affected and what barriers may these individuals or groups face in relation to Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Other groups e.g. rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived or disadvantaged communities and also the potential impact on

Community Cohesion. Remember people have multiple characteristics so the impact of a policy on a particular community may impact people within the community differently. Where possible include numbers likely to be affected.
This policy is designed to help staff identify and report safeguarding concerns and it is important that staff understand how important it is to recognise harm and apply the policy across the board. During both Bronze and Gold Level Safeguarding training, staff are reminded of the need not to be swayed by perceived behavioural ‘norms’ (for example cultural or religious) and to ensure that Children and Young People are protected from any harm that may be occurring to them regardless of their characteristics or any community they are part of.
Step 5: Mitigating and assessing the impact If you consider there to be actual or potential adverse impact or discrimination, please outline this below. State whether it is justifiable or legitimate and give reasons. If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately. If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people. Consider what barriers you can remove, whether reasonable adjustments may be necessary and how any unmet needs have identified can be addressed.
I do not consider that there is any actual or potential adverse impact or discrimination related to this policy. However, all employees receive equality and diversity training alongside safeguarding training, so they should be able to identify any negative impacts of the policy if any arise. The training highlights the dangers of making assumptions or stereotyping people based on their characteristics and makes it clear that the focus of safeguarding is protecting people from harm, whoever they are.
Step 6: Making a decision Summarise your findings and give an overview of whether the policy will meet Harborough District Council’s responsibilities in relation to equality, diversity and human rights. Does it contribute to the achievement of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty – eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations?
The policy is designed to ensure that the most vulnerable members of our community are protected from harm. The policy links to the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children’s Partnership and is based on best practice guidelines. Processes are updated following Serious Case Reviews so that learning and improvement is continuous.
Step 7: Monitoring, evaluation & review of your policy/procedure/service change What monitoring systems will you put in place to promote equality of opportunity, monitor impact and effectiveness and make positive improvements? How frequently will monitoring take place and who will be responsible?
Quarterly safeguarding referral figures are provided to the Corporate Safeguarding and Equality Strategy Group, by the Safeguarding Lead. These figures identify the number of referrals made, which department initiated the referral and where they were referred on to. Due to the relatively low numbers of referrals, more detailed equality monitoring takes place on an annual basis. Analysis is completed by the Safeguarding Lead and reported to the Corporate Safeguarding and Equality Strategy Group.

Equality Improvement Plan

Equality Objective :

Action: Continue to try and establish baseline statistics for most vulnerable groups within the Harborough District

Officer Responsible: Julie Clarke

By when: April 2022

Equality Objective :

Action: Continue to monitor characteristics of children and young people referred through the policy to identify any potentially disadvantaged groups

Officer Responsible: Julie Clarke

By when: April 2022

Signed off by: R Felts

Date:

Once signed off, please forward a copy for publication to Julie Clarke, Equality and Diversity Officer
e-mail: j.clarke@harborough.gov.uk, telephone: 01858 821070.