

## **Diversity Impact Assessment for the reduction of budget at Sure Start Children's Centres Pinehurst and Penhill.**

### **1 What's it about?**

Refer to equality groups

Sure Start Children's Centres in Pinehurst and Penhill provides universal and targeted services to all children under the age of 5 years and their families within the area to support families and help improve their outcomes.

It was originally established in 2001 as part of the then Government's initiative as a Sure Start local programme and became a designated Children's Centre in 2004. Funding for the service was ring fenced from Central government.

The budget allocated to Sure Start Penhill and Pinehurst is to be reduced as part of the overall budget available within Swindon Borough Council. These changes have necessitated a review of services and staffing to ensure that both Children Centres, Penhill and Pinehurst are still able to provide universal centre based activities and support for vulnerable families at home as required by Central Government policy.

The main focus of Children's Centres, in accordance with government directive is that they remain a universal service whilst also supporting the most vulnerable families in our society.

### **What is it there for? What is it set up to deliver? What is the proposed change**

The Children's Centres offer universal services such as group activities for children and their parents/ carers that are open, safe and accessible to all. These provide the opportunities for children and their parents to develop their learning in many areas including healthy lifestyles and keeping safe, and to give social opportunities and access emotional support. Some activities are also targeted to specific groups such as parenting groups or for babies under 1 year and their parent/carer. Information, support and guidance is available at all these groups and at both Centres.

Through direct links with Child Health Records, midwifery and health visiting services the centres identify when there is a new baby within a family. The family is then offered a home visit from outreach staff to give information about the services provided by the Children's Centres. The centres also are notified through the same sources of families who move into the reach area and they are also offered these information visits. Parents are then able to choose to access services. The targeted groups are age focussed and open to all children within the relevant age group. Partner agencies also encourage use of the centres and will if necessary support vulnerable clients to access the centres.

Family support is also available to all families with a child under the age of 5 living within the area of Pinehurst and Penhill, e.g. managing child behaviour and is offered either at the Centres or within families own home. Other family support work is targeted where families have specific issues such as debt, housing issues, mental illness or where there are concerns around meeting the needs of the children.

Volunteers from local families and from across Swindon also support these groups and activities.

Adult and family learning is offered at both Centres. Other services such as health visiting, speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and Swindon Psychology service also use both centres. Job

Centre Plus through Journeys to Work also works with the Children's Centre staff.

The proposed change involves some changes to the staff posts within the team.

There are 3 posts placed at risk :

Teacher

Information and Evaluation Manger

Information Assistant

The current post holders are all female. The teaching post is full time the other posts are part time. The Information and Evaluation Manager works 32 hours over 4 days and the Information Assistant works 22.5 hours over 3 days. Two of the posts have required professional qualifications where as the other has required specific relevant experience.

## 2 Who's it for?

Refer to equality groups

The services are available to all families with a child under the age of 5 years living within Penhill and Pinehurst. The area is known to have high levels of deprivation and low academic achievement. Penhill also has the highest number of lone parents and children living in workless households. Most families live in either local authority housing or private rents.

Families are informed of the services available through contact either in the antenatal period, when the baby is born or when they move into the area. A membership form is completed, with the agreement of the family and they are then sent a quarterly newsletter and timetable of activities. There are currently 963 families registered as members (December 2010) of which 83% are living in Penhill and Pinehurst. Other users come from across Swindon. Of these families 64% have used the service at some time over the last 12 months (evidenced by monitoring data), other families access intermittently as they require. These figures include people who attend either of the Centres or are supported within their own homes.

Of these service users, in the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010, 11% of children and 11% of adults have registered their ethnicity as other than White British. There is a wide range of different ethnic groups including Indian, Bangladeshi, Black African, Chinese and other white. Polish and Turkish are the two main languages other than English that is spoken although other languages are only spoken by 3% of children and 5% of adults service users.

As 11% of service users consider themselves other than white British, it would suggest the service is in contact with a high percentage of different cultures living within the reach area.

3% of children and 4% of adult service users have recorded having a disability on the membership forms.

31% of families with membership describe themselves as lone parents.

Equality duties are met as seen by the range of families who access services either at both Centres or through home visits. Staff will adapt service delivery to meet specific needs. A request for our services can be made by a family directly or by any agency working with the family. Once this is received, outreach workers make contact with the family to discuss with them their specific needs and agree with them an action plan to address these identified needs. This is constantly reviewed and updated, directly with the family.

--

<b>3 Impact</b>	Refer to dimensions of equality
-----------------	---------------------------------

The removal of these posts will not impact directly on services delivered to families. We do not believe that implementing this decision will have an adverse impact on the grounds of age, disability, sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity.

The role of the teacher has been to support staff in the delivery of quality early learning and education using the Early Years Foundation Stage framework across the Children's Centre. It has also been to facilitate training for staff. There is no longer a statutory requirement for Phase One Children Centres to employ a teacher. The impact of ending this post will be upon staff rather than directly upon children as this has been the focus of the role. To mitigate the loss of this role the centre will seek advice, support and training for staff from a range of providers including the Local Authority. This will continue to ensure the quality of early learning within the Children's Centres which is consistent with other Children's Centres and early education providers.

The Children's Centre information Technology systems are changing, the centres will use the same system as the Integrated Children's Services and other Children's Centres. The data which has previously been managed in house will now be managed through new IT systems and access to external support.

The current data system (e-PEX) is used to record certain information about a child or parent and when a contact has been made with them. From this, reports detailing different aspects of service use can be obtained. These are then used by Sure Start Partnership and also the Centre for monitoring service use and future service planning. The maintenance of the records of families registered with the service has been managed in house. There has not been an external IT support service to facilitate this work. With the change of IT system to the same system as other Children's Centres, there will be a central support service to facilitate information management and evaluation, the maintenance of records and running of required reports.

<b>What consultation has taken place?</b>
---

There will be consultation with staff starting in June 2011 as specified in SBC processes.

<b>4 So what?</b>	Link to business planning process
-------------------	-----------------------------------

The removal of these posts will require the centres to utilise alternative IT support systems and advice and training. This will ensure the quality of service delivery and the intelligent use of data and information to support service evaluation and planning.

The Diversity Impact Assessment will be reviewed 3 months following the consultation period and any issues identified then will be addressed.

<b>For the record</b>
-----------------------

Name of person leading this DIA <b>Sarah Tough</b>
--

Names of people involved in consideration of impact <b>Annette Allan / Chris Wallis/ Sara Tough</b>
---

Date Completed
Name of director signing DIA
Date DIA signed
Date approved by corporate group.

## Strategic Planning Framework – Diversity Impact Assessments

### 1 What's it about?

- What is it there for? What is it set up to deliver? What is the proposed change?
- What potential is there to meet the equality duties?
- What equality benefits does it create?
- What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

### 2 Who's it for?

- Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)?
- What do you know about them (evidence)?
- Who is missing or may find it difficult to use the service?
- Do you know why?

### 3 Impact

- How will this service be successfully delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)
- Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?
- Is there anything about the way you deliver your service which may stop people getting involved? (negative impact)
- Is that reasonable or justified? How can it be resolved?
- What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

### 4 So what?

- What changes have you identified?
- What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?
- When will this be reviewed?
- How will success be measured?
- Who is signing this off/taking responsibility?

### Considerations

#### Our equality duties

1. Eliminate Discrimination
2. Promote Equal Opportunities
3. Promote Good Relations
4. Prevent Harassment
5. Encourage Participation in Public Life

In the areas of: age, disability, gender (including transgender), race, religion/belief and sexual orientation (socio-economic status).

**Dimensions of equality** How will the service affect the life chances of different groups? Consider how the service will impact

1. **Longevity:** e.g. premature mortality.
2. **Physical security:** e.g. freedom from violence and physical and sexual abuse.
3. **Health:** e.g. well-being and access to high quality healthcare.
4. **Education:** e.g. being able to be creative, to acquire skills and qualifications, and having access to training and life-long learning.
5. **Standard of living:** e.g. being able to live with independence and security; and covering nutrition, clothing, housing, warmth, utilities, social services and transport.
6. **Productive and valued activities:** e.g. access to employment, a positive experience in the workplace, work/life balance, being able to care for others.
7. **Individual, family and social life:** e.g. self-development, having independence and equality in relationships and marriage.
8. **Participation, influence and voice:** e.g. participation in decision-making and democratic life.
9. **Identity, expression and self-respect:** e.g. freedom of belief and religion.
10. **Legal security:** e.g. equality and non-discrimination before the law and equal treatment within the criminal justice system.

For up to date information and advice contact [equality@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:equality@swindon.gov.uk) or check [swindon.gov.uk/dia](http://swindon.gov.uk/dia)