

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Before completing this EqIA please ensure you have read the guidance on the intranet.

Initial Information

Name:	Kerry Smith
Job Title:	Service Manager – Inclusion
Email address:	Kerry.smith@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
Members of the assessment team:	Kerry Smith (Service Manager Inclusion)
Date assessment started:	15/11/2022
Date of completion:	15/11/2022
Version Number:	1.0

Part 1: Background Information

Is this (please tick or expand the box to explain)

Existing	
Changing, updating or revision	
New or proposed	*
Other	

Is this (please tick or expand the box to explain)

Internal (employees only)	
External (residents, communities, partners)	*
Both of the above	

What is the name of your policy, strategy, project or service being assessed?

Dorset Attendance Strategy and Plan

What is the policy, strategy, project or service designed to do? (include the aims, purpose and intended outcomes of the policy)

The Dorset attendance plan and strategy aims to ensure that children and young people in Dorset have the highest possible attendance.

What is the background or context to the proposal?

The Department for Education published its guidance document “Working together to improve school attendance” in May 2022 to take effect in September 2022. This brought some new requirements on local authorities, particularly to ensure that attendance is everyone’s business and to support the wider education system to work together to promote good attendance in schools.

Part 2: Gathering information

What sources of data, information, evidence and research was used to inform you about the people your proposal will have an impact on?

School census data and Department for Education (DfE) attendance data.

What did this data, information, evidence and research tell you?

In 2022, 61% of children with 95% or above attendance achieved the Key Stage Two expected standard in reading, writing and maths; compared to 47% of children with between 90 and 94.9% attendance; 38% with attendance between 85 and 89.9% attendance, 23% for children with between 80 and 84.9% attendance and 16% for children with below 80% attendance.

At Key Stage Four in 2019, 72% of children whose attendance was 95% or above achieved a grade four or above in English and Maths, compared to 56% whose attendance was between 90 and 94%, 40% for children whose attendance was between 85 and 89.9%, 41% for children whose attendance was between 80 and 84.9% and 35% for those children whose attendance was below 80%.

Is further information needed to help inform this proposal?

We will continue to use the most recent data provided by the DfE and the school census to compare the attendance in Dorset with national.

Part 3: Engagement and Consultation

What engagement or consultation has taken place as part of this proposal?

We held a multi-agency Dorset attendance workshop which was attended by over 80 colleagues from Dorset Council, our schools, police, youth justice, parents and carers and health.

How will the outcome of consultation be fed back to those who you consulted with?

We will share the attendance strategy and plan with all that took part in the workshop. We will up-date schools through Head Teacher briefings, SENCo briefings and attendance senior leader network meetings. We will hold a further workshop with parents and children and young people as well as meeting termly with our health, police and youth justice colleagues. In addition, we will provide CPD for Dorset Council staff.

Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment Guidance before completing this section.

Not every proposal will require an EqIA. If you decide that your proposal does **not** require an EqIA, it is important to show that you have given this adequate consideration. The data and research that you have used to inform you about the people who will be affected by the policy should enable you to make this decision and whether you need to continue with the EqIA.

Please tick the appropriate option:

An EqIA is required (please continue to Part 4 of this document)	✓
An EqIA is not required (please complete the box below)	

This policy, strategy, project or service does not require an EqIA because:

N/A

Part 4: Analysing the impact

Who does the service, strategy, policy, project or change impact?

- If your strategy, policy, project or service contains options you may wish to consider providing an assessment for each option. Please cut and paste the template accordingly.

For each protected characteristic please choose from the following options:

- Please note in some cases more than one impact may apply – in this case please state all relevant options and explain in the ‘Please provide details’ box.

Positive Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposal eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and/or fosters good relations with protected groups.
Negative Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected characteristic group(s) could be disadvantaged or discriminated against
Neutral Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change/ no assessed significant impact of protected characteristic groups
Unclear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough data/evidence has been collected to make an informed decision.

Age:	<i>Positive Impact</i>
What age bracket does this affect?	0-16 years
Please provide details:	

	<p>The absence rate of children in Dorset primary schools was 3.4% in the academic year 2020/21 compared to 5.4% for secondary aged pupils. In the academic year 2020/21, the rate of severe absence was highest in Year 10 (2.5%), followed by Year 11 (2.1%) and Year 9 (1.5%). There was an increase in severe absence rates from Year 6 (0.7%) to Year 7 (1.2%).</p> <p>The Dorset attendance strategy and plan will focus on these age groups working in collaboration with schools.</p>
--	---

Disability: (including physical, mental, sensory and progressive conditions)	<i>Positive Impact</i>
Does this affect a specific disability group?	Children with SEND
Please provide details:	<p>In the academic year 2020/21, the absence rate of children with an EHCP in Dorset was 14% which was slightly above the national rate of national 13% and for children identified as SEN Support it was 6%, below the national average of 7%.</p> <p>The Dorset attendance strategy and plan will identify plans to support this cohort of children.</p>

Gender Reassignment & Gender Identity:	Unclear
Please provide details:	

Pregnancy and maternity:	Unclear
Please provide details:	

Race and Ethnicity:	Positive impact
Please provide details:	<p>In the academic year 2020/21, the absences rates for children and young people with a traveller of Irish heritage were higher both nationally and in Dorset, although the number of children identified as traveller of Irish heritage was small in Dorset.</p> <p>The Dorset attendance strategy and plan will identify plans to support this cohort of children.</p>

Religion or belief:	Unclear
Please provide details:	
Sexual orientation:	Unclear
Please provide details:	
Sex (consider both men and women):	Neutral
Please provide details:	<p>In the academic year 2020/21, the total absence rate in Dorset was 5%, which was the same as national. In the same academic year, the absence rate of females in Dorset was 4% (national 5%) and for males it was 5% (national 5%).</p> <p>The Dorset attendance strategy and plan will identify plans to support these cohorts of children.</p>
Marriage or civil partnership:	Unclear
Please provide details:	
Carers:	<i>Unclear</i>
Please provide details:	
Rural isolation:	Unclear
Please provide details:	
Single parent families:	Unclear
Please provide details:	
Social & economic deprivation:	Positive impact
Please provide details:	<p>In the academic year 2020/21, the absence rate of children eligible for free school meals (8%) both in Dorset and nationally was double that of children not entitled to free school meals (4%).</p>
Armed Forces communities	Unclear

Please provide details:	
-------------------------	--

Data Source: School Census data and DfE attendance data

Part 5: Action Plan

Provide actions for **positive**, **negative** and **unclear** impacts.

If you have identified any **negative** or **unclear** impacts, describe what adjustments will be made to remove or reduce the impacts, or if this is not possible provide justification for continuing with the proposal.

Issue	Action to be taken	Person(s) responsible	Date to be completed by
All protected characteristics	The EqIA will be reviewed alongside the Dorset attendance strategy and plan.	The Dorset Education Board	September 2023

EqIA Sign Off

Officer completing this EqIA:	Kerry Smith	Date:	15.11.2022
Equality Lead:	Susan Ward-Rice	Date:	
Equality & Diversity Action Group Chair:	Dr David Bonner	Date:	