



Equality Impact Assessment form (updated April 2011)

This is where you evidence how a policy or practice, or a decision relating to a policy or practice, complies with the general equality duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

This form is intended to guide and prompt you about the questions and evidence that you need to think about. As indicated in the guidance, this assessment takes into consideration each of the “protected characteristics” listed in the Equality Act 2010 – race, age, gender etc. This assessment should be used to inform any relevant decision about the policy or practice. Please state policy options in the assessment.

Service Area Integrated Family Support Services (IFSS)	Head of Service: Mike Nicholson	Person responsible for the assessment: Vicky Self	Date of Assessment September 2012	
Name of the policy / practice to be assessed: provision of Integrated family Support Services which includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Intervention Prevention Team (EIPT); • Family Contact Service (FCS), • Family Support team (FST), • Integrated Family Support Team (IFST) and • Family Assessment and Support service (FASS - in partnership with Barnardos) within Newport 			Is this a new, existing or policy / practice under review?	Practice under review

1. Briefly describe the purpose of the policy / practice

If the policy / process is under review, please list any options under consideration

Collectively, the IFSS seeks to contribute to :

- Safely reducing the number of children in care, in proceedings or on Child Protection Register by 20% through the provision of effective family support services. (FST,IFST and FASS)
- Demonstrating that families receiving services have reduced assessed risk factors by up to 25% (FST,IFST and FASS)
- Reducing the number of children removed from families before a full assessment of risk has taken place (IFST & FASS)
- Providing safe, individualised and needs led arrangements for supervised contact. (FCS)
- Supporting vulnerable families in need at an early stage to reduce the need for more intrusive interventions at a later stage. (EIPT)

Developing the work of IFSS further is one of the key plans within the Children's service plan 2012 - 2013.

The above services all contribute to providing support to children and families assessed with varying degrees of need for assistance. The teams take referrals from the front line children's services teams, though the EIPT can take referrals from any source. None of the teams have case holding responsibility.

At the time of writing proposals to re-structure preventative services are taking place - through the joining of EIPT and the Preventative Services Group (PSG) which have been previously core funded and by Education and Cymorth grant funding, though will in the future be funded from Families First. The restructure aims to bring those teams together under one manager and with a single shared aim. This will not impact on what the service offers and to whom, but will impact on the way services are delivered, which seeks to be more family centred and family flexible and address needs holistically, in line with the rest of the IFSS teams.

Plans are also taking place at the moment in relation to rolling out IFST across Gwent - as an IFST pioneer - Newport will be leading on this for the Gwent area

<p>2. Name any associated policy, legislation, corporate objective etc.</p>	<p>Prevention strand of Families First (EIPT) NCC supervised contact Policy (FCS) The Children and Families (Wales) measure 2010 (IFST) NCC children and Family services plan (Children Act and various updates) Partnership contract between NCC and Barnardos Cymru. Local safeguarding children’s partnership and policy</p>
<p>3. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy / practice?</p>	<p>Children and families living in Newport Front line social workers and practitioners (referrers to the services) Partner agencies</p>
<p>4. Who performs the service?</p>	<p>Staff employed within the IFSS including NCC staff (family contact centre staff; Family Support Staff: IFST staff); seconded staff from ABHB: Probation; Kaleidroscope; Gwent Heddlu Police and those in partnership with us - including Barnardos staff.</p>
<p>5. What outcomes are wanted from this policy / practice?</p>	<p>Refer to objectives above - in achieving these, families are supported to increase their resilience and so be less reliant on statutory services, though the work can also provide social workers with evidence that levels of risk within the family are such that the child/children are not safe, and may need to be taken into care.</p>

6. What factors could contribute / detract from the outcomes (risks / opportunities)?

Please list the factors for each separate policy / process options under consideration

Detract from outcomes: Low referral rates from social workers/others; perceived negative experiences of workers and families, lack of capacity in teams to take cases, lack of clarity about role and function (inter and intra teams), ineffective practice, lack of partner engagement. Resistance, overload of change.

Opportunities: Families can access the right type of individualised support at the right time and be given the opportunity to work with services and agencies as opposed to be 'done to'. Avoid duplication of services through collaborative working; raft of training available in methods of 'whole family' intervention, thus increasing the opportunity to support the cause of the problem behaviour as opposed to the symptoms of it. Increase in workers skills; opportunity to amend/increase the service specification and remit (FCS).

There is a risk from the proposed change for IFST to be rolled out across Gwent as the budget for the service will be reduced from £600K for Newport, to £850K for Gwent- Newport will receive less of a service. Contingency planning has involved developing a 'preferred partnership' with Barnardos, which has enabled us to create the FASS to support the very high level of complex needs of some families.

Current low level of referrals to the FCS has offered the opportunity to look at new ways to support front line staff - extending the remit.

Team meetings, service development days and management meetings within IFSS ensure that as issues arise, we can plan and take action to address them

7. Describe the steps you have taken to carry out this assessment e.g. consultation and involvement

- All services use customer satisfaction questionnaires (completed by service users)
- FCS: consultation with front line referring teams about review of policy: consultation in respect of extension of remit; contract meetings; case reviews, case conferences, open morning when reconfigured service launched. (when nurseries decommissioned - consultation process followed including HR and Unions).
- Some of the cases open to IFSS are independently reviewed - feedback from these reviews (FST/IFST and FASS)
- Staff consultation about services - FST/IFST/FASS workshops in relation to new central referral system and process
- EIPT (Families First) launch conference event: subsequent Team around the family plans - tweaking of process to improve
- Various workshops on different aspects of EIPT work
- Range of IFSS training events and training evaluations. (multi-agency)
- FST/IFST/FASS offer consultations to front line workers on daily basis - take up increased - will soon offer the same from EIPT
- Increase in referral rates in FST, IFST and FASS. (latter of these have specific eligibility criteria - former set by WG and in statute, the latter decided by NCC in response to other families with complex needs needing a specific service. (Agreed through Local Multi-agency management Board)
- Collection of different data by each service in relation to age, gender, ethnicity, location.....
- Focus in Children's Management Team (CMT) and Whom team managers (WTM) meetings about different aspects of the work
- Independent research completed by UWIN and SQW (IFST)
- Feedback from quarterly reports to WG
- Feedback from multiagency management Board and from multiagency Implementation group
- Whole IFSS service development events (quarterly)
- Relevant complaints and comments
- All IFSS intervention plans put the service user at the centre of the planning process.
- IFSS development ½ day focussing on multi-cultural/faith awareness

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers 'linked' to front line teams - to ensure appropriate communication and understanding of the services • Session with service users (IFST) specifically asking for feedback on the service
<p>8. Give a summary of the information the council has taken into account for this assessment</p>	<p>Feedback from service users (questionnaires) and complaints and comments (sources from all teams)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes from various meetings (team meetings; management meetings, Board meetings; NSCB equality subgroup....) • Stats/annual report produced by each team

9. Does the policy / practice eliminate discrimination and promote equality and good community relations due to:

- **Age**
- **Gender**
- **Disability**
- **Race**
- **Religion / belief**
- **Welsh language**
- **Gender reassignment**
- **Marriage / civil partnership**
- **Sexual orientation**

Yes/ No – include detail

All IFSS services (with the exception of EIPT) are referred to by the front line teams - service users are not able to directly access any of the services. Each team has a 'target' group of potential service users, and all those referred are offered a service (even if this is only an assessment) unless lack of staff capacity does not allow this - therefore, to a large extent, we do not control who is offered a service - all referrals are accepted irrespective of age, gender, race, disability.....

The different services do routinely record the ethnicity, age and gender of services users, and do whatever is necessary to provide a service for users - though not all information is recorded:-

for example:

- the FCS regularly uses interpreters with families receiving contact;
- bear religious festivals and cultural issues in mind whilst agreeing contracts with families;
- the service has a number of workers who are welsh speaking, so can provide services in Welsh if needed.

On the whole, services within IFSS are provided in the community or in family homes.

The only service which has service users coming to the building is the FCS - disabled facilities are not fully available on both sites used, (there is no disabled toilet facility in the Alway site) though plans are in progress to address this. In the Brynglas site, there is no lift to access the first floor - though families can be accommodated on the ground floor. The longer term plan is that the majority of this service is moved to Alway - it has more room, and is better served by public transport - an issue raised by the service users. The Brynglas site would be used for those families where it is more convenient for them.

10 .Summary of the impact of the policy / practice on the general equality duty

The interventions offered by IFSS are focussed on individualised need, and include the child and family being at the heart of the planning process as it is recognised that they themselves have the answers/solutions to many of their problems, though they need assistance in identifying them. Hence equality and inclusion are intrinsic to delivery and there is no adverse impact on any of the listed strands.

No major barriers to access have been identified, though it is recognised that there is little direct access into the service, meaning that front line social workers make the decision as to who is referred. We are confident that the practice of offering consultations together with the linked workers with each referring team and the training /workshops offered, ensures that workers are fully informed as to who could be referred.

Similarly, we are confident that the training offered to partner agencies and services serves to inform other services about IFSS and what needs to be done by them to support children's services to make referrals.

We have acted on consultation where appropriate and possible - extending the remit of the FCS and developing the FASS for instance, so there is credibility within front line teams that we will do what we can to support overall service provision.

Equality Action Plan		
<p>Key Actions As stated in the Children’s services plan for 2012-2013</p> <p>To consolidate the collaborative partnership with Barnardos and fully align services. (June 2012)</p> <p>To consolidate the Families first preventions and early intervention services and strengthen links with community safety, early years and communities first services (September 2012)</p> <p>To lead on the development of 2 IFSTs for the GWENT region (March 2013)</p>	<p>Actions (with dates) Any associated performance measures</p> <p>As none of the teams within IFSS (with the exception of IFST) are statutory, there are no universal performance targets applicable other than those stated at the start of the report, which IFSS contributes to.</p> <p>The WG has not set specific targets for IFST, though all IFSTs across Wales have ensured that they provide similar performance information within their annual reports and general reporting. (See annual report for details). To assist this process the IFSS is in the process of commissioning a bespoke database to enhance and support the collection and collation of management information for the service area.</p> <p>Each team within IFSS prepares it’s own annual report outlining the operation of the team over the last 12 months, and reporting all performance.</p>	<p>Lead Officer(s)</p> <p>Mike Nicholson</p> <p>IFSS/FF multiagency management Board</p> <p>IFSS/FF multiagency management Board</p>
<p>Further actions to eliminate discrimination, promote equality and good community relations :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As outlined previously, the service is available to anyone who needs it and who is eligible to use it. 		
<p>If there are decisions pending that will affect this policy / practice please state when and how the decision will be taken</p>	<p>as already noted - most significantly roll out of IFST and restructure of prevention services under Families First.</p>	
<p>How will the policy / practice be:</p>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitored • Performance assessed • Reported 	<p>Through annual reports from each team (collated into a service plan) which will be circulated to the IFSS multiagency management board on annual basis to supplement usual reporting processes</p>		
<p>Does the EIA need be revisited in 6 months/ a year?</p>	<p>reviewed in 12 months</p>		

Signed (lead officer) Vicky Self

Signed (Head of Service) Mike Nicholson