Equality Assessment (EA)

Service Area:	Kingston and Richmond Children's Services
Name of service/ function/ policy/ project being assessed:	Transform the culture and working practices of early help and children's social care services in the Cluster Model by ensuring more joined-up services, including with partners, to avoid duplication, maximise resources and improve the journey of the child
Officer leading on assessment:	Daniela Acosta, Head of Integrated Working
Other staff involved:	All Operational Staff in Operational Area 1; Henry Kilpin, Head of Strategy and Programmes

BACKGROUND

1. Briefly describe the service/ function/ policy/ project:

Summary

The Cluster Model aims to transform the way we deliver services for children and families across Early help and Children's Social Care. As a result of working in this way, children and families will experience a more joined up offer, including when partners are involved; practitioners will avoid duplication and maximise resources and provide a smoother and more effective journey. We now have three multi-disciplinary 'Clusters' – teams working in a defined geographical area – and 'Central Teams' working across the whole of Kingston and Richmond.

What do we hope to achieve?

By reorganising into a new Cluster Model, the aim is to transform services so we can make life better for children, young people and families by:

- Organising services around their experiences and needs.
- Creating effective multi-disciplinary teams that work in defined geographical areas. This will help us to:
    - really understand the communities we work with and build up local relationships;
    - work better together by sharing information and expertise; and
    - be readily accessible to those who rely on us.
- Better aligning PEH and Children's Social Care so that we can:
    - become respond flexibly to needs, supporting families as early as possible;
    - minimise the number of assessments families go through; and
    - reduce the number of professionals families work with and make transfers smoother when they do happen.
- Improving how we work with families, and making sure what we do is evidence-based.

- Work better with local partners, such as GPs and health providers, schools and the voluntary sector.

We will also improve how Achieving for Children operates by:

- Building commitment and trust with staff by listening to their views, knowledge and experience and making sure these are at the heart of the design and implementation of the new approach.
- Using resources on what matters most by saving money on accommodation and spending it on developing staff skills and expertise and services instead.
- Setting AfC apart from other organisations by implementing a new way of working within clusters and seeking to commission services more efficiently and across borough boundaries.
- Complete our integration of services across Kingston and Richmond so that we maximise efficiencies and fully establish ourselves as a single operating body.

What does the Model look like?
The key features of our Cluster Model are:

- A shared view of the journey of the child in two parts:
  1) to the point it is clear a child or young person will be looked after away from home permanently, and 2) into permanency and on to independence.
- Central Teams working across the AfC area.
- Multi-disciplinary Cluster Teams working with families in three defined geographical areas, sharing information and expertise.

What has been the process for implementing the Cluster Model?
There have been two key phases to implementing the Cluster Model:

Phase 1: Transition (March 2016 to March 2017) was aimed at getting the new Cluster Model up and running. This meant:

- Integrating social care teams across Kingston and Richmond.
- Reconfiguring PEH services to better facilitate the Cluster Model.
- Establishing physical clusters and operating processes, including: ICT, accommodation moves; determining new referral pathways; workload management in the transition and transfer of cases; establishing Cluster working arrangements. The Clusters are based close to the communities they work.

A process for allocating staff to clusters was been agreed with the process and an overview of the transport, parking and local amenities at each location clearly set out for staff. In deciding on locations for the Clusters and our Central Teams, we looked carefully at:

- overall the best position for children and young people and their families;
- logistical issues, such as how business support can be managed; and
- finding solutions that cause the least disruption for the most staff.

In Phase 1, each team had a formal consultation setting out the vision for the service in the new model; the proposed new structure; job profiles; location; terms and conditions; and change process for that team. For each of these redesigns, equality assessments were completed.

Phase two: Transformation (from April 2017) has been about maximising the opportunity of moving to the Cluster Model to improve the service, including:

- Supporting team building across the Cluster to develop and maintain relationships.
- Providing leadership support to the Cluster Management Teams.
- Developing a Cluster Handbook which sets out how Clusters should work in practice.
- Identifying how we discuss and make decisions around our most complex families.
- Rationalising the numbers of meetings we hold about children and young people .
- Planning the implementation of our operating framework Signs of Safety.
- Looking at our services from the perspective of the journey of the child, working out how we can make their experience much better and designing out barriers and issues created by services and organisations.
- Setting our vision for closer working between PEH and Social Care.
- Looking at how we can engage partners differently to make sure we can together deliver the services that children and families need, when they need them.

2. Why is the equality assessment being undertaken?

As one of AfC's major projects, it has been necessary to complete an equality assessment to understand the impact of the changes that are being implemented.

3. What sources of information have been used in the preparation of this equality assessment? (e.g national research, local needs assessment, user feedback) Please provide the details in the table below:

Information source	Description and outline of the information source
Achieving for Children Annual Equalities Report 2016-17 and 2017-18	The annual report setting out how AfC meets its public sector equality duty requirements.
Discussions at forums such as Cluster Management Team meetings and the Clusters Development Group (CDG)	These forums provide an opportunity to discuss all areas around the implementation of the model, including: ● Sharing best practice. ● Dealing with barriers. ● Identifying training needs. ● Progressing the implementation of related methodologies, such as Signs of Safety. ● Developing the 'team around the local area'. ● Strengthening relationships with partners. ● Understanding local needs. ● Agreeing local priorities. ● Maintaining good performance. ● Co-creating and developing AfC's approach to locality working.

	● Creating a thriving environment for innovation and best thinking. Each Cluster has produced a Cluster Plan to capture local priorities and inform AfC's Master Clusters Plan.

ANALYSIS OF IMPACT

4. Assess the relevance of each protected characteristic group to the service/ function/ policy/ project and explain what the data, customer feedback, complaints or discussions with stakeholder groups tells you about the impact.
Other questions to consider: ● *How well are diverse needs met?* ● *Have any differences in access to services/functions been identified for any group?* ● *Has the area identified any disadvantages experienced by groups, which need to be addressed?* ● *Have there been any complaints about a failure to receive an appropriate and fair service?* ● *Is there any other evidence of differential impact or different outcomes which needs to be addressed?* ● *Is there any evidence that participation in areas of public life is disproportionately low for any particular relevant protected characteristic group?* ● *Have the needs of disabled people been identified and addressed where these are different from the needs of non-disabled people?* ● *Have you identified any need to tackle prejudice or promote understanding between different relevant protected characteristic groups?* *Remember that equality assessment is not simply about identifying and removing negative effects of discrimination but it is also an opportunity to identify ways to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.*

Protected Group	*Findings*
Age	**Data** ● There are 41,600 children and young people aged 0-19 in Kingston and 47,758 in Richmond. In both Kingston and Richmond, children aged 0-4 make up the largest group within the 0-19 population. ● The 0-19 population is expected to grow by approximately 10% in Kingston by 2026 and by 1.5% in Richmond by 2035. **Impact** AfC will continue to deliver services to all children and young people aged between 0-25 (if they have a disability or are a care leaver). This will not change as a result of the implementation of the Cluster Model.
Disability	**Data**

	• There are 1,042 children and young people with a Statement of Special Educational Need (SEN) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in Kington, 1,239 in Richmond and 917 in Windsor and Maidenhead. • 10.7% of pupils in Kingston and 12.3% of pupils in Richmond have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND). **Impact** Although services for Children with Disabilities have remained central, all services have identified a service manager link to the Clusters. This will ensure that children with disabilities fully benefit from the implementation of the new model.
Gender (Sex)	**Data** • The gender breakdown of males and females aged 0-19 is almost 50/50 in both boroughs. **Impact** The cohort of children and young people supported by AfC will remain the same- this will not change as a result of the Cluster Model.
Gender reassignment	**Data** • AfC does not routinely collect data relating to gender reassignment. **Impact** The new Cluster Model is considered of low relevance to gender reassignment.
Marriage and civil partnership	**Data** • AfC does not routinely collect data relating to marriage and civil partnership. **Impact** The new Cluster Model is considered of low relevance to marriage and civil partnership.
Pregnancy and maternity	**Data** • AfC does not routinely collect data relating to pregnancy and maternity apart from in relation to teenage pregnancy. **Impact** The new Cluster Model is considered of low relevance to pregnancy and maternity.
Race/ethnicity	**Data** • 38.6% of children and young people in Kingston and 30.0% from Richmond (this total includes 'White Other') are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic

	(BAME) background. 61.0% of children and young people from Kingston and 70% in Richmond are White British. Kingston's 0-19 population are more diverse than the population as a whole (Kingston BAME population is 30.7%). Similarly in Richmond, the 0-19 population is slightly more diverse than the population as a whole (Richmond BAME population is 29%. It should be noted this includes 'White Other'). **Impact** The cohort of children and young people supported by AfC will remain the same- this will not change as a result of the Cluster Model.
Religion and belief including non-belief	**Data** • AfC does not routinely collect data relating to religion. **Impact** The cohort of children and young people supported by AfC will remain the same- this will not change as a result of the Cluster Model.
Sexual orientation	**Data** • AfC does not routinely collect data relating to religion. **Impact** The cohort of children and young people supported by AfC will remain the same- this will not change as a result of the Cluster Model.

5. Summarise the key findings of the equality assessments of impact- have you identified any data gaps in relation to the relevant protected characteristics and relevant parts of the duty?

Other questions to consider:

- *Are there findings of unlawful discrimination?*
- *Can you address any identified adverse impact?*
- *Can you mitigate any negative impact?*
- *Please provide rationale if you are unable to address any adverse impact.*
- *Have you identified any ways of advancing equality in this area? For example, meeting diverse needs?*
- *Is there a need for any actions to promote understanding between different protected groups?*

The Cluster Model puts families and children at the centre of all interventions. It strengthens the relationship between service users and practitioners and will have a positive impact on the protected characteristic groups when in receipt of our services.

The new approach will benefit children and young people, regardless of background, through a greater shared understanding of the communities that we work with and the ability to be more flexible to meet their needs. The improved alignment of services will

ensure those who come in contact with us will experience a more joined-up and smooth process, regardless of which protected characteristic group they fall within.

CONSULTATION

6. What consultation have you undertaken with stakeholders or critical friends about the key findings? What feedback did you receive as part of the consultation?
As the Cluster Model is becomes embedded, feedback will be gathered regularly from the children and families receiving support and the practitioners supporting them to ensure that the model remains effective.

ACTION PLANNING

7. What issues have you identified that require action?			
Issue identified	*Planned action*	*Lead officer*	*Completion Date*
N/A			

MONITORING AND REVIEW

8. How will the actions identified above be monitored and reviewed and where will the actions be captured i.e. Business Plan, project plan, service and improvement plan, service plan poster or Personal Development Plan?
● Cluster Plans are regularly reviewed at Cluster Management Team Meetings ● The Master Clusters Plan is regularly reviewed by the Clusters Development Group (CDG) and the Delivery Group

PUBLISHING THE COMPLETED ANALYSIS

When completed, the equality assessment should be approved by a member of AfC Management Team and published on the Achieving for Children website. Please provide details below:	
Approved by	Ian Dodds, Deputy Chief Executive
Date of approval:	June 2018
Date of publication:	July 2018