

Equality Impact Assessment Form

Before completing this form, please refer to [the supporting guidance document](#)

The purpose of this form is to aid the Council in meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in the Equality Act 2010. This requires the Council to have “due regard” of the impact of its actions on the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The assessment is used to identify and record any concerns and potential risks. The following actions can then be taken to address these issues.

- Remove risks: abandon the proposed policy or practice
- Mitigate risks – amend the proposed policy or practice so that risks are reduced
- Justify policy or practice in terms of other objectives

Once the EIA has been approved by the Senior Responsible Officer, please ensure that a copy is placed on the SharePoint folder: “Equalities Board, EIAs”

1- Policy details	
Name of policy	Youth Justice Plan 2026–27
Department and service	Children and Family Services – Youth and Justice Service
Who has been involved in completing the Equality Impact Assessment?	Strategic Manager (Youth Justice), in consultation with the Youth and Justice Partnership Board, Youth Justice Service managers, and partner agencies including Police, Health, Education and the Voluntary Sector.
Contact numbers	0116 305 0030
Date of completion	March 2026

2- Objectives and background of policy or practice change

Use this section to describe the policy or practice change

What is the purpose, expected outcomes and rationale?

Include the background information and context

What is the proposal?

What change and impact is intended by the proposal?

The Youth Justice Plan 2026–27 sets out the strategic priorities and partnership commitments for the delivery of youth justice services in Leicestershire. The Plan moves to an annual cycle to reflect the pace of national youth justice reform and increased assurance requirements, while strengthening a Child First, preventative and trauma-informed approach.

The Plan prioritises:

- Prevention and diversion for children at risk of entering the criminal justice system
- Reducing reoffending and unnecessary criminalisation
- Strengthening responses to serious violence, exploitation and vulnerability
- Improving access to health, wellbeing and education, including social prescribing
- Enhancing the offer and voice of victims

A core intended impact is to reduce inequality and disproportionality by ensuring that services are responsive to the needs of children who experience multiple and intersecting disadvantages, and that partnership responses do not exacerbate existing inequalities.

This plan is a renewal of the three-year plan from 2023-2026. It is a one-year plan due to a period of reform announcements that are being made by the Ministry of Justice in relation to Youth Justice, and particularly the Youth Justice Board, who currently provide our governance.

What is the rationale for this proposal?

Children known to the youth justice system are disproportionately affected by adverse childhood experiences, unmet health needs, special educational needs, exploitation, and social inequality. The Plan recognises that these vulnerabilities are not evenly distributed across the population and that some groups of children are more likely to experience criminalisation and poorer outcomes.

The rationale is therefore to embed equality, prevention and inclusion at a strategic level, ensuring that:

- Pathways into the system are minimised
- Responses are proportionate and tailored
- Services are accessible, culturally competent and trauma-informed
- Partnership governance actively scrutinises inequality and impact

This approach aligns with statutory duties under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

3- Evidence gathered on equality implications - Data and engagement

What evidence about potential equality impacts is already available?

This could come from research, service analysis, questionnaires, and engagement with protected characteristics groups

What equalities information or data has been gathered so far?

What does it show?

The Youth Justice Plan draws on:

- Service performance and assurance data reported to the Youth Justice Partnership Board
- Evidence of vulnerabilities linked to youth justice involvement, including exploitation, anti-social behaviour and health needs
- Learning from prevention, diversion and victim work
- National and local expectations around Child First practice and disproportionality

The evidence highlights that children entering or known to the youth justice system often face multiple disadvantages, reinforcing the need for early intervention, coordinated support and equality-focused service design.

Inequalities and disproportionality in Youth Justice System

Evidence nationally and locally indicates that contact with the youth justice system is not evenly distributed across the child population. Some groups of children experience a higher likelihood of being stopped, reported, criminalised, prosecuted and receiving more intensive statutory intervention, and may also experience poorer outcomes (for example, higher rates of remand, custodial sentences, breach and reoffending). These differences can arise from structural inequality, cumulative disadvantage, unmet need, and the way services and decision-making thresholds operate across the partnership.

- **Race and ethnicity:** children from some ethnic minority backgrounds can be disproportionately represented at key points (police contact, out-of-court disposals, court outcomes and remand). This may also intersect with place, deprivation and perceptions of risk.
- **Disability, neurodiversity and mental health:** children with SEND, speech/language needs, learning disability, autism/ADHD and mental ill-health may face barriers to understanding processes, communicating effectively and complying with conditions, increasing risk of escalation or breach.
- **Sex and gendered pathways:** boys and girls can have different routes into offending and different patterns of harm. Girls known to youth justice services are more likely to have experienced exploitation, trauma and domestic abuse, and may have needs that are missed within generic provision.
- **Care experience and safeguarding vulnerability:** children looked after or with care experience are over-represented in youth justice and are more likely to experience instability, exploitation, missing episodes and criminalisation linked to placement context.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic disadvantage: deprivation, exclusion from school, unmet health needs, and limited access to positive activities are associated with higher risk of entry to the youth justice system and reduced ability to access support. <p>The Youth Justice Plan 2026–27 responds to these inequalities by strengthening prevention and diversion, promoting Child First and trauma-informed practice, and requiring partnership scrutiny of decision-making and outcomes.</p> <p>The Partnership Board will use assurance and performance reporting to monitor disproportionality (including intersections between protected characteristics and vulnerability factors), review the effectiveness of diversion and intervention pathways, and agree actions where differences cannot be explained by need or risk. This EIA will be kept under review as delivery progresses and as new intelligence or feedback from children, families and communities is gathered.</p> <p>The Youth and Justice Partnership Board are provided with a comprehensive performance report which includes a full breakdown of the demographics of the children who are supported through the service. We are in the process of developing this further to show trends.</p>
<p>What engagement has been undertaken so far?</p> <p>What does it show?</p>	<p>Engagement has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from children and families through evaluation activity • Input from victims to inform improvements to the victim offer • Multi-agency collaboration through the Youth and Justice Partnership Board • Access to children’s records based on their interaction with the service detailing their needs. <p>This engagement demonstrates the importance of listening to lived experience and ensuring that services are shaped by the voices of those most affected by the youth justice system.</p>

The Youth Justice Plan does not require any public consultation.

4- Benefits, concerns and mitigating action

Please specify if any individuals or community groups who identify with any of the '[protected characteristics](#)' may *potentially* be affected by the policy and describe any benefits and concerns including any barriers. Use this section to demonstrate how risks would be mitigated for each affected group. If a group will not be affected by the proposal please state so.

Group	What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?	What are the concerns identified and how will these affect those from the following groups?	How will the known concerns be mitigated?
Age	The Plan is specifically designed for children and young people, prioritising prevention, diversion and developmentally appropriate responses.	<p>Children aged 15-17 are most likely to be represented within the Service.</p> <p>The Service has a statutory obligation to work with some children as they transition into young adulthood and with others who will be have a considered transition to the Young Adults Team in Probation.</p>	<p>Ensure that children have access to early help and prevention services, such as Teen Health who are based within schools.</p> <p>Close working relationships with Leicestershire Probation utilising the dedicated Senior Probation Officer SPOC and the seconded Probation Officer within Youth Justice.</p>

		Risk of younger children being drawn into formal processes where early help may be more appropriate.	Strengthened triage, diversion pathways and prevention panels to ensure proportionate responses. Engagement with District Councils Joint Action Groups to identify children engaging in Anti-Social Behaviour and an offer of support at this early stage.
Disability	There is a high prevalence of children with the Youth Justice System with disabilities, specifically SEND needs. . The benefit of the plan is to ensure that the health and education needs of children are understood, addressed and support is in place for children to achieve their potential and have ambition.	Children with SEND or neurodiversity may experience barriers to engagement or understanding processes. Require improved access to health support, including mental health and neurodevelopmental needs, and a trauma-informed approach.	Partnership working with Health, Education and specialist services, and use of tailored interventions. Strategic representation on the Youth and Justice Partnership Board from Education Leads and Health Leads. During 2026-27 a specialist Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) provision will be implemented to work across the YJS children and the partnership to improve support and understanding around communication needs. All children who require support from the Youth and Justice Service

			<p>have a Communication Passport completed with them so that their needs are better understood.</p> <p>Currently exploring opportunities to ensure access to health services when diverted away from Court and police custody.</p>
Race	<p>Black, Asian and multi-ethnic children and adults are over-represented in the Criminal Justice System as a whole. It is likely that this group of children will face multiple disadvantages and intersectionality.</p> <p>The Plan is set to address disproportionality by race as a key thread across priorities and within the partnership, Child First principles and prevention activity aim to reduce unnecessary criminalisation and escalation of children.</p>	<p>Risk of racial disproportionality in contact with policing and youth justice pathways. This group of children are at more risk of entering into youth justice and the prison estate.</p>	<p>Ongoing scrutiny through partnership governance structure and rigor of quarterly data.</p> <p>Development of a disproportionality action plan supported by the Race Equity Lead from the Youth Endowment Fund.</p>
Sex	<p>The plan recognises the need for differing pathways and vulnerabilities for boys and girls, including exploitation and victimisation.</p>	<p>The over-representation of girls in YJS is a concern. Work has identified that girls are likely to have higher levels of trauma and vulnerability</p>	<p>Strategic work across LLR is underway concerning girls and women in CJS.</p>

		and are likely to have experienced victimisation.	#EmpowerHer has been developed in collaboration with girls to offer practical support and emotional wellbeing. Work has been undertaken on developing a pathway for boys to address positive relationships and talking openly about mental health and emotional wellbeing.
Gender Reassignment	The Plan recognises the need to support young people to safely explore their identity.	Whilst evidence is limited, it is understood that children who are exploring their identity can become vulnerable and may display risk taking behaviour.	All children who require support from the Youth and Justice Service have a Communication Passport completed with them so that their needs are better understood, including their identity. Improved data collection. Developing pathways of support.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No direct impact identified, improvements to partner services will support all children and young people in YJS.	None identified.	Not required.
Sexual Orientation	The Plan recognises the need to support young people to safely explore their identity.	Whilst evidence is limited, it is understood that children who are exploring their identity can become	All children who require support from the Youth and Justice Service have a Communication Passport

		vulnerable and may display risk taking behaviour.	<p>completed with them so that their needs are better understood, including their identity.</p> <p>Improved data collection.</p> <p>Developing pathways of support.</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	No direct impact identified, improvements to partner services will support all children and young people in YJS.	None identified.	Not required.
Religion or Belief	The Plan recognises the need to support young people to safely explore their culture and identity.	Whilst evidence is limited, it is understood that children who are exploring their culture and identity can become vulnerable to negative influences.	<p>All children who require support from the Youth and Justice Service have a Communication Passport completed with them so that their needs are better understood, including their identity.</p> <p>Improved data collection.</p> <p>Developing pathways of support.</p>

Armed Forces (including veterans)	No direct impact identified, improvements to partner services will support all children and young people in YJS.	None identified.	Not required.
People with lived care experience	The plan acknowledges that children with lived care experience can be over-represented within the Criminal Justice System.	Children who have lived care experience have a higher vulnerability to criminalisation and exploitation.	Strong relationships with the Children in Care Service and Care Leavers Service. Data reported quarterly to the Youth and Justice Partnership Board who scrutinise data and will respond to any over-representation.
Other groups: e.g., rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived or disadvantaged communities	No additional direct impacts identified, improvements to partner services will support all children and young people within Youth Justice. Above addresses children with care experience and care leavers.	None identified currently.	Robust performance monitoring through the Youth and Justice Partnership Board around cohort data and any response needed.

5- Action Plan			
Produce a framework to outline how identified risks/concerns identified in section 4 will be mitigated.			
What action is planned?	Who is responsible for the action?	Timescale	Expected outcome
Monitor equality impacts through Partnership Board reporting	Youth and Justice Partnership Board	Ongoing 2026–27	Improved oversight of disproportionality and equality impact and robust plans in place that show positive outcomes.
Embed Child First and trauma-informed practice across delivery	Youth Justice Service Management Team	Ongoing 2026–27	More equitable and proportionate outcomes for children
Strengthen prevention and diversion pathways for vulnerable groups	Multi-agency partners	Ongoing 2026–27	Reduced escalation and unnecessary criminalisation
Improve access to health and wellbeing support including social prescribing	Health partners and Youth Justice Service	Ongoing 2026–27	Reduction in unmet health needs and inequality

6- Approval Process	
Departmental Equalities Group	14/04/2026
Corporate Policy Team	Please set out comments from the Corporate Policy Team
Sign off by the Senior Responsible Officer for the Project.	