

EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

UAS Childrens Service

Responsible Officer

Alex Stringer - CY SCS

Type of Activity**Service Change**

No

Service Redesign

Service Redesign

Project/Programme

Project/Programme

Commissioning/Procurement

Commissioning/Procurement

Strategy/Policy

No

Details of other Service Activity

No

Accountability and Responsibility**Directorate**

Children Young People and Education

Responsible Service

UAS Children's Service, Countywide Services, CYPE

Responsible Head of Service

Alex Stringer - CY SCS

Responsible Director

Kevin Kasaven - CY SCS

Aims and Objectives

Following a High Court judgment on the preliminary issues for a litigation judgement on the 27 July 2023 and the subsequent order, it has been determined Kent County Council (KCC) has not always met its statutory responsibilities, including its Section 20 duties, in relation to Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UAS children) arriving in Kent. Further court hearings took place and orders were made on 18 August 2023 and 15 September 2023, by which the Judge ordered that KCC must take all possible steps to increase its capacity to accommodate and support all UAS children arriving in Kent in lawful discharge of its Children Act 1989 duties, including but not limited to seeking and agreeing additional funding and other resources from Government, requesting assistance with placements from other local authorities, and or lawfully redeploying existing resources within the County Council.

KCC separately asked the court to review the operation of the national transfer scheme (NTS), which was considered at a hearing on 10 October 2023. A judgment was handed down on 28 November 2023 finding that the Secretary of State for the Home Department (SSHD) was unlawfully operating the NTS between December 2021 and 27 July 2023. Consequential orders are expected to be made at a further relief hearing on 15 December 2023.

Discussions have been ongoing with the Home Office and the Department for Education (DfE), as directed by the court, to identify a plan with sufficient funding provided by Central Government to enable KCC to develop a pathway to meet its statutory duties. An urgent key decision paper connected to this EQIA sets out the necessary decisions and delegations that are now required to enable KCC to put in place the

necessary arrangements to increase Ofsted regulated accommodation provision, to enter into necessary contractual agreements and operational arrangements to deliver the required services in line with the Court Order.

The objective for Kent County Council and its UAS Children's Service is to fully comply with the Court Order.

In achieving this objective, the Service aims to ensure newly arrived unaccompanied asylum seeking children to Kent:

- Are accommodated in appropriate and suitable accommodation in line with Section 22 of The Children Act 1989 and Ofsted regulations for supported accommodation 2023.
- Thrive in a reception centre setting. Experience feeling safe and supported, and that the centre is their home for the time until they move to the care of other local authorities under the National Transfer Scheme.
- During this time children will be supported by social workers and reception centre staff to:
 - o Maintain their physical and emotional health and well-being.
 - o Develop their understanding and confidence in spoken and written English.
 - o Develop independent living skills to prepare them for adulthood.
 - o Engage in education and training that supports their future learning and employment aspirations.
 - o Celebrate their identity and culture whilst learning and abiding by lawful and socially acceptable behaviour in the UK.
 - o Develop confidence and resilience to manage difficult situations and relationships appropriately.
 - o Building positive relationships with their peers and the professionals who support them.

Section B – Evidence

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?

Yes

It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?

Yes

Is there national evidence/data that you can use?

Yes

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

Yes

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

Department for Education
Home Office
Kent County Council Members

Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?

Yes

Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?

Yes

Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?
Service Users/clients Service users/clients
Staff Staff/Volunteers
Residents/Communities/Citizens Residents/communities/citizens
Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?
Yes
Details of Positive Impacts
<p>The Council will be providing accommodation and support to all newly arriving unaccompanied asylum seeking children to Kent, regardless of race, gender, religion or abilities. This is consistent with the Council's statutory duties to all children.</p> <p>The proposed reception centres are buildings that have no current occupants, use or benefit to their local communities. There is potential for the centres to become employers for the communities in which they are based. Staff employed at the centres, and children accommodated at the centres, can have a positive impact through participation in local community initiatives and events.</p>
Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions
19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age
Are there negative impacts for age?
No. Note: If Question 19a is "No", Questions 19b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Details of negative impacts for Age
Not Completed
Mitigating Actions for Age
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age
Not Completed
20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability
Are there negative impacts for Disability?
No. Note: If Question 20a is "No", Questions 20b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval
Details of Negative Impacts for Disability
Not Completed
Mitigating actions for Disability
Not Completed
Responsible Officer for Disability
Not Completed
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
Are there negative impacts for Sex
Yes - Add details of the negative impacts and mitigations.
Details of negative impacts for Sex
UAS children may arrive from countries where gender discrimination and abuse is condoned or tolerated by authorities and society. Whilst the UK may have laws to prevent gender discrimination and abuse, it still exists and UAS children may be particularly vulnerable to this due to their previous experiences. For the

proposed activity this could manifest in the following ways:

1. Gender discrimination and abuse between UAS children accommodated in the reception centres.
2. Gender discrimination and abuse by UAS children toward members of the local community.
3. Gender discrimination and abuse by UAS children toward staff working in the reception centres.
4. Gender discrimination and abuse by members of the local community and/or general public toward UAS children accommodated in reception centres.

Mitigating actions for Sex

The UAS Children's Service and its staff follow and champion Kent County Council's Equality and Diversity policy, which underpins reception centres' own policies and practice.

All children accommodated in reception centres receive a weekly program of education and support, through which they are supported to develop respect for themselves and for others, building on the strengths of children from all cultures, religions, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, and backgrounds to help them to achieve their full potential. Staff are expected to challenge attitudes, behaviour and language that are non-inclusive and discriminatory, in a positive way.

The Service has a range of translated materials and uses interpreters to support these messages and the consequences for gender discrimination and abuse. In existing centres this is proven to be successful in preventing gender discrimination and abuse between UAS children, by UAS children toward staff or toward members of the local community.

The Service will engage with statutory partners, community and faith leaders to listen to local community concerns and provide assurance with the aim of mitigating gender discrimination and abuse by the local community or general public toward UAS children accommodated in reception centres. The Service will also work with statutory partners, community and faith leaders to deliver gender equality education to UAS children accommodated in the reception centres.

If, despite these efforts, UAS children are subject to, or subject others to, gender discrimination and abuse the Service will report this and work closely with Police to implement restorative justice.

Responsible Officer for Sex

Alex Stringer

22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender

Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender

Yes - Add details of the negative impacts and mitigations.

Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender

UAS children may arrive from countries where transgender discrimination and abuse is condoned or tolerated by authorities and society. Whilst the UK may have laws to prevent transgender discrimination and abuse, it still exists and UAS children may be particularly vulnerable to this due to their previous experiences. For the proposed activity this could manifest in the following ways:

1. Transgender discrimination and abuse between UAS children accommodated in the reception centres.
2. Transgender discrimination and abuse by UAS children toward members of the local community.
3. Transgender discrimination and abuse by UAS children toward staff working in the reception centres.

4. Transgender discrimination and abuse by members of the local community and/or general public toward UAS children accommodated in reception centres.

Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender

The UAS Children's Service and its staff follow and champion Kent County Council's Equality and Diversity policy, which underpins reception centres' own policies and practice.

All children accommodated in reception centres receive a weekly program of education and support, through which they are supported to develop respect for themselves and for others, building on the strengths of children from all cultures, religions, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, and backgrounds to help them to achieve their full potential. Staff are expected to challenge attitudes, behaviour and language that are non-inclusive and discriminatory, in a positive way.

The Service has a range of translated materials and uses interpreters to support these messages and the consequences for transgender discrimination and abuse. In existing centres this is proven to be successful in preventing transgender discrimination and abuse between UAS children, by UAS children toward staff or toward members of the local community.

The Service will engage with statutory partners, community and faith leaders to listen to local community concerns and provide assurance with the aim of mitigating transgender discrimination and abuse by the local community or general public toward UAS children accommodated in reception centres. The Service will also work with statutory partners, community and faith leaders to deliver gender identity education to UAS children accommodated in the reception centres.

If, despite these efforts, UAS children are subject to, or subject others to, transgender discrimination and abuse the Service will report this and work closely with Police to implement restorative justice.

Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender

Alex Stringer

23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race

Are there negative impacts for Race

Yes - Add details of the negative impacts and mitigations.

Negative impacts for Race

Immigration policy and groups seeking asylum in the UK is a divisive topic, which can bring discrimination and racist abuse. The children themselves may arrive from countries where racial discrimination and abuse is condoned or tolerated by authorities and society. For the proposed activity this could manifest in the following ways:

1. Racism between UAS children accommodated in the reception centres.
2. Racism by UAS children toward members of the local community.
3. Racism by UAS children toward staff working in the reception centres.
4. Racism by members of the local community and/or general public toward UAS children accommodated in reception centres.

Mitigating actions for Race

The UAS Children's Service and its staff follow and champion Kent County Council's Equality and Diversity

policy, which underpins reception centres' own policies and practice.

All children accommodated in reception centres receive a weekly program of education and support, through which they are supported to develop respect for themselves and for others, building on the strengths of children from all cultures, religions, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, and backgrounds to help them to achieve their full potential. Staff are expected to challenge attitudes, behaviour and language that are non-inclusive and discriminatory, in a positive way.

The Service has a range of translated materials and uses interpreters to support these messages and the consequences for racism. In existing centres this is proven to be successful in mitigating racism between UAS children and by UAS children toward staff or members of the local community.

The Service will engage with statutory partners, community and faith leaders to listen to local community concerns and provide assurance with the aim of mitigating racism by the local community or general public toward UAS children accommodated in reception centres. The Service will also work with statutory partners, community and faith leaders to deliver anti-racist education to UAS children accommodated in the reception centres.

If, despite these efforts, UAS children are subject to, or subject others to, racist abuse the Service will report this and work closely with Police to implement restorative justice.

Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race

Alex Stringer

24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief

Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief

Yes - Add details of the negative impacts and mitigations.

Negative impacts for Religion and belief

Immigration policy and groups seeking asylum in the UK is a divisive topic, which can bring religious discrimination and abuse. The children themselves may arrive from countries where religious discrimination and abuse is condoned or tolerated by authorities and society. For the proposed activity this could manifest in the following ways:

1. Religious discrimination and abuse between UAS children accommodated in the reception centres.
2. Religious discrimination and abuse by UAS children toward members of the local community.
3. Religious discrimination and abuse by UAS children toward staff working in the reception centres.
4. Religious discrimination and abuse by members of the local community and/or general public toward UAS children accommodated in reception centres.

Mitigating actions for Religion and belief

The UAS Children's Service and its staff follow and champion Kent County Council's Equality and Diversity policy, which underpins reception centres' own policies and practice.

All children accommodated in reception centres receive a weekly program of education and support, through which they are supported to develop respect for themselves and for others, building on the strengths of children from all cultures, religions, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, and backgrounds to help them to achieve their full potential. Staff are expected to challenge attitudes, behaviour and language that are non-inclusive and discriminatory, in a positive way.

The Service has a range of translated materials and uses interpreters to support these messages and the

consequences for religious discrimination and abuse. In existing centres this is proven to be successful in preventing religious discrimination and abuse between UAS children and by UAS children toward staff or members of the local community.

The Service will engage with statutory partners, community and faith leaders to listen to local community concerns and provide assurance with the aim of mitigate the risk of religious discrimination and abuse by the local community or general public toward UAS children accommodated in reception centres. The Service will also work with statutory partners, community and faith leaders to deliver religious tolerance education to UAS children accommodated in the reception centres.

If, despite these efforts, UAS children are subject to, or subject others to, religious abuse the Service will report this and work closely with Police to implement restorative justice.

Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief

Alex Stringer

25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation

Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation

Yes - Add details of the negative impacts and mitigations.

Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation

UAS children may arrive from countries where sexual orientation discrimination and abuse is condoned or tolerated by authorities and society. Whilst the UK may have laws to prevent sexual orientation discrimination and abuse, it still exists and UAS children may be particularly vulnerable to this due to their previous experiences. For the proposed activity this could manifest in the following ways:

1. Sexual orientation discrimination and abuse between UAS children accommodated in the reception centres.
2. Sexual orientation discrimination and abuse by UAS children toward members of the local community.
3. Sexual orientation discrimination and abuse by UAS children toward staff working in the reception centres.
4. Sexual orientation discrimination and abuse by members of the local community and/or general public toward UAS children accommodated in reception centres.

Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation

The UAS Children's Service and its staff follow and champion Kent County Council's Equality and Diversity policy, which underpins reception centres' own policies and practice.

All children accommodated in reception centres receive a weekly program of education and support, through which they are supported to develop respect for themselves and for others, building on the strengths of children from all cultures, religions, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, and backgrounds to help them to achieve their full potential. Staff are expected to challenge attitudes, behaviour and language that are non-inclusive and discriminatory, in a positive way.

The Service has a range of translated materials and uses interpreters to support these messages and the consequences for sexual orientation discrimination and abuse. In existing centres this is proven to be successful in preventing sexual orientation discrimination and abuse between UAS children, by UAS children toward staff or toward members of the local community.

The Service will engage with statutory partners, community and faith leaders to listen to local community concerns and provide assurance with the aim of mitigating sexual orientation discrimination and abuse by the local community or general public toward UAS children accommodated in reception centres. The

Service will also work with statutory partners, community and faith leaders to deliver sexual orientation education to UAS children accommodated in the reception centres.

If, despite these efforts, UAS children are subject to, or subject others to, sexual orientation discrimination and abuse the Service will report this and work closely with Police to implement restorative justice.

Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation

Alex Stringer

26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity

Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity

No. Note: If Question 26a is "No", Questions 26b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval

Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity

Not Completed

Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity

Not Completed

Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity

Not Completed

27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships

Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships

No. Note: If Question 27a is "No", Questions 27b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval

Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships

Not Completed

Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships

Not Completed

Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships

Not Completed

28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities

Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities

No. Note: If Question 28a is "No", Questions 28b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval

Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities

Not Completed

Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities

Not Completed

Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities

Not Completed