

Equality Impact Assessment Template – Policy, Function or Strategy

This document should be completed when a new policy, function or strategy is introduced or when a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy is recommended. This will ensure equality considerations are taken into account before a decision is made and the policy, function or strategy can be altered, if required.

1. Policy, function or strategy		
a.	Name/description of the policy, function or strategy ¹	Parentsportal
b.	Responsible organisation(s)/Lead Service	Education Service
c.	Lead Officer	Adam Stephenson, Education Officer Ross Scullion, SEEMiS Development Officer
d.	Date of Impact Assessment	20/12/2021
e.	Partners/other Services involved in the development of the policy, function or strategy	Improvement Services, Scottish Government, SEEMiS, Legal, IT
f.	Is the policy, function or strategy?	<input type="checkbox"/> New
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reviewed/Revised
g.	What is the purpose of the policy, function or strategy (include details of any new legislation which prompted the introduction of the policy, function or strategy or the substantive change to the policy, function or strategy)?	Parentsportal is a new system that will give parents access to information about their child that is held within our SEEMiS system– this will include report cards, attendance, contact information and school timetable. Schools will also be able to use the system to provide a calendar of events, issue and collect permission slips electronically and send messages.
h.	What are the intended outcomes of the policy, function or strategy?	Improved access to information to parents on their children on demand and to improve efficiency of use of staff time.
i.	Geographical area (Inverclyde-wide or a specific location)	Inverclyde-wide

¹ Please attach details of the policy, function or strategy to this Template

1. Policy, function or strategy		
j.	Which parts of the Equality Duty will the policy, function or strategy impact on?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by The Equality Act 2010
		<input type="checkbox"/> Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups
		<input type="checkbox"/> Foster good relations between people from different groups
k.	Will those who may be directly or indirectly affected by the policy, function or strategy be involved in its development?	The system has been developed by Improvement Services on behalf of Scottish Government. Parent representatives were involved in the development of the system at a national level.

2. Does the policy, function of strategy impact on:		
	Yes	No
a. Protected Characteristics under The Equality Act 2010: Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion and Belief; Sex; Sexual Orientation (see Section 3)	✓	
b. Reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage – Fairer Scotland Duty ² (see Section 6)	✓	
c. Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) 2017/22 ³ (see Section 7)		✓

² [Fairer Scotland Duty: interim guidance for public bodies](#)

³ [Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017/22](#)

2. Does the policy, function of strategy impact on:		
d. Corporate Plan 2018/22 ⁴ (see Section 8)	✓	
3. If 'Yes' is selected for any part of Section 2, please populate the other relevant Sections of this Template.		
4. If 'No' is selected for <u>every part</u> of Section 2, please state the reasons for this.		
Please sign below and email a copy of this Template to Karen Barclay, Corporate Policy Officer: karen.barclay@inverclyde.gov.uk .		
Signature:	Date:	

3. Impact – Protected Characteristics
Which of the Protected Characteristics will the policy, function or strategy have an impact upon?

⁴ [Corporate Plan 2018/22](#) (agenda item 5)

3. Impact – Protected Characteristics						
Protected Characteristic	Impact					Reasons/Comments
	Positive High	Low	Neutral	Negative High	Low	
Age			✓			
Disability			✓			
Gender Reassignment			✓			
Marriage and civil partnership			✓			
Pregnancy and maternity			✓			
Race	✓					With communications now being electronic, families for whom English is not their first language can use online translate options to view the information in their home language.
Religion and belief			✓			
Sex		✓				All parents will be able to create an account and view information about their child. Currently information will go to one parent, identified as the main contact. This will give equal access to information for all parents.
Sexual orientation			✓			

3. Impact – Protected Characteristics						
Other groups to consider					✓	Adults supporting children who are looked after will not be able to access the system and will require to continue to rely on traditional methods of communication – email, text, paper. This is a security feature built into parentsportal to protect the information of the most vulnerable children.
• Carers						

4. Which parts of the Equality Duty will the policy, function or strategy have an impact upon?	
✓	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
☐	Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
☐	Foster good relations between people from different groups

5. Impact – groups	
From the information you have highlighted above, describe the positive and negative impacts and the groups affected under The Equality Act 2010.	
<p>Positive impacts +</p> <p><i>(Describe groups affected.)</i></p> <p>Families</p> <p>Race Families of children in our schools for whom English is a second language will now be able to view school communication and more easily make use of translate options to ensure that they fully understand the information they are presented with.</p> <p>Sex All parents will now be able to access information on their child – potentially this will include report cards, attendance, general</p>	<p>Negative impacts -</p> <p><i>(Describe groups affected.)</i></p> <p>Other</p> <p>Carers Due to security systems built into parentsportal to protect the most vulnerable children – carers of young people being looked after will not be able to access the parentsportal system and will require to continue to rely on traditional methods of communication such as text, email and paper.</p>

5. Impact – groups	
information notices, permission slips. This will ensure that all parents are aware of what is happening in school and this will be of particular benefit for parents who do not live in the same household.	

6. Impact – Fairer Scotland Duty

What impact will this policy, function or strategy have on reducing inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage?

Positive impact +	Neutral impact =	Negative impact -
		-
<p>Briefly describe how the policy, function or strategy will impact on reducing inequalities of outcome.</p> <p>Families who do not have access to the internet or a device to access the information are at risk of missing out on key information if a wholesale move to digital only for reports, permissions slips etc is rolled out.</p> <p>Access to internet – careful of assumption that all will be able to access as described as a negative above. Mitigations in place will be to continue to offer alternatives to electronic communication eg printing copies of reports or permission slips. Schools know their families well and will be proactive in providing this alternative.</p>		

7. Impact – LOIP 2017/22

Which Priority/Priorities from the LOIP 2017/22 will this policy, function or strategy impact on?

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Population: Inverclyde's population will be stable and sustainable with an appropriate balance of socio - economic groups that is conducive to local economic prosperity and longer term population growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Inequalities: There will be low levels of poverty and deprivation and the gap between the richest and poorest members of our communities will be reduced (This may already have been highlighted at Section 6.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Environment, culture and heritage: Inverclyde's environment, culture and heritage will be protected and enhanced to create a better place for all Inverclyde residents and an attractive place in which to live, work and visit
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. The local economy: Inverclyde has a thriving and diverse local economy, economic activity is increased and skills development enables both those in work and those furthest from the labour market to realise their full potential

Briefly describe how the policy, function or strategy will impact on the LOIP Priority/Priorities.

8. Impact – Corporate Plan 2018/22

Which Priority/Priorities from the Corporate Plan 2018/22 will the policy, function or strategy impact on?

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. To promote Inverclyde, to both residents and visitors alike, as a great place to live, work and visit
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. To work collaboratively, to enable strong, connected and empowered communities, particularly in areas of deprivation, so that residents have influence and control over the things that matter to them
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. To grow the local economy in a way that creates opportunities for all our residents, including access to good quality jobs
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. To reduce the prevalence of poverty and, in particular, child poverty in our communities
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. To safeguard, support and meet the needs of our most vulnerable families and residents
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. To improve the health and wellbeing of residents so that people live well, and for longer
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7. To protect and enhance our natural and built environment
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. To preserve, nurture and promote Inverclyde's unique culture and heritage
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	9. To deliver services that are responsive to community needs and are underpinned by a culture of innovation, continuous improvement and effective management of resources
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	10. To develop motivated, trained and qualified employees who deliver quality services that meet current and anticipated service needs

Briefly describe how the policy, function or strategy will impact on the Corporate Plan Priority/Priorities.

By making use of Parentsportal, we will allow parents access to key information held about their child within our schools management information system – this will include viewing attendance records, report cards, timetable information and contact information held. Parents can access this information at any time using an internet enabled device. Schools will also be able to issue and collect permission slips electronically and send messages to parents. We will still be able to issue paper copies where this is needed but moving to an electronic system will provide better access to information for parents in one central location. Using this service will help make efficiency savings in staff

□	1. To promote Inverclyde, to both residents and visitors alike, as a great place to live, work and visit
time and reduce the need to print and issue paper documents. By reducing printing and posting and making use of parentsportal to share and collect information we will further reduce the council's carbon footprint.	

9. Evidence

What evidence do you have to help identify any potential impacts of the policy, function or strategy?

Note: Evidence could include information from consultations, surveys, the Citizens' Panel, focus groups, interviews, projects, user feedback, complaints, Officers' knowledge and experience, equalities monitoring data, publications, research, reports, and local and national groups.

Evidence	Details
Consultation/Engagement (including any carried out while developing the policy, function or strategy)	Consultation on the development of the system was undertaken by Scottish Government through Improvement Services – this involved discussions with parents, pupils and staff over what information would be useful to be part of an online information system for parents. Discussion with School Business Coordinators, Headteachers and parents at the Inverclyde Parent forum has taken place at a local level.
Research	<p>To determine the interest in a parent's portal for Scotland being developed and in support of a user-centric design and development approach, numerous forms of consultation were carried out to seek opinion, views and feedback from a wide range of stakeholders including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents • Children • Local authorities • Schools • Parental interest and support groups • Scottish Government • The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) <p>To gather feedback from local authorities and school personnel, the Improvement Service and SEEMiS conducted a series of roadshows and workshops across Scotland in the summer and autumn of 2017.</p>

Evidence	Details
	<p>The Improvement Service and SEEMiS Group commissioned Ipsos MORI Scotland to undertake some exploratory qualitative research into parents', carers' and guardians' views on current communication with their school and on an online portal for parents and schools. To gauge demand for, and acceptance of, the development of such a service, seven focus groups were conducted among parents, pupils and representatives from the National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFs).</p> <p>A copy of the published report can be found at: https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0013/7105/parent-engagement-consult-summary.pdf</p>
Officers' knowledge and experience (including feedback from frontline staff)	<p>The Education Officer working on this project has 16 years' experience of working in secondary education and has led local and national developments around the use of digital technology to improve communication with stakeholders.</p> <p>The Development Officer working on this project has 16 years' experience of working in local government, leading on both system implementation and post-implementation development, training and support. The past two years have been spent within a similar role for the Education Service.</p>
Equalities monitoring data	<p>Data held by schools on families who may not have access to a device or internet will help ensure no one misses out on communications. We will monitor registrations during the launch period</p>
User feedback (including complaints)	<p>Feedback from the Ipsos survey detailed in the research section was used to design the service for all local authorities across Scotland. Inverclyde Council will engage with parents and school staff during the initial launch and then again after the first year of use to gather feedback to share with the Parentsportal User group to inform change. We will monitor service desk calls received to identify where we may need to provide more support with common queries and/or issues.</p>
Stakeholders Other	<p>Improvement Services SEEMiS Education HQ Staff School staff Parents</p>

Evidence	Details
	Pupils
Are there information gaps and, if so, what are these?	N/A

10. Consequences of analysis

What steps will you take in response to the findings of your analysis? Please select at least one of the following and provide a brief explanation.

a.	Continue development with no changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
b.	Continue development with minor alterations	✓	Schools will be reminded to closely monitor parental engagement with the system and ensure that anyone who has not signed up to access the system will still receive information via an alternative method.
c.	Continue development with major changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
d.	Discontinue development and consider alternatives (where relevant)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

a.	Continue development with no changes	□	
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How will the effect of the policy, function or strategy be monitored following implementation?

We will monitor usage statistics from sign ups, review logs from the support system on issues faced and conduct a survey once we have run a full academic year of the system being live. Timescale for survey May/June 2023. Parentsportal will be soft launched with staff who have children at the launch schools, this will be followed by launching by groups of school by cluster. Launching in this way will mean that we can take feedback on the user experience and adapt our approach for the next cluster to be brought online.

When is the policy, function or strategy due to be implemented?

February 2022

When will the policy, function or strategy be reviewed?

May 2023

What resources are available for the implementation of the policy, function or strategy? Have these resources changed?

Support from Improvement Services and other councils who have already implemented parentsportal.

11. Please use the space below to detail any other matters arising from the Equality Impact Assessment process, including what action could be taken to mitigate the impact of the policy, function or strategy.

Some parents may not have access to internet enabled devices and may feel disconnected if schools move to parentsportal particularly when issuing report cards. Our schools know their communities well and will be able to offer alternatives where they know there is an issue with access to internet.

Details of the Person(s) who completed the Assessment:		
Name:	Adam Stephenson	Ross Scullion
Position:	Education Office	SEEMiS Development Officer
Date:	02/02/2022	02/02/2022
Authorised by:		
Name:	Ruth Binks	
Position:	Corporate Director: Education, Communities and Organisational Development	
Date:	14/02/2022	

Thank you for your assistance with the completion of this task.

Please send a copy of the completed Template to Karen Barclay, Corporate Policy Officer at karen.barclay@inverclyde.gov.uk.

9 September 2021