



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE 17 NOVEMBER 2005

Review of Children in Need Services to children and families from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities

Background Information

This review is in line with Derby City Social Services commitment to continuously improve and develop the services it provides. The aim of the review is to accurately map levels of service provision to members of all communities and make recommendations for any developmental needs identified. This is in line with the council's commitment to providing fair and equal access to services.

The review started in January 2005. The Project Initiation Document and a brief report were presented to the Social Care & Youth Coordination group on 10 January 2005. A report was then presented to the Minority Ethnic Communities Advisory Committee (MECAC) on 3 February 2005.

Potential benefits of the Review

Research and experience shows that early intervention with children and families leads to more positive outcomes for children and promotes social inclusion. The approach taken by the review is further encouraging partnership working which in turn will aid more effective interventions with children and families.

There is no doubt that there is a lot of good practice in Derby. The review aims to enable agencies, individual staff, service users and community groups to share and disseminate this. In the process the review will aid the continuing development of a trusting and open relationship between agencies and members of the communities of Derby. Furthermore agencies will be in a better position to meet the requirements of the Race Relations Amendment Act.

Project Team

The project team is now established. The team consists of representatives from across children's social services and includes:

Mohammed Jakhara	Project Manager
Jenny Appleby	Project Manager - Neighborhood and Social Care Partnerships
Sarah McLoughlin	Service Manager A&CP
Katy Elliott	Workforce Learning & Development
Lincoln O'Conner	Workforce Learning & Development
Rod Jones	Children's Residential Services
Jotinder Atwal	Service Manager – Family Support
Chris Newton	Information Section

Resham Toor Reception Services
Rita Ballinger Fostering & Adoption

Disabled Children's Service. Due to current changes the service is facing and workload pressures a representative cannot be appointed. A commitment has been given to ongoing consultation.

Manjit Sahota CAMHS
Donna Brooks Sure Start
Alison Jackson Youth Offending Service

Definition of Children in Need (Children Act 1989)

a child shall be taken to be in need if-

(a) he is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services by a local authority under this part;

(b) his health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services; or

(c) he is disabled

“development” means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural; and

“health” means physical or mental health

National Research

National studies carried out by academic sources provide some useful insight into the issues that face communities and how they view and experience services. This aids agencies to question how services are delivered and shaped. Nationally there are more young people in the BME communities. Several cultures influence young people. Organisations and traditional families will not adequately meet the needs of these young people with out good communication between agencies and carers.

Central Government bodies indicate that while there is much variation between different Ethnic Communities overall Minority Ethnic Communities are more likely live in deprived areas and in unpopular and overcrowded housing. They are more likely to be poor, suffer unemployment, regardless of their age, sex, qualifications and place of residence. All imply a higher need for services (Social Services Performance Framework Indicators 2003/04).

Living in a deprived area adversely affects individuals' life chances over and above what would be predicted by their personal circumstances and characteristics. 70% of people from Minority Ethnic Groups live in multiple deprivation areas (Improving prospects of people living in areas of multiple deprivation – January 05 ODPM).

“Child Welfare Services from Minority Ethnic Families” research by Thoburn, Chand and Procter (2005) indicated a number of barriers to accessing formal support services including: Living in closer-knit communities could promote isolation as people are less likely to access formal services due to feelings of shame.

Discrimination faced by parents negatively impacts on children. Both communities can discriminate against children of Dual Heritage. Lack of or poor quality interpreting services reduce the ability to access appropriate services.

Baseline Analysis of Derby Social Services Service Provision

From the available statistics via the social services SWIFT data collection and management information system there is a mixed picture of service take up (see appendix A for service user profile). There is much variation between the different Ethnic Communities in Derby. The information suggests that families of Dual Heritage children are accessing services at a higher level than the average. National Research indicates that these families are amongst some of the most socially excluded groups. Hence the higher take up of services can be viewed positively and is encouraging.

The picture of service take up from other communities is mixed. The statistics suggest that some minority communities are accessing specialist services such as the disabled children's service. This reflects the higher rates of disability within minority Ethnic Communities in particular families of Asian Muslim origins. This would indicate that these services are meeting needs. Other services are accessed at a lower level than the average.

The Black African Community is over represented in children In Need services. This may be due to increased number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children or asylum seeking families that are accessing services.

While there is a lot of local knowledge and information about newer communities in Derby this is held in specialist pockets. This information needs to be collated and disseminated.

Next Steps

It is the aim of the project to develop an accurate understanding of the issues underlying the statistical findings to date. From this an action plan will be developed in order to provide continuous improvements to services provided by Social Services to all members of the community. The review has agreed to carry out a qualitative study of possible reasons. The review aims to engage staff and service users from within Social Services and external agencies.

To date the review has consulted with a range of professionals. On 16 May 2005 a consultation exercise was carried out Children's Services Social Services Managers. This highlighted a number of areas for further developments. A further consultation event for a range of statutory and voluntary agencies took place on 14 July 2005. This was attended by approximately 30 representatives from a range of voluntary and statutory agencies.

Both of these events highlighted some very good practice and areas for further development. Good practice includes commitment from social care workers and managers to provide good quality service, a range of service developments in specialist services such as the Disabled children's service have increased access. Services such as the Unit for Deaf people and the Leaving and After Care service have a lot of experience of working with children, young people and families from

Black and Minority Ethnic communities and provide good support for children, young people and their carers. The commitment from all staff to improve services needs to be recognised, as this is crucial to future service development.

Areas for development include further work on a range of communication issues including easier access to information in a range of formats, how interpreters are used, the need for a better understanding of the role and threshold criteria of social services. Cultural aspects including the stigma felt by potential service users, fears about the service based on stereo typical information provided by the media. A range of training needs has been identified. There is a further need to develop policies and procedures to reinforce the current good practice.

The project team has refined the consultation tools and has started a third series of consultations with service users, potential service users and carers. A range of consultations will take place with young people in the “Looked After” system and care leavers. Information has been made available from recent consultations with young people in community via the Integrated Children’s Service team. Further consultations are planned with foster carers and adoptive parents. The education welfare service has offered to carry out consultations with some of their service users.

The feedback from each of the consultations is being collated and analysed. This will go towards final report making recommendations.

MECAC can help the review by feeding in their own comments on the experiences and needs of children and families of our services.

Developments

The review is intended to be dynamic and implement some of the developments identified as it progresses as well as producing a final action plan. Some of the developments identified to date include:

- Training and development has been identified as one key issue that may help to meet some of the needs of staff and agencies. A sub project group has been set up to address this. Appropriate links have been made with the Corporate Training Development Advisor to assess whether he can provide any further support or advice.
- A good practice guide for practitioners on positively engaging and working with Children and Families from BME communities needs to be developed and will be delivered as a tool for practitioners based on current good practice.
- Language and effective communication continue to be a key to improving service take up and quality. The review is considering how these can be addressed.
- Policies and procedures need to be developed and reviewed to assess the impact of the findings of the review on existing documents and need to develop additional ones.

- The findings from the review are being shared with the Project Manager for the Common Assessment. This will be a significant way forward in addressing gaps in the information process and empowering organisations and individuals to make appropriate referrals.

Mohammed Jakhara
Project Manager
Social Services
Planning & Partnerships

Appendix A
Social Service Child Service User Profile

	Child Population Of Derby (2001 Census)	Children Receiving Service From SSD	% Figures
All Children	52339	1854	3.54
White British	41567	1409	3.38
White Irish	227	11	4.84
Other	551	50	9.07
Total White Children	42345	1470	3.47
White/Black Caribbean	1599	64	4.00
White/Black African	110	19	17.27
White/Asian	660	48	7.27
Other	281	30	10.67
Total Dual Heritage Total	2650	161	6.07
Indian	2318	17	0.73
Pakistani	3549	75	2.11
Bangladeshi	97	3	3.09
Other	295	8	2.71
Asian/Asian British Total	6259	103	1.64
Black Caribbean	576	23	3.9
Black African	88	13	14.7
Other	103	2	1.94
Chinese	180	3	1.66
Other	138	15	10.86
Black/Black British Total	767	38	4.95
Not Known/Declared		64	