



## Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report:** Andrew Jones,  
Director of Education and Skills and Joe Horobin,  
Director of Commissioning

**Report of:** *Meredith Dixon-Teasdale, Strategic Director of Children's Services*

**Report to:** *Education, Children and Family Policy Committee*

**Date of Decision:** *19<sup>th</sup> March 2024*

**Subject:** *Update on the development of a Children's Services Belonging Framework*

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2479				
Has appropriate consultation taken place? This report outlines the approach that will be taken to coproduce the Belonging Framework.	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<p><i>"The (<b>report/appendix</b>) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (<b>insert relevant paragraph number</b>) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i></p>				

### Purpose of Report:

This paper provides an update about our work to develop a Belonging Framework.

As a reminder, we are developing a Belonging Framework to drive change - so that everything we do is focussed on developing and deepening children and young people's sense of belonging.

Children and young people's views will be central to the development of our Belonging Framework and will be at the heart of all we do.

Belonging links to our strategic priorities in the **Sheffield City Council Plan 2024 – 2028, Together we get things done**. In particular to the first priority outcome:

*A place where all children belong and all young people can build a successful future.*

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee:

1. Acknowledges our update and endorses our next steps.
2. Continues to be proactive in the development of the belonging framework, including the proposed engagement plan.
3. Notes that the development of the framework continues to be an iterative process as we gain the views of children and young people in ways that work best for them, and review and refine the framework and next steps based on this.
4. Notes the continued intention for an ongoing conversation with the Committee about belonging, including a further update presented at the Committee meeting in Summer 2024.

**Background Papers:**

*(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)*

1. Draft Belonging Framework

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Kayleigh Inman
		Legal: Nadine Wynter
		Equalities & Consultation: Bashir Khan
		Climate: Kathryn Warrington
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	<b>SLB member who approved submission:</b>	<i>Meredith Dixon-Teasdale</i>
3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b>	<i>Cllr Dawn Dale</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> <i>Andrew Jones</i> <i>Joe Horobin</i>	<b>Job Title:</b> <i>Director of Education and Skills</i> <i>Director of Integrated Commissioning</i>
	<b>Date:</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	

## 1. PROPOSAL

1.1 We are currently speaking to stakeholders across the Council to start assimilating thinking about Belonging and how it applies to their services. We continue to liaise with colleagues in Community Youth Services to develop our approach to engagement with children and young people. We shared our initial draft ideas with the Youth Cabinet and their feedback has helped to inform our view and further develop the approach.

1.2 We have been reviewing what young residents have said relating to Belonging and a sense of self. From this, we are beginning to draw out possible themes and recurring issues.

1.3 We have started and will continue to work with colleagues across Education and Skills, Community Youth Services and Children and Families to hear their views and engage with children and young people about Belonging. We are also engaging with Learn Sheffield and schools as part of a wider engagement about the City Goals and Council's Corporate Strategy.

1.4 Our first piece of planned large-scale consultation with young residents will take place in Autumn 2024. We will support Community Youth Services to develop a Young Residents' Survey which will go out to all 11–18-year-olds in school in October 2024. The timing of the survey has been chosen to coincide with annual Democracy Week activities 2024. The survey will have some from a number of council areas including (but not limited to):

- Education
- Climate
- Transport
- Housing
- Access to community
- Being a young person
- Social care
- Infrastructure
- Health
- Access to your council/democracy

We will support Community Youth Services to work with colleagues in each of these areas to identify the questions they would like to ask. Community Youth Services will amend wording and draft the questions as necessary to ensure they are appropriate for engaging children and young people.

1.5 The Young Residents' Survey will be delivered in every secondary school in Sheffield. It will mirror the delivery model of the Sheffield Youth Cabinet elections and National Make Your Mark campaign. This saw

over 11,000 young people engage. The consultation period is to be finalised but it is anticipated that it will run for 4 weeks.

Our goal is to reach upwards of 10,000 children and young people with the Young Residents' Survey. The survey will be part of our pre-consultation work. It will be an initial large scale 'temperature check' from which we can then have more nuanced, exploratory discussions with young residents about language, assumptions and key themes.

- 1.6 A key objective of the survey is to provide us with high-level quantitative data from young residents about a range of areas that affect their lives. This methodology offers scoping questions which will then allow Community Youth Services to run in-depth workshops and creative consultation collaboratively with children and young people. It will help us break down the findings into themes, trends and specifics and to help draw out what belonging means.

Our overarching priority is for the voice of Sheffield young residents to be at the core of the development of the Belonging framework. This means committing to deep and meaningful participation – where we can challenge young people and they can challenge us, creating an authentic dialogue.

- 1.7 The timescale of the survey will allow us to engage more thoroughly with providers and others in the coming weeks. This will give us the opportunity to spend more time with a wide range of learning provision and care and support to get our questions right.
- 1.8 In the lead up to the survey, we will continue to work with schools to explore Belonging with them and seek their views. This will include school visits and events. We will also use other opportunities that present themselves to pick up conversations around Belonging. We are exploring whether and how Artificial Intelligence (AI) might help us to pick up the views of children and young people in a more efficient and effective way.
- 1.9 We continue to work with Professor Kathryn Riley, who is a leading international voice in the field of Belonging. She will work with schools and other services to raise further awareness, and generate discussion about, Belonging with them.

1.10 **Questions for Members to consider in approving the proposal:**

- i. Will the proposed approach enable the optimum number of children and young people to engage in the consultations?
- ii. How can Members beyond the Education, Children & Families Committee become aware of this approach and shape the Belonging Framework from within other committees and other activities undertaken by the Council?

- iii. Does the Committee feel that the planned approach of carefully building up consultations is appropriate and what is the Committee's view on engaging with organisations beyond the Council?

## **2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?**

- 2.1 The Belonging Framework and our approach to its development will feed into to a number of the ambitions within the Council's Corporate Plan. It will contribute to our aim of 'happy young people who have the start they need for the future they want'.

There is also a strong link with our aim of healthy lives and wellbeing for all.

## **3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?**

- 3.1 Ensuring that children and young people's voices drive this approach is absolutely vital. We have set out above how we have sought the views of young people and also our plans for consultation with young residents over the coming months. We will continue to work with schools and other stakeholders to explore Belonging with them and seek their views. We will also use other opportunities that present themselves to create opportunities for conversations around Belonging.

## **4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

### **4.1 Equality Implications**

- 4.1.1 Decisions need to consider the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

A full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and highlights with this framework we will be better able to engage with

children and young people, cutting across various characteristics. The engagement with a wide range of children and young people's voices later this year will help inform the strategy for Belonging moving forward.

#### 4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

#### 4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this update.

#### 4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 Whilst this strategy won't have significant climate impacts, the Education, Children and Families Committee Climate Statement that was considered by Strategy and Resources Committee in December included the Belonging Strategy as being a key piece of policy on this Committee's work programme that would have a positive impact to the sense of pride in the places children and young people call home and may in time lead to them going to school and socialising in their community, reducing the need for travel.

#### 4.4 Other Implications

4.4.1 There are no other implications to consider

### **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5.1 The alternative options are to consult young residents on a smaller scale but more quickly or to use feedback we have already received and not seek any more.

5.2 We do not recommend either of these approaches given feedback from the Youth Cabinet which has informed our approach and how vital it is to the development of a meaningful Belonging Framework that we carry out authentic consultation that reflects a wide range of children and young people's views. The volume of consultation that we anticipate will be achieved by the Young Residents' Survey, will give us a much wider reach and in doing so provide feedback that reflects the personality and diversity of the city.

5.3 When children and young people feel a sense of belonging and sense of pride in their families, their peers, and their communities, they can be emotionally strong, self-assured, and able to deal with challenges and difficulties. This creates an important foundation for their learning and development. Positive messages about their families, backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, and languages help children and young people to develop pride in who they are. These messages also give them

confidence to voice their views and opinions, to make choices, and to help shape their own learning, development and future.

## **6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 A Belonging Framework will ensure that everything we do is focussed on developing or deepening children and young people's sense of belonging. It will be designed so that other parts of the Council and other organisations can review and "attach" their contribution to belonging to the framework.
- 6.2 Our approach to engagement and plans for consultation will mean that we can carry out authentic consultation with children and young people. It will also ensure that we can fully explore Belonging with other stakeholders, listening to their views and allowing us to develop other opportunities for engagement as they present themselves.
- 6.3 Outcomes for the Belonging Framework will have a qualitative and quantitative focus. They will be developed iteratively through the process of co-production. These outcomes may relate to individual experience, happiness, fulfilment, purpose, stability and will relate back to our vision, however we will be led by what children and young people tell us.

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