



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2026



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Aim: develop and implement actions that are based on the EDI staff survey and subsequent EDI Action for Change [Pyramid](#) to drive Achieving for Children's (AfC's) EDI agenda forward.

Project leads or project managers [Lucy Kourpas and Laurie Davidson](#)

Timeframe [September 2024 to August 2026](#)

Our values

Achieving for Children has published a [strategic plan](#) for 2024-2029, which sets out our values (how we interact with each other), our principles (how we approach and plan our work) and our strategic priorities (themes for what we'll do) for the next five years.

Our organisational values of 'trust, empower and respect', aim to express our shared understanding of what we believe are our most important ways of working, how we aim to behave and what we aspire to be as an organisation. Our values should be present in everything we do.



We will **RESPECT** similarities and differences and use our diversity to shape inclusive services for children and young people



We will **EMPOWER** each other, and the young people we work with, to be our authentic selves everyday



We will work together to build an organisation built on **TRUST** that provides the environment and opportunity for all to thrive



AFC values
How we work
Strategic priorities
Equality objectives

Our equality objectives

Public authorities are legally required to set at least one equality objective every four years to help focus attention on priority equality issues. Achieving for Children (AfC), acting for children's services on behalf of Kingston, Richmond, and Windsor and Maidenhead councils, is proposing five equality objectives to help drive equality and inclusion across all areas of the organisation's work, as well as demonstrating compliance with the public sector equality duty.

The proposed equality objectives, set out below, are separated into internal (workforce) and external. The objectives have been developed by drawing on the organisation's current policies, annual equalities report, staff survey feedback and equalities data.

Internal

Mission statement

All staff at Achieving for Children will have an equal opportunity to thrive and use their diverse experiences to enrich the work we do with children, young people and families.

Objective 1: To strengthen organisational ownership of the equality, diversity and inclusion programme.

Objective 2: To develop a workforce that is committed to investing in equality, diversity and inclusion issues, by creating and promoting training and development opportunities and resources in AfC.

Objective 3: To provide all staff an equal opportunity to thrive by fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce and creating avenues for personal and professional growth for underrepresented staff.

External

Mission statement

Achieving for Children will understand and respect the unique backgrounds and needs of our children and young people and families to tailor our support to their individual needs.

Objective 1: To strengthen community engagement and data collection to ensure all children and young people have what they need to thrive.

Objective 2: Champion the recognition of care experienced as a protected characteristic within the framework of equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).

Plan overview

The AfC Equality and Diversity Board was established in 2021. The EDI Board's purpose is to drive AfC's equity and diversity change agenda, in line with our organisational values. The board will help implement our action plan based on the 'Equality and diversity action for change strategy' and pyramid which has been designed to promote, improve and sustain equity, diversity and inclusion across AfC as well as the children, young people and families that we work with.

This action plan builds on the previous year's action plan, as well as a revised strategy and updated equity objectives. The action plan should be read in conjunction with the strategy, as well as the AfC EDI Policy, which sets out the overall EDI aims and objectives for the organisation.

The EDI Board includes officers from our two operational areas and Business Services, including senior management representatives. The purpose of the EDI Board is to lead cultural change across AfC so that as an organisation we embrace and celebrate diversity. Its aim is to support staff to understand differences and behave respectfully to each other so that people want to work and stay working in the company, and that AfC can respond to the different needs of service users.

The full Terms of Reference of the EDI Board

Pyramid

This document sets out the EDI Board's third action plan, which has been extended to a 24 month plan, to give the organisation sufficient time to put these actions into place. Its purpose is to develop and implement actions to drive AfC's EDI agenda forward.

The focus of this 24 month action plan will be continuing to improve EDI for AfC's workforce, and to look at improving EDI for AfC's children and families. Progress will be monitored and key activities will be reviewed at the quarterly EDI Board meetings, as well as by the EDI lead on an ongoing basis.

Members of the EDI Board

RBK: Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames LBR: London Borough of Richmond upon Thames RBWM: Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Name	Role on EDI Board	Job title	Directorate
Lucy Kourpas	Chair of EDI Board and Company Leadership Representative	Chief Operating and Finance Officer	Business Services
Vacant	Vice Chair of EDI Board	Strategic EDI Lead	Business Services
Janice Riley	Clerk to the EDI Board	Executive Support Officer	RBK, LBR Operations
Clare Meadows	Learning and Development HR Lead, Advocacy and Support	Head of Learning and Development and Organisational Development	Business Services
Edwina Gregory-Johnson	Strategy and Programme Management Lead, Advocacy and Support	Head of Strategy and Programmes	Business Services
Laurie Davidson	Strategy and Programme Management Lead, Advocacy and Support	Strategic Project Lead	Business Services
Javade Khan	Communications Lead, Advocacy and Support	Head of Communications and Marketing	Business Services
Julie Hawdio	Data Lead, Advocacy and Support	Head of Intelligence and Improvement	Business Services
Sarah Moran	Leadership Advocate	Deputy Director Children's Social Care and Early Help	RBWM Operations
Shungu Chigocha	Leadership Advocate	Associate Director Practice Improvement and Quality Assurance	RBWM Operations
Sarah Scott	Advocacy and Support	Early Help Advisory Manager	RBWM Operations
Jabed Hussain	Leadership Advocate	Associate Director of Business Efficiency and Digital	RBK, LBR Operations
Henry Kilpin	Leadership Advocate	Associate Director for School Place Planning	RBK, LBR Operations
Roberta Evans	Leadership Advocate	Associate Director Family and Adolescents	RBK, LBR Operations
Rosemary Hafeez	Leadership Advocate	Associate Director School Standards and Performance	RBK, LBR Operations
Farah Ahmad	Children, Young People and Families Advocacy	SEND Parent Engagement Officer	RBK, LBR Operations
Kathryn Kashyap	Children, Young People and Families Advocacy	School Improvement Adviser	RBK, LBR Operations
Melody Chiramba	Advocacy and Support	AfC Fostering Panel Adviser	RBK, LBR RBWM Operations
Vacant	AfC Board Representative	Board Director	AfC Board

EDI action plan - internal

'All staff at Achieving for Children will have an equal opportunity to thrive and use their diverse experiences to enrich the work we do with children, young people and families'

Objective one: To strengthen organisational ownership of the equality, diversity and inclusion programme

Reference	Identified tasks	Deadline	Lead	RAG rating	Outcome
Governance and communication					
1.1	To strengthen organisational ownership of the equality, diversity and inclusion programme				
1.1.1	Launch series of listen and learn activities to inform the next iteration of the EDI Plan and identify focus areas for the year	December 2024	Lucy Kourpas, Ian Dodds, Lin Ferguson		
1.1.2	Review EDI Board membership to ensure it has adequate representation from AfCs three directorates Review the impact of the EDI lead role and take steps to appoint a new vice chair	December 2025	Lucy Kourpas		
1.1.3	Establish an Ops 2 sub group that will link in with the EDI Board	June 2024	Sarah Moran, Shungu Chigocha		
1.1.4	Launch of new plan and awareness raising of the strategy and activity	October 2024	Lucy Kourpas, Jav Khan		
1.1.5	Review EDI Policy	November 2024	Lucy Kourpas, Laurie Davidso		

Objective two: To develop a workforce that is committed to investing in tackling equality, diversity and inclusion issues, by creating and promoting training and development opportunities and resources in AfC

Reference	Identified tasks	Deadline	Lead	RAG rating	Outcome
EDI training					
2.1	Ongoing review of general EDI training and development offer				
2.1.1	Review of what is covered on EDI within induction and managers' induction	December 2025	Lydia Hughes		
2.1.2	Amend professional development scheme (PDS) template to include an EDI goal for the year	April 2025	Charli Robson		
2.1.3	Review of Leadership Centre of Excellence (LCOE) provision and annual management training offer	December 2025	Gill Goouch		
2.1.4	Commission a leadership development session for AfC senior leaders (AD and above)	October 2024	Lucy Kourpas		
Raising awareness					
2.2	Focus on supporting staff with disabilities and neurodivergence				
2.2.1	Review of existing resources, training and guidance to support staff with disabilities and neurodivergence to identify gaps	November 2024	Clare Meadows, Jo Steer, Charli Robson		
2.2.2	Create action plan based on review - actions to be added to this plan	November 2024	Clare Meadows, Laurie Davidson		
2.2.3	Include discussions and advice on how to support staff and colleagues in EDI forums, recruitment guidance and the training offer	December 2025	Regina Bowler, Mez Ladva		

2.3	Highlighting existing and new guidance and policies for all staff				
2.3.1	Update of supporting trans employees guidance and publish on Connect	September 2024	Laurie Davidson		
2.3.2	Promote relevant policies and guidance during relevant awareness months, weeks, days etc.	Ongoing	Via Calendar of Events meeting		
2.3.3	Draft and launch AfCs first anti-racism strategy	October 2024	Lucy Kourpas, Laurie Davidson		
2.4	Re-establish full programme of forums, AfC Employee Networks (AENs) and annual communications calendar events to raise awareness				
2.4.1	Restart EDI forums and embed into business as usual (every other month initially), ensuring discussions and information is published on Connect to support awareness. Where needed develop action plans	June 2024	Jabed Hussain, Javade Khan		
2.4.2	Review of AENs: what has supported successful ones, and how best to support development of stalled and new groups. Review whether to have joint forums with the local authorities Further development of AENs, depending on review outcomes - actions to be added	June 2024	Jabed Hussain, Roberta Evans		
2.4.3	Set up a calendar of events' working group. Calendar of EDI communications to be created and shared with AfC - including blogs from Leadership Team, EDI Board Members	January 2025	Claudia Cowey		

Objective 3: To provide all staff an equal opportunity to thrive through fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce and creating avenues for personal and professional growth for underrepresented staff

Reference	Identified tasks	Deadline	Lead	RAG rating	Outcome
Recruitment, retention and development					
3.1	Ongoing review of general EDI training and development offer				
3.1.1	Agree on how to run diverse panels in practice. Guidance provided to the workforce on how to effectively manage a diverse recruitment panel	April 2025	Regina Bowler, Mez Ladv		
3.1.2	Add section in the recruitment Policy to encourage diverse panels	December 2024	Regina Bowler, Mez Ladv		
3.1.3	Review exit interview questions to ensure that EDI is effectively covered. Share anonymised learning twice a year with the EDI Board	April 2025	Gill Gooouch		
3.1.4	Define anonymous recruitment and pilot in select teams in Ops 2	December 2024	Sandeep Bajwa,		
3.1.5	Review and amendment of wording in advertisements - such as highlighting that 'we are committed to diverse panels'	September 2024	Shungu Chigocha		
3.2	Develop diverse succession planning				
2.2.1	Development of inclusive succession planning guidance for managers	April 2025	Lucy Kourpas		
2.2.2	Development and roll out of reverse mentoring across the wider organisation, based on data from the pilot scheme	December 2025	Jabed Hussain		
2.2.3	Progress of protected groups through the organisational hierarchy is monitored	Ongoing	Gill Gooouch		

Recruitment, retention and development					
3.3	Understanding the views of our workforce				
3.3.1	Development of inclusive succession planning guidance for managers	April 2025	Lucy Kourpas		
3.3.2	Development and roll out of reverse mentoring across the wider organisation, based on data from the pilot scheme	December 2025	Jabed Hussain		
3.4	Develop a more data driven approach to the EDI action plan and tracking outcomes				
3.4.1	Improve quality of data held on AfC staff demographics	December 2024	Gill Goouch		
3.4.2	Establish what workforce metrics are collected within AfC, and agree which of these provide useful tracking for EDI outcomes within the plan	December 2024	Gill Goouch		
3.4.3	Establish and EDI dashboard for reporting to EDI Board, Leadership team and wider organisation	June 2025	Lucy Kourpas, Gill Goouch		
3.5	Feed back to workforce and In full (ECLT) on progress relating to EDI				
3.5.1	Publish a 'You Said, We Did' document, covering the historical work of the EDI Board	September 2024	Laurie Davidson, Henry Kilpin		

Project action plan - external

'Achieving for Children will understand and respect the unique backgrounds and needs of our children and young people and families to tailor our support to their individual needs'

Objective one: To strengthen community engagement and data collection to ensure all children and young people have what they need to thrive

Reference	Identified tasks	Deadline	Lead	RAG rating	Outcome
Understanding and working with your communities					
1.1	Collecting and sharing information				
1.1.1	Map our current services and review their effectiveness in tailoring to those with protected characteristics		Strategic EDI Lead, Laurie Davidson		
1.1.2	Map out community organisations - what they do, how we work with them and who works with them	December 2024	Strategic EDI Lead, Laurie Davidson		
1.1.3	Review whether our current communication protocols with community organisations and service users are effective in tailoring to those with protected characteristics	December 2025	Javade Khan		
Responsive services and customer care					
2.2	Develop diverse succession planning				
2.2.1	Review of the procurement and commissioning processes to ensure they take into account of the diverse needs of clients, and that providers understand the requirements of the public sector Equality Duty	December 2024	Lucy Roberts		We are currently embedding these principles into a clear commissioning process as well as contract monitoring training.
2.2.2	Monitoring requirements are built into contracts to ensure equity issues are addressed.	December 2025	Lucy Roberts		

Objective one: Champion the recognition of the care experienced as a protected characteristic within the framework of equality, diversity, and inclusion

Reference	Identified tasks	Deadline	Lead	RAG rating	Outcome
Understanding and working with your communities					
1.1	Collecting and sharing information				
1.1.1	Map our current services and review their effectiveness in tailoring to those with protected characteristics		Strategic EDI Lead, Laurie Davidson		
1.1.2	Map out community organisations - what they do, how we work with them and who works with them	December 2024	Strategic EDI Lead, Laurie Davidson		
1.1.3	Review whether our current communication protocols with community organisations and service users are effective in tailoring to those with protected characteristics	December 2025	Javade Khan		
Responsive services and customer care					
1.2	Develop diverse succession planning				
1.2.1	Review of the procurement and commissioning processes to ensure they take into account of the diverse needs of clients, and that providers understand the requirements of the public sector Equality Duty	December 2024	Lucy Roberts		We are currently embedding these principles into a clear commissioning process as well as contract monitoring training.
1.2.2	Monitoring requirements are built into contracts to ensure equity issues are addressed.	December 2025	Lucy Roberts		

Objective two: Champion the recognition of the care experienced as a protected characteristic within the framework of equality, diversity, and inclusion

Reference	Identified tasks	Deadline	Lead	RAG rating	Outcome
Implementation of care experience to be treated as a protected characteristic					
2.1	Collecting and sharing information				
2.1.1	Review of equality impact assessment to incorporate care experienced as a protected characteristic	January 2025	Edwina Gregory-Johnson		
2.1.2	Raise awareness of AfC and LA vacancies to care leavers	December 2025	Regina Bowler, Mez Ladvá		
2.1.3	Encourage partners and other organisations to consider care experience as a protected characteristic including when recruiting	December 2025	Edwina Gregory-Johnson		

Risks

Identified risks	Potential solutions	Likelihood (high, medium, low)
Such as lack of funding	Apply for grant	Medium
EDI Board members balancing full time roles and responsibilities with EDI responsibilities	Laurie to support project management to keep momentum going and enable EDI Board to get the action plan done EDI Board members to ensure they make time in their week for EDI work, by scheduling time in their calendars Dedicated part time EDI lead to support dedicated weekly time for EDI activity	High
Difficulty setting up realistic outcomes to ensure success of project	Have an open discussion about this with the EDI Board to set expectations. Reflect this in the action plan- potentially identify longer-term goals	Medium
Lack of understanding that EDI work is a long process as it's associated with culture change.	Have an open discussion about this with the EDI Board to set expectations. Reflect this in the action plan- potentially identify longer-term goals	Low
Disclosures from staff regarding EDI, which come up in conversations (one-to-one, EDI forums, AfC employee networks), are not escalated appropriately	Include escalation process in Terms of Reference for all groups: one-to-one, EDI Forums, AfC Employee Networks	Medium
Disclosures from staff regarding EDI, which come up in conversations (one-to-one, EDI forums, AfC employee networks), are triggering for other staff members	Research best practice on how to create a safe space for conversations about EDI. Include guidance in Terms of Reference for all groups: one-to-one, EDI forums, AfC employee networks	Medium
Insufficient leadership engagement in the EDI programme for change to be successful	Lucy Kourpas sits on the EDI Board and the EDI Board Chair to report quarterly into CLT. EDI topics to form part of the Leadership Centre of Excellence Programme. Leadership representation from AD level on AfC employee networks, etc	Low
Insufficient engagement from the wider organisation to support meaningful cultural and organisational level change	Development of open and transparent communications about the work of the EDI Board. Publication of engaging communications calendar of events and seeking staff feedback regarding how they want to engage and shape the organisation	Medium
Insufficient staff representation and inclusion in AfC's EDI work	HR to go through EDI staff survey and make sure questions are effective in ensuring we capture staff's voices. Add in a regular agenda point (check in) to discuss representation at EDI Board	Medium

For some projects, an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) and/or a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) may be required. Please read the guidance linked to see if your project meets the criteria.

Link: [Equalities Impact template and guidance](#)

For any queries relating to EIAs, contact the Strategy and Transformation Team (projects@achievingforchildren.org.uk)

Link: [Data Protection Impact Assessment guidance](#)

For any queries relating to DPIAs, contact AfC's data protection officer (samukele.matshakayile-ndlovu@achievingforchildren.org.uk)

Completed by: **Laurie Davidson**

Date completed **3 October 2024**