



Annual Equalities Summary Report

2019/20



**achieving
for children**

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Achieving for Children is a community interest company created by the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames in 2014 to provide their children's services. In August 2017, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead became a co-owner of Achieving for Children, and the company now delivers children's services across all three boroughs.

We produce an equalities report each year to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This report sets out:

- what we know about equality and diversity in relation to the children, young people and families we support and our workforce, and what it tells us
- what we have achieved during 2019/20
- our plans for the next 12 months

The PSED came into force on 5 April 2011 with the aim of embedding equality considerations into the everyday work of public bodies to enable them to tackle inequality and discrimination more effectively. The PSED has three general duties that public bodies must adhere to.

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

WHAT IS OUR APPROACH TO EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY?

Achieving for Children's approach to managing equality and diversity is set out in an equality and diversity policy which has been agreed by the Company Leadership Team. An equality and diversity framework has been put in place to sit alongside the policy, and the key elements of the framework can be found below.

Responsibility for equality and diversity

While the Achieving for Children Board and Company Leadership Team have ultimate responsibility for equality and diversity, on an operational basis, the Chief Operating Officer takes the lead in this area. Support is provided by the Achieving for Children Equalities Lead, who is an officer in the Strategy and Programmes Team. Other members of the Strategy and Programmes Team also provide support when required.

Equality impact assessments

Achieving for Children requires managers to complete equality impact assessments (EIAs) to demonstrate that we are considering the equality implications of the decisions we are making. Actions from EIAs are monitored through team plans by service managers.

An EIA schedule will be compiled annually as part of the business planning process. It will include key projects from the Achieving for Children Business Plan (the completion of an EIA is mandatory for all key projects) and any adhoc areas of work that require an assessment of the equality implications. All potential EIAs will be screened to identify if a full assessment is needed (further details set out below). Details of EIAs are published on our website: <https://www.achievingforchildren.org.uk/equality-diversity-documents/>

Challenge to our approach to equality and diversity

An equality and inclusion forum was established in Achieving for Children across both operational areas in 2019 (previously known as the equality and diversity forum). The forum includes officers from operations and business services including senior management representatives. The purpose of the forum is to lead cultural change across Achieving for Children 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 we can respond to the different needs of service users.

A number of staff forums are in the process of being established to represent the views of specific groups within the workforce. This includes BAME, disability and LGBTQ+. These groups will feed into the equality and inclusion forum.

In addition, the equalities lead will attend equality and diversity meetings within each council as required. Achieving for Children will also attend the Richmond External Stakeholders Scrutiny Group (ESSG) twice a year to receive external challenge. ESSG is an independent equalities group made up of a range of people from across the protected characteristic groups and from the community and voluntary sector. It also includes four local residents who act as critical friends and who have professional backgrounds in the public sector and considerable experience of equality and diversity.

Reporting and monitoring

Achieving for Children will produce an annual equalities summary report in the summer of each year in keeping with the business planning cycle which will enable us to demonstrate how we are meeting the PSED. Other equality reports are produced as and when requested by the owning councils.



OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Although the majority of our work to address the issues raised by COVID-19 has taken place during 2020/21, as the pandemic originated towards the end of 2019/20, it is appropriate to set out our initial response in this report, given the impact across the protected characteristic groups, particularly for those with disabilities or those from a Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic (BAME) background.

At the end of February 2020, we began preparations for the potential escalation of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. This included developing plans and steps with our owning councils to minimise disruption to the services we provide for children and young people in our local communities and to support and consider the needs of our workforce. We embraced technology to enable us to maintain our critical service offer. This has included over 75% of our employees working from home, hosting children's centre sessions on Facebook, delivering training virtually and via webinars, and communicating with our care leavers via regular video calls, which have proved extremely popular.

Our staff have responded to the situation with creativity and innovation that has ensured we have been able to continue to deliver our services, particularly to those that we support that could be considered vulnerable. Some of the best practice examples follow.

- Engaging with children and young people with autism via video calls. This has been extremely positive as for some children and young people with autism, the removal of a physical interaction has helped and has alleviated some concerns around being touched or having somebody in their space. Moving forward virtual calls may be a good way of progressing care plans with children and young people who prefer to communicate their views and wishes in this way.
- The Educational Service for Sensory Impairment (ESSI) has organised teacher-led online sessions and have used WhatsApp videos made by parents for monitoring, weekly phone calls, SMS exchanges, feedback and activities recommended by Teacher of the Deaf.
- Children's social care has created kit bags for children to have at home. These are bespoke for each age group and contain a range of resources for them to use. This allows the social workers to plan interventions with what is available to children which makes the interaction creative and special.
- The Safeguarding Team used video-calls and virtual ways of communicating such as jam boards. This has worked well for adolescents as they are comfortable with technology and the team will look to use this going forward to improve engagement with the children and young people they are supporting.
- All child protection conferences and looked after reviews have been held virtually and within timescales. This has resulted in better multi-agency attendance, better information sharing, and improved engagement from children, young people and families.

COVID-19 has required a shift in our approach and we have responded well. As the pandemic eases, we will begin to look at what recovery looks like and build resilience. We have already begun to carefully think through how we can safely manage a return to full service delivery for our workforce and our children, young people and families over the coming months.

This approach is our best effort, having collated the feedback from managers and staff, and will include lessons learnt. Our position will no doubt change and flex in line with government guidelines. It may also be that each operational area will take a localised approach to timeframes for implementation. However we remain confident we can continue to deliver high quality services for the children, young people and families we support.

To better understand the impact of COVID-19 on our staff and the children, young people and families we support we have also developed a draft equality impact assessment which will be published later in 2020/21.



OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Along with so many others here in the UK and across the globe, all of us at Achieving for Children have been deeply affected by the tragic death of George Floyd. Although his death took place during 2020/21, as with COVID-19, we feel it appropriate to address the impact in this report.

We recognise that discrimination has a destructive impact on many people's lives. The recent events have highlighted the continued racial disparity, structural inequalities and systemic injustices experienced by many BAME communities across the world, and given us all the opportunity to reflect on ourselves, our society and our organisation.

The powerful and collective response of the Black Lives Matter movement and the feedback we are seeking from colleagues within Achieving for Children will help us to better understand where we are as an organisation and where we would like to be. A plan will be developed over the coming months, and as an organisation we are committed to taking action to address any areas of concern within Achieving for Children and for the children, young people and families we support. We will report on the impact of this work as part of our business plan reporting arrangements.

This work is being led by our equality and inclusion forum. To start the conversation, we have arranged virtual drop in sessions with our BAME staff, and our staff from other protected characteristic groups, to better understand their experiences, both in Achieving for

WHAT DO WE KNOW AND WHAT DOES IT TELL US?

Our workforce

In 2019/20, we employed 1,375 employees in total, including those in full-time, part-time and casual roles (992 full time equivalent employees). Our employees come from a broad range of professional disciplines including social work, teaching, health services and public sector management. We work hard to ensure that our workforce represents the diversity of the children and young people we work with. We are also committed to the recruitment, training, development and promotion of people with disabilities. In 2019/20, of those who declared their protected characteristics:

The majority of employees are aged between 30 and 50:

25.5% are aged 50 to 59

25.1% are aged 30 to 39

22.6% are aged 40 to 49

15.5% are aged 20 to 29

10.1% are aged 60 and over

1.4% are aged 16 to 19

Our workforce age profile aligns nationally: a report by the DfE (Children and Family Social Work Workforce in England) showed that 30.0% of children and family social workers are aged 30 to 39. Locally, our workforce is largely representative of the general population: in Kingston, those aged 30 to 44 make up 24.0% of the population, in Richmond, those aged 30 to 44 make up 23.9% of the population, and in Windsor and Maidenhead, those aged 30 to 44 make up 22.1% of the population. We have a number of apprenticeships and traineeships in place across the organisation to attract young people to work for Achieving for Children so we can increase the number of employees amongst the lower age brackets.

5.3% of our employees reported that they had a disability

Although there are no directly comparable statistics available across the local government workforce, it is thought that 19.0% of working age adults have a disability (Scope: Disability Facts and Figures). This suggests as an organisation we are not sufficiently representative of those with a disability. It should be noted however, not all employees have stated their disability status in the three boroughs, so the actual figure may be higher. More work is required to encourage all employees to share this information by clarifying why we need it and how we will use it.

As an employer we also need to ensure that we make reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities and enable them to access flexible working arrangements as necessary. This is illustrated by a 2016 report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (Being disabled in Britain - a journey less equal) that stated that disabled people are less likely to be in work than those with no disabilities.

82.5% of our employees are female

The percentage of our workforce who are female is not representative of the general population, as national and local data indicates a male/female gender split which is approximately 50/50. However, this is in line with the workforce across local government and children's social care. A 2017 report by the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU), 'Does local government work for women', found that 78.0% of local government officers are female. Similarly, a Department for Education report in 2018, 'Children and Family Social Work Workforce in England', found that 85.0% of children and family social workers are female. The high number of females amongst the workforce has an impact: for example, in terms of maternity leave and women being more likely to have caring responsibilities. As an organisation we need to ensure we support this by enabling staff to have flexible working arrangements which allow them to remain in work.

49.0% of our employees are married or in a civil partnership
27.5% are single
11.4% have a partner

The figures relating to relationship status largely reflects local data. In Kingston, 45.3% are married or in a civil partnership, 29.7% are single and 7.2% are separated or divorced. In Richmond, 47.4% are married or in a civil partnership, 36.7% are single and 10.1% are separated or divorced. And in Windsor and Maidenhead 52.7% of the population are married or in a civil partnership, 30.1% are single and 10.5% are separated or divorced. More work is required to increase the number of respondents so the figure for 'not known' reduces.

21.9% of our employees are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background

Our workforce has a slightly higher BAME representation than the general population in Richmond (15.9%), but is less representative than the general population in Kingston (31%) and Windsor and Maidenhead (22.5%). As our workforce is not fully representative of the local communities, we need to ensure they are trained and equipped to be knowledgeable and informed about the different ethnic backgrounds of the children, young people and families that we support.

The largest faith group within our workforce is Christian (53.8%)
Employees with no faith or religion or who did not declare their religion account for 35.7% of the workforce

The religious status of our workforce is reflected locally as in Kingston 52.9% are Christian followed by those with no religion (25.7%). In Richmond 55.3% are Christian, followed by those with no religion (28.4%), and in Windsor and Maidenhead, 62.3% of the population stated they were Christian, followed by those with no religion (21.7%). More work is required to ensure that all employees share this information by clarifying why we need it and how we will use it.

3.9% of our employees are gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or other

Local statistics on sexual orientation are not available. Nationally however, in 2016, a report from the Office of National Statistics suggested that 2.0% of the UK population aged over 16 are lesbian, gay or bisexual. This would suggest our workforce is largely representative. However, more work is required to encourage employees to respond and provide information about their sexuality so we can have a more accurate picture.

83.5% of our employees who earn over £50,000 are female

14.5% of these employees are BAME

2.7% of these employees have a disability

Directly comparable information is not available, however a Local Government Association report (Local Government Workforce Survey 2016/17, published June 2018) showed that across all local authorities, 48.8% of the top 5% of earners were female, 3.7% were from a BAME background, and 2.5% had a disability. The table below shows that compared to the workforce as a whole, we are performing well in terms of percentage of women and BAME employees in the organisation, but further work is needed to increase the percentage of employees with a disability to make it more representative of the workforce as a whole.

	Female	BAME	Disabled
Employees earning over £50,000	82.1%	11.3%	4.5%
Overall AfC workforce	83.5%	14.5%	2.7%

Gender pay gap

Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, public sector employers with 250 or more employees are required to publish a snapshot of their workforce data.

Our data, which has been published on the government's website, shows that:

81.3% of our workforce are women (it is worth noting that this figure differs slightly from the information reported above as the time period that it relates to is not aligned due to different reporting timescales)

- 80.0% of the top quartile of earners are women
- the average hourly pay for women is 2.1% lower than for men
- the median hourly pay for women is 2.3% lower than for men

We compare favourably to local government as a whole. The Local Government Association has reported that the median gender pay gap across all local authorities in 2019 is 4.0% (compared to 2.6% in Achieving for Children) and women make up 55.3% of the top quartile of earners (compared to 79.0% in Achieving for Children).

OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Achieving for Children collects and collates a range of information about the children and young people that we work with and support. This includes equalities information which is reported to Kingston, Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead councils as part of our contract arrangements and to the corporate parenting groups in all three boroughs.

To provide context to our work and to show an understanding of the children and young people we work with, we have included a range of equalities data relating to groups such as children subject to a child protection plan, looked-after children and the school population. This information is used by services to ensure that we are effectively meeting the differing needs of our children and young people. This allows us to highlight any key issues or trends as they arise and take action to address them.

The data included below comes from a range of sources including: Children's Social Care Performance Reporting - March 2020, the Kingston and Richmond SEND Dataset - March 2020, the Kingston Children and Young People's Needs Assessment - September 2017, the Richmond Children and Young People's Needs Assessment - 2019, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Self-Evaluation - January 2018, Achieving for Children Annual Equalities Report 2018/19, Schools Spring Census - 2020.

We have combined the data across the Kingston, Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead to provide a picture across the whole of Achieving for Children.

General information about our children and young people

126,779
children and young people
aged 0 to 19 years old



35.4% of
children and young
people are BAME
(including White Other)



The gender breakdown of
males and females aged
0 to 19 is almost **50/50**
in all boroughs

10.9%
of children
in poverty

2.9% of young people
not in education, employment
or training (or not known)

3,590 children and young people with an
education, health and care plan

Children in need (CiN)

(including those aged 18+ receiving a leaving care service)

2,584

children and young people supported by children's social care



46.3% of CiN are BAME (including White Other)



15 to 19

The most common age group amongst the CiN cohort is 15 to 19 years old

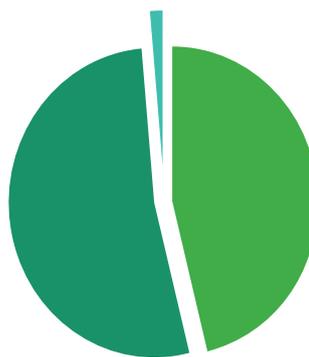
14.0% of CiN who are supported have an EHCP

Children subject to a child protection plan (CPP)

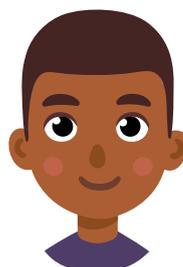


5 to 9

The most common age group for children subject to a CPP is 5 to 9 years old

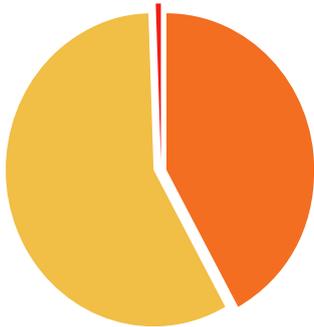


Of the children subject to a CPP, **46.3%** are female and **52.5%** are male (**1.2%** unborn)



52.4% of children subject to a CPP are BAME (including White Other)

Children looked after



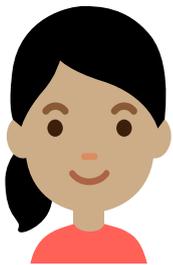
Of the CLA cohort, **42.1%** are female and **57.6%** are male (for **0.3%** gender is indeterminate)



The most common age group for CLA is **16 years old plus**



17.0% of CLA have a disability (with an EHCP)



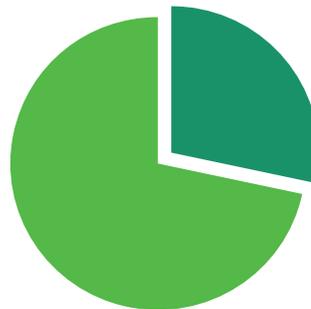
58.0% of CLA are BAME (including White Other)

Children and young people with SEND



12 to 14

The most common age group for children and young people with SEND is 12 to 14 years old



Of those with SEND, **28.4%** are female and **71.6%** are male



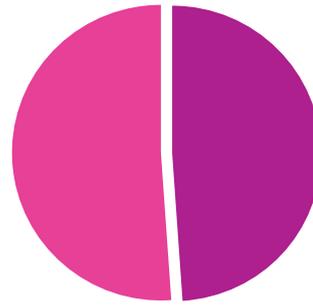
2.5% of children and young people have a disability (with an EHCP)

School population

77,713
pupils



196
schools
(including
independent)



Of all pupils,
49.1% are
female and
50.9% are male

13.7% of pupils have
a disability (with an EHCP or
receiving SEN support)



45.0% of
pupils are BAME
(including White
Other)

9.2% of pupils are
eligible for Free School Meals

Intersectionality

Our work over the last 12 months, particularly through the completion of equality assessments, has highlighted some areas of intersectionality, where children and young people from more than one protected characteristic group are impacted or may be affected disproportionately. This is highlighted in the following information.

Children and young people in care	<p>Research and data shows that nationally and locally, children and young people in care are more likely to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be male• be of secondary school age• have a disability• be from a BAME background
Children and young people with SEND	<p>National data shows that young people with SEND are more likely to be male than female.</p> <p>There is a complex relationship between ethnicity and SEND with many other variables such as socio-economic status, language and cultural barriers influencing children's outcomes. At an aggregate level, the national school census shows that black pupils are slightly more likely to have EHCPs and Asian pupils are slightly less likely, on average. However, there is more variation within some of these ethnic groups than between them, so meaningful conclusions cannot be drawn at this aggregate level.</p>
Foster carers	<p>Foster carers are more likely to be in the middle-aged to older age bracket (45 years old +) and female.</p>
Young offenders	<p>Research and data nationally show there are a number of specific characteristics of the young people who may be involved with the YOS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• aged 16 to 17• more likely to have SEND than the general population• male• more likely to be from a BAME background than the general population• more likely to have been a child in need, looked after child or on a child protection plan than the general population• more likely to have substance misuse issues than the general population• more likely to be NEET than the general 0 to 19 population.

Available local data shows that the youth offending cohort is more diverse than the 0 to 19 population and the overall population. This is in line with national data which shows that young people from a BAME background are disproportionately represented throughout the youth justice system. For example, minority ethnic children make up a growing proportion of those offending for the first time, reoffending, and serving custodial sentences.

Today 41% of under-18s in custody are from minority backgrounds, compared with 25% a decade ago. Young black people are now nine times more likely to be in youth custody than young white people.

The Lammy Review, chaired by David Lammy MP, was an independent review of the treatment of, and outcomes for, BAME individuals in the Criminal Justice System (CJS). It was published in September 2017. The review identified no single explanation for the disproportionate representation of BAME groups and summarised that so many of the causes of, and answers to, the problem lie outside the criminal justice system: poverty, lone-parent families, school exclusions, and growing up in the care system.

The report stated that a third of young people in custody have spent time in the care system, and a similar proportion have mental health issues. Nearly half arrive with substance misuse problems. But, these problems are not being picked up as often for minority ethnic children as for white children.

BAME children in custody are less likely to be recorded as having substance misuse concerns, to be at risk of self-harm, to have learning difficulties, to have mental health concerns, to be disengaged from education, and to have problematic family relationships. Lammy concluded, 'the pattern is too consistent to ignore. It is hard not to conclude that minority youngsters face bias in our criminal justice system.'

Other

There is an established link between disability and poverty, with research in 2016 indicating that half of people in poverty are disabled or live with a disabled person.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

This section sets out our key achievements in relation to equality and diversity and demonstrates how we are implementing the PSED. Furthermore, our impact reports set out the impact that we have had on the lives of children, young people and families during 2019/20 that does not directly relate to the protected characteristics. This can be found on our website: <https://www.achievingforchildren.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Impact-Report-2019-20.pdf>

Age

- As a crucial part of our early help offer, our children's centres continue to be well used and highly regarded with over 12,000 families attending sessions. Our centres offer a range of services for families, from midwifery, health visiting, and speech and language, to nursery advice and school readiness, delivered alongside over 40 partner agencies, which is primarily aimed at children aged 0 to 5 years old.
- To ensure we are able to better meet the needs of the most vulnerable families in Kingston, we have implemented our new children's centre strategy which involves a more targeted approach for those most in need and greater use of outreach provision to ensure hard to reach families are able to access services. The strategy was developed following an extensive public consultation exercise which attracted over 740 responses and which highlighted that 98% of users felt that children's centre services have had a positive impact on their wellbeing and that of their children.
- In Windsor and Maidenhead, we have just completed a public consultation on our transformation programme that aims to turn our early help services into an Integrated Family Hub model through a remodelling of our children's centres, youth centres, parenting service and our family resilience service. The new hubs are proposed to be largely focused on a targeted and specialist offer to enable us to focus our provision on the families that need the support the most. The consultation received 501 responses, and of those who declared a preference, 53% agreed with the proposals. Elected members will make a decision how to proceed later in 2020.
- We continue to be creative to ensure our early help services are targeted at those most in need. For example, we have just introduced new chat and play sessions in children's centres to improve the support provided to parents with concerns relating to educational psychology, speech and language therapy, sensory impairment, portage, occupational therapy and physiotherapy. We have held eight sessions so far with 41 families attending with 100% reporting they felt more confident supporting their children's needs as a result of attending. Our one-off events remain popular with our National Play Day bringing together 755 families and 1,067 children to enjoy fun activities and to learn more about our children's centre offer.

- A focused inspection of services to protect vulnerable adolescents (young people aged 13 to 17 years old) in Kingston highlighted the success of our multi-disciplinary Youth Resilience Service (YRS) which has provided support to over 200 young people who were on the edge of care and who have been involved in offending, substance misuse, going missing from home, or were at risk of being exploited.

Each young person was provided with bespoke interventions from a range of specialists, including family therapists, youth workers, nurses, and substance misuse workers to prevent their needs escalating. The inspectors highlighted that young people benefit from strong relationships with skilled social workers and from specialist, accessible and well-resourced help, and identified our innovative YRS as a real strength. They were particularly impressed by the energy of social workers across our teams and their commitment to our young people. To further support the work of the YRS, in collaboration with Kingston and Richmond Community Safety Partnerships, we have successfully secured funding from the newly-formed Violence Reduction Unit for Project X to deliver detached and outreach youth work to reduce serious youth violence and knife-related crime.

- In Windsor and Maidenhead, we held a number of Preparing for Adulthood information events in January 2020 in recognition of the need to ensure that young people and their parents and carers are aware of the Preparing for Adulthood agenda and have knowledge of services and support available to them. There were 169 attendees, of which 87 were young people and their parents and carers, and 22 organisations exhibited information. Feedback was extremely positive with young people and parents and carers praising the breadth of knowledge and information available and the helpfulness of the organisations in attendance.
- More than 10,000 young people (generally those aged 13 to 19) regularly use our youth services to take part in positive activities that develop their interests and talents. In 2019/20, 30% of those taking part received an accreditation for the activity they took part in. The service offers a wide range of affordable activities for young people from parkour to cookery, skateboarding to gym workouts. Our youth workers conduct issue-based work with young people covering topics such as sexual health, substance misuse and emotional wellbeing.
- Our teams work with young people in schools, undertake street-based work engaging young people where they hang out, and offer an extensive holiday provision. For example, our school education workshops in Windsor and Maidenhead which covered topics including gangs, criminal exploitation, and online safety, were attended by 4,214 young people with 91% of attendees stating they had learnt from the sessions. We also held workshops for 321 parents and carers or professionals identifying how best to support young people in relation to those topic areas, with 94% of attendees stating the sessions met their needs. In Kingston and Richmond, we have secured funding for a new youth bus which will allow the service to undertake detached work across both boroughs and establish a presence in known hot-spots. We have also established two new youth clubs, with each attracting over 50 young people per session.

Disability

- The creation of additional school places to meet rising demand continues to be a priority across all operational areas. In September 2019, an additional 71 SEND places were established in Kingston and Richmond, including the new special school, Capella House, and four new specialist resource provisions, at King Athelstan Primary, Richmond Park Academy, The Hollyfield and Tolworth Girls'. Work has continued on developing the designs for the two special schools - one in Kingston and one in Richmond - which are expected to open in the next three years, and the education providers for them have been selected following a rigorous process.
- Construction is almost complete on a new purpose-built short break centre for children and young people with disabilities. With more than 1,000 children with disabilities receiving short break care, including overnight respite care, the new centre will help us to meet the demand and provide a high quality and local service. The eight-bed centre will provide overnight respite care for children and young people aged from eight to 18 years who may have multiple disabilities, complex medical needs or challenging behaviours.

The design and planning for the centre, which is due to open in the summer of 2020, has been heavily informed by the views and experiences of children, young people and families. We have also been successful in bidding for over £30,000 of grant-funding to develop an internal sensory room and a sensory garden, both of which will be an important part of the activity programme children and young people will be able to enjoy whilst staying at the centre. Currently, 96% of parents and carers rate the short break care and activities that their children receive as good or better and we are confident the new centre will help us maintain, or even improve, on this.

- In Kingston and Richmond, we now have established multi-agency SEND Partnerships, which include representation from children, young people, parents and carers. The boards direct improvement work through agreed transformation plans and by responding to evidence provided through a quarterly dataset. We have also put in place new ways of working with the parents and carers of children and young people with SEND through Kingston's Parent Consortium and Richmond's Parent Panel.
- Through the groups, parents and carers were involved in a range of system improvement initiatives, including improvements to the education, health and care plan annual review process, resulting in over 95% of EHCPs being issued within 20 weeks, significantly higher than the national average of 61%, and implementing a new approach to collecting parent and carer feedback to inform our service delivery.
- Parents and carers contributed to the review of therapy provision in Kingston and Richmond carried out jointly by Achieving for Children and the Clinical Commissioning Groups. Covering speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy, the review provided clarity on existing and emerging therapy needs and confirmed that therapies are a significant and valued element of the support package provided to children and young people with SEND. It quantified the increasing level of need for therapies to meet children's needs and the amount of increased investment needed.

The review outlined a new proposed model which will be implemented in 2020/21 which offers a whole-system, outcome-based framework that can be used to understand, plan and evaluate services to support children and young people.

- In October 2019, Ofsted revisited our SEND services in Windsor and Maidenhead and confirmed that we were making good progress against six of the eight areas identified as requiring improvement. Inspectors praised strengthened leadership and oversight, the improved timeliness and production of EHCPs, better communication with parents and carers and children and young people, and the newly introduced inclusion charter. We are fully focused on delivering improvements to the remaining two areas that relate to consistency and commissioning.
- In Windsor and Maidenhead, we held a number of Preparing for Adulthood information events in January 2020 in recognition of the need to ensure that young people and their parents and carers are aware of the Preparing for Adulthood agenda and have knowledge of services and support available to them. There were 169 attendees, of which 87 were young people and their parents and carers, and 22 organisations exhibited information. Feedback was extremely positive with young people and parents and carers praising the breadth of knowledge and information available and the helpfulness of the organisations in attendance.
- In June 2019, 325 children and young people, families and stakeholders from 105 organisations from health, education and social care from Kingston and Richmond attended the SEND Futures Conference. Over 75 parents attended in person and were able to contribute to the discussions using their own experiences.

They were joined by voluntary organisations working in the boroughs with children, young people and parents of children with SEND. The conference, which was co-produced and delivered by young people, parents, carers and professionals, was an opportunity for the SEND community and service providers to come together, share learning, deepen their understanding and work together to ensure high quality services continue to be delivered. The feedback was extremely positive with 82% of attendees stating they were satisfied or very satisfied with the event.



- We held our Windsor and Maidenhead Inclusion Summit in September 2019. The event provided an opportunity for professionals in education, health and the voluntary sector to come together with parents and carers to discuss how to work together to make Windsor and Maidenhead a positive beacon of inclusion for children and young people with SEND. The summit was co-produced with Parents and Carers in Partnership (PaCiP), East Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Group and local SEND organisations.

Over 180 people were in attendance, representing parents and carers, educators from early years, schools and colleges, services from health, the local authority, and the voluntary sectors. The feedback captured as part of the Summit has been crucial in helping us shape our services going forward.

- The Early Years SEND Team in Windsor and Maidenhead organised a highly successful conference in June 2019 for 50 early years' practitioners from private, voluntary and independent settings and maintained nursery classes across Ascot, Windsor and Maidenhead. The event focused on thinking more creatively and flexibly about how inclusion feels to children, parents, staff and the whole school community.

A range of workshops were on offer, including working with parents, smooth transitions for children with autistic spectrum conditions and meditation. Feedback was wholly positive, with evaluations commenting on how planning first for children with SEND will benefit the provision for all children; and how they feel more confident in managing challenging behaviours.

- We have supported over 500 children and young people through our emotional health services, with 89% reporting improved mental health and emotional wellbeing. Our services include art therapy, clinical psychology and systemic family therapy. We are part of a national trailblazer in Kingston and Richmond to deliver a whole-school approach to mental health which aims to establish an emotional wellbeing programme in all schools including wellbeing support, training, and information to pupils, parents and staff. The principle is to intervene early using evidence-based direct work to prevent issues escalating.

As part of the trailblazer, we have delivered sessions and workshops to 11 schools, held 12 sessions for 80 pupils, held 14 sessions for 315 parents, and held five whole school training sessions and six targeted training sessions for 118 staff. We are hoping to be successful with a bid to deliver the programme to more schools in the next wave starting in 2021 in collaboration with neighbouring local authorities.

- In Windsor and Maidenhead, alongside East Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Group and the council, we are introducing an enhanced early intervention service with the aim of ensuring that all children's and young people's early intervention mental health services are fully integrated, offered through a seamless, quality and timely support, and use the innovative restorative practice and IThrive principles. The new service is being developed in response to increasing demand for emotional and mental health services, to address rising waiting times for initial appointments, and to ensure that low level needs are met at the earliest possible opportunity.

- Having secured £105,000 in grant funding during 2018/19 from the Careers and Enterprise Company to develop innovative new approaches to careers advice for young people with SEND, over the past 12 months we have worked across 13 mainstream and special schools providing 'next steps' personal guidance interviews to students with SEND in Years 10 and 13 in Kingston and Richmond. We have held over 190 interviews with pupils with SEND.

The interviews are designed to provide information on post-16 training and employment options and help young people to explore their longer-term aspirations. In Windsor and Maidenhead we have held two successful 'preparing for adulthood' events with almost 100 young adults and their families attending sessions to help plan their education and employment in the future. Feedback on the events was extremely positive.

- Our Education Business Partnership has supported 53 young people with SEND into post-16 vocational pathways. 18 young people are in apprenticeships, 13 are in supported internships, 10 are in employment, four are in traineeships, and eight are undertaking other vocational destinations. This represents an increase of over 25% from 2018/19.
- During the year, we have progressed our plans to take on responsibility for the Berkshire Sensory Consortium Service from 2020/21. The service works with children and young people up to the age of 19 attending school and resident in the Berkshire local authorities who have educational needs arising from a diagnosed hearing, visual or multi-sensory impairment.

Specialist teachers, paediatric habilitation specialists, educational audiologists and specialist teaching assistants provide a key worker service for pre-school children, pre-school groups, parent workshops and provide advice, teaching and training for pupils, parents and schools. In April 2020, the service will join with us and an additional 40 employees will be welcomed into the company.

- During May 2019, we promoted a range of health and wellbeing initiatives for our workforce as part of Mental Health Awareness Week. This included mindfulness exercises, guidance for managers about positive mental health in the workplace and free e-learning about managing staff mental ill health, and links to other mental health resources.

Gender

- The Youth Service in both operational areas celebrated International Women's Day in March 2020 with a number of special events across youth centres. This included events, workshops, speeches and performances to promote female empowerment for young women aged 11 to 21 years old.
- We have established a briefing session to help frontline staff to be able to effectively engage with boys and men which is an important part of childcare and safeguarding practice. Boys who are vulnerable and at risk may not be identified for support and men may be involved in families in a range of ways and may need support in the process of becoming effective parents.

The session considers learning from serious case reviews, research and evidence based practice when working with men and boys, the blocks to engaging with and working with men and boys and the risks of 'hidden' men. It also looks at a variety of skills and techniques for engagement and assessment.

- We have opened referrals for our domestic violence abuse women survivors support groups in Windsor and Maidenhead. The groups are facilitated by managers with the help of peer mentor volunteers. The groups will give participants the opportunity to share their experiences of abuse with other women who are or were experiencing a similar situation. Each session will focus on different issues such as: what is domestic abuse, types of abuse, different tactics used by perpetrators of domestic abuse, early signs of abusive relationships, impacts on children and others.
- In Windsor and Maidenhead we have expanded the support for vulnerable families through the embedding of family coaches and domestic abuse workers. Feedback and evaluation data indicates the positive impact of the family coaches, with four successful family reunifications in the final two months of 2019/20 and avoidance of a number of potential placement breakdowns.

The domestic abuse workers have already reported evidence of reducing risk in individual families and the funding has been secured to ensure the work can continue. This is crucial as national research shows that one in four women and one in six men experience domestic abuse in their lifetime. In the four day Ofsted inspection report, inspectors highlighted the strong interventions available to all family members where domestic abuse is a concern.

Gender reassignment

- Since December 2016, we have delivered introduction to gender identity and trans awareness training to a number of our frontline staff. The course introduces the key information employees need to know to support trans colleagues or to work with trans clients or pupils. The proportion of people falling somewhere on the broad trans spectrum is estimated at around 1%. Of those, the number seeking a medically supported transition is growing rapidly.

Any organisation now needs to be ready to encounter real-life situations involving trans people. The training encourages participants to get involved in thinking through what trans means and ways to achieve equality and inclusivity in practice.

Marriage and civil partnership

We have not undertaken any specific actions in relation to marriage and civil partnership.

Pregnancy and maternity

- The Health Visitor and School Nursing teams have made good progress in 2019/20, with our Public Health England Key Performance Indicators showing improvements across most areas. At the beginning of 2020/21, 94% of families with a newborn were seen within the requisite 14 days, which is an improvement from 85% the previous year. For the same period the nine to 12 month review saw an improvement with a take up of 72% in compared with 62%. Similarly, the 2 year old review take up has improved from 56% to 78%.
- The School Nurse Enuresis Service continues to be well evaluated by the children and parents, and the Safe Baby initiative has ensured that there has been an increased focus on the safety of our youngest and most vulnerable children.
- We have delivered tailored support for expectant mothers amongst our children in care cohort. For example, the Young People's Supported Accommodation Service in Kingston and Richmond has established a weekly life-skills session for our care leavers who are young parents, in collaboration with midwives and a local faith group. Based on the success of the initial group, we have set up a second session.

The young people attending have been extremely positive about the group as they have said they previously found it difficult to access traditional parent groups. We have also established a play session called Busy Babies for other young mums up to 24 years of age and their children to come together and meet new friends. The group has been well received and has brought together a number of young parents who would otherwise be socially isolated.

Race (including ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality)

- We have developed our targeted services to reach out to those families who do not currently engage with us. This has included work with Asian women in Maidenhead to celebrate and build on their achievements in overcoming barriers to achieve better outcomes for their children. We have also targeted communities that are traditionally considered hard to reach to ensure they are able to have a voice in decisions about how we deliver our services. For example, as part of our consultation about the proposed Family Hub Service in Windsor and Maidenhead we have produced an easy read document to be translated into Urdu so that the Pakistani community are able to better understand the reasons for the consultation, what the proposals include, and how they can get involved.
- The Intensive Family Support Service organised a successful beach trip in the summer of 2019 for 136 Asian women and children from Windsor and Maidenhead. The trip provided a much needed opportunity for families to spend quality time together and have fun, and feedback from the families was extremely positive.

- We deliver a range of training courses across all our children's centre provision aimed at parents who have English as a second language. For example, we hold well-attended 'Learning English at Home' classes at the Barnes Children's Centre to help improve English reading and writing in small and friendly sessions, and hold English as a Second Language (ESOL) classes at our children's centres.
- Since November 2016, we have delivered a cultural awareness training course to over 80 participants across Kingston, Richmond and Windsor and Maidenhead. The training is designed for professionals working with children and families to increase their awareness of how the cultural background of service users and themselves will affect their work. The training supports our employees to be better placed to consider how sensitivity, awareness, responsiveness and confidence can enable them to better meet the needs of service users.

It is based on learning from serious case reviews (SCRs) around 'cultural relativism' and the need to be sensitive and curious, but not lose sight of children's voices in safeguarding practice. Research over the last six years has highlighted that a lack of trust and understanding between the family and the professional hindered the correct support. Families in these situations believed that staff turnover had a negative impact, resulting in professionals unable to develop the necessary cultural knowledge.

- We were successful in our bid to the Youth Endowment Fund, for funding to set-up transition hubs, in partnership with St Mary's University in Twickenham and Barnet Council. The transition hubs support future students in care aged 11 to 14 years old, including unaccompanied asylum seeking children, to improve their long-term outcomes. They offer an evidence-informed and tailored programme of support to the student, their carer and the receiving school, prior to the student starting school.

Each transition hub offers students: a six-week personalised programme of support, as well as weekly and monthly visits based on four stages of transition, a learning mentor who provides relational stability across the four transition stages, and a detailed assessment to allow for more targeted and effective provision. The transition hubs also offer training to schools and foster carers around the interconnectedness of child, family, school and community factors in supporting better outcomes for children in care.

- To celebrate Black History Month in 2019, our Leaving Care Team facilitated singing, poetry, drama and steel pan workshops with young people. The young people's poems have now been published in a book which is available to buy with proceeds going towards fundraising to take a number of care leavers to Montserrat. The care leavers will meet other children in care and share their experiences with each other, and they will participate in ongoing projects and workshops - with the support of the Project Manager and Director of Education of the Montserrat Children Society.
- To celebrate cultural diversity at Achieving for Children, we have hosted a number of events for our staff. This started with a 'let's eat together' event where colleagues were invited to bring in traditional food to the offices to share with colleagues. As well as bringing people together, the sessions provided an opportunity for staff to give any comments or feedback on what we can do more to promote and celebrate equality and diversity across the company. Staff from across all three boroughs attended and feedback was extremely positive - especially about the food on offer.

Religion and belief (includes lack of belief)

- During the past 12 months, we have delivered a number of personal development and parenting groups for our Muslim community linked to Islamic values which have been facilitated by the specialist parenting worker in the Intensive Family Support Team. The aim has been to improve engagement with multi-faith communities. The team has also worked with the community to set up Muslim youth groups.
- Our staff have attended the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership training around the impact of culture, faith and belief systems on safeguarding children. The course enables participants to increase their understanding of the influences of their own and their families race, culture, faith or beliefs on the parenting of children, gain confidence in talking about attitudes and beliefs and how these might affect judgment, and improve knowledge of practice skills in relation to culture, faith and beliefs systems when completing assessments or offering services.
- In March, the Family Resilience Service hosted a unique event designed to bring together women from the Christian, Muslim and Jewish communities in celebration of these religions. Local people, including leaders from three religious backgrounds, gathered to explore the similarities and differences between the faiths. The event supported attendees to gain a deeper understanding of differing beliefs and cultures, promoting empathy and a desire to live together peacefully and for greater community cohesion in Maidenhead. The event was a great success with 85 women attending. The post evaluations indicated that a 100% of the attendees felt that their awareness of other Abrahamic religions increased, rating the event as excellent.

Sexual orientation

- Since October 2017, we have delivered lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and others (LGBTQ+) training to over 30 professionals across the company. The training is designed to enable delegates to understand what steps they can take to be inclusive to the young LGBTQ+ people in their care and also how they can challenge their own understanding, in order to be a greater support to these young people. Public Health England's study, 'Producing modelled estimates of the size of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) population of England' (2017), estimates that 2.5% of England's population identifies as LGB or 'other', with the largest concentration, 5.5% in Greater London. This demonstrates the importance of ensuring our employees are able to meet the needs of young people who are LGBTQ+.
- We have continued to recruit new members for 'Shout This Way', which is a supportive, confidential and safe youth project for young people who are questioning their sexuality, identity or gender or who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender in Kingston and Richmond. The group meets regularly and shapes their own programme of work and as part of their remit have attended regional and national events. They also offer information, advice and guidance to anyone who is in contact anonymously.
- During 2019/20, we promoted the work of Galop, the LGBT anti-violence charity that supports all LGBT+ people who have experienced sexual and domestic violence. They focus on anti-violence issues and work with victims and survivors within three main areas: hate crime, sexual violence, and domestic abuse. Galop works directly with LGBT+ people aged 13 years old and above. The service can be used by our staff if they have concerns for themselves or colleagues, or for the children, young people and families we support.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?

To ensure we are able to meet our public sector equality duty we have identified four key equality objectives that focus on those areas of equality and diversity most needing action across Achieving for Children. They have been developed based on a review of key equality and diversity data and information and through focus groups with service managers.

These are new objectives developed for 2020 to 2024. We will report on progress against these objectives in the annual equalities report each year.

Equality objective	Why has this been identified as an equality objective?	What will we achieve by 2024?
Providing support to the increasing numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)	National data shows that the number of UASC entering the UK has risen by more than 50% in a single year, with increasing numbers having their claims for asylum refused. Increasing numbers of UASC has been attributed to the ongoing refugee crisis. In Kingston and Richmond, there are at least four new UASC coming into our looked after children and leaving care services each month.	We will ensure there is sufficient local supported accommodation for our UASC young people and that our staff are appropriately trained to provide effective support to meet their differing needs. We will deliver training, advice and guidance so they are provided with the information they need to thrive, including counselling and life skills workshops. We will celebrate the diversity amongst our UASC young people and support them to better understand their background.

Equality objective	Why has this been identified as an equality objective?	What will we achieve by 2024?
<p>Integrating care and support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities within their local communities, ensuring SEND provision is high quality, and supporting young people to transition to adulthood</p>	<p>The number of children and young people with statements of SEND or an EHCP is growing both nationally and locally. This has been accompanied by an increase in the number of children with severe and complex needs.</p> <p>In addition, there is also a recognition that the support we provide to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) is an area for improvement.</p> <p>The report published in January 2020 by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, highlighting failings by Richmond Council and Achieving for Children in relation to historic support provided to three young people with SEND and their families, shows that we still have a way to go until we can be confident that these families are receiving the quality provision that they deserve. The findings have reinforced the importance of the transformation work that we began two years ago and have and will continue to improve the experience of the young people we support. We know that we must make improvements to SEND provision, not just in Achieving for Children, but also in our schools, colleges and health services. This is a partnership issue and we are working collectively (including with parents, carers and young people) to improve our local offer and the quality of services. To do this, we have put in place transformation plans, committed considerable resources, and we are working with parents to better learn from their experiences. Continuing to develop and improve provision in this area will continue to be a priority in the coming year.</p> <p>We know that we must make improvements to SEND provision, not just in Achieving for Children, but also in our schools, colleges and health services. This is a partnership issue and we are working collectively (including with parents, carers and young people) to improve our local offer and the quality of services. To do this, we have put in place transformation plans, committed considerable resources, and we are working with parents to better learn from their experiences. Continuing to develop and improve provision in this area will continue to be a priority in the coming year.</p>	<p>We want to deliver high quality services for children and young people with SEND that are rated as good or better by parents or carers and judged to be effective through the inspection of local area SEND services by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission. We will be able to support more children and young people with SEND locally, close to their family and their friends, and we will have a strong therapy offer in place.</p> <p>The timeliness and quality of EHCPs will continue to improve and we will aim to meet the needs of younger children at the earliest stage in mainstream schools so that some children and young people will not need an ECHP.</p> <p>We will have put in place effective transition arrangements for young people with SEND who are moving into adulthood which will plan for their independence and maximise their opportunities for a positive experience of early adulthood, including planning for their transition to adult social care services where needed.</p>

Equality objective	Why has this been identified as an equality objective?	What will we achieve by 2024?
<p>Developing and implementing a mental health strategy that outlines responsibilities for Achieving for Children, CCG and partner organisations, with clear pathways and thresholds that are easily understood by families and that effectively meet the mental health needs of children and young people in universal and more targeted provision.</p>	<p>A large and growing body of research shows that good mental health is essential for individual wellbeing, for a happy, healthy society, and for a prosperous economy.</p> <p>Unfortunately, child mental health problems are on the increase both nationally and locally, with a rising demand on services and increasing complexity of need. Research shows that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one in 10 children has a diagnosable mental health condition. This figure is likely to be higher and growing. • Over half of all mental ill health starts before the age of 14, and 75 per cent has developed by the age of 24. • Demand is going up: over three years there has been a 14 per cent rise in children admitted to hospital after harming themselves, specialist child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) are on average turning away 23% of the young people referred to them for treatment. • Children from low income families are four times more likely to experience mental health problems than children from well off families. • Amongst LGBTQI+ young people, seven out of 10 girls and six out of 10 boys described experiencing suicidal thoughts. <p>Concerns have also been raised about the quality of mental health services, and the availability of access to this support, with unclear pathways and thresholds that are not understood by families.</p>	<p>Children and young people are easily able to access high quality mental health services that have a strong focus on early intervention and prevent issues escalating to higher levels of need. 75% of families will rate mental health services as good or better.</p>

Equality objective	Why has this been identified as an equality objective?	What will we achieve by 2024?
<p>Ensuring Achieving for Children is an inclusive and diverse organisation that celebrates differences and that represents the local communities it serves</p>	<p>Research shows that promoting and supporting diversity in the workplace is an important aspect of good people management - it is about valuing everyone in the organisation as an individual. However, to reap the benefits of a diverse workforce it is vital to have an inclusive environment where everyone feels able to participate and achieve their potential.</p> <p>Diversity is about recognising difference. It is acknowledging the benefit of having a range of perspectives in decision-making and the workforce being representative of who the organisation serves.</p> <p>Inclusion is where people's differences are valued and used to enable everyone to thrive at work. An inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels that they belong without having to conform, that their contribution matters and they are able to perform to their full potential, no matter their background, identity or circumstances. An inclusive workplace has fair policies and practices in place and enables a diverse range of people to work together effectively.</p> <p>Greater inclusivity and diversity brings a number of benefits, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruiting from a diverse pool of candidates means a more qualified workforce • a diverse and inclusive workforce helps avoid employee turnover costs • diversity fosters a more creative and innovative workforce • diversity and inclusion bring us all opportunities to learn from others and grow 	<p>The workforce will be more reflective of the local community that it services across all areas. Staff equality groups will be well-established and will work alongside the equality and diversity forum to ensure that Achieving for Children is known for embracing diversity and championing inclusions - both for our workforce and the children and families that we work with, so that their identities are promoted and their individual needs are met.</p>



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