



***Driven by love***  
**united in**

*Action for  
Children*

**Diversity and Inclusion Strategy  
2025-2028**

# Introduction

At Action for Children, we're driven by love. We take action so children don't miss out on a safe and happy childhood.

**And this starts with our people.**

We want to create an inclusive culture where everyone feels they can thrive and do their best work for children and families. This strategy will help us to do this.



**Here you'll find our 2025-28 objectives for diversity and inclusion, plus what we'll do to achieve them.**



# Why we support **equality, diversity and inclusion**

**Right now, equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is being challenged in our society.**

But at Action for Children, **inclusion is one of our core values** and we're committed to being a welcoming and safe charity for our staff, volunteers and the children and families we support.

We strive to represent the diverse communities we serve, and to be anti-racist. A place where everyone feels valued, respected and empowered to reach their full potential.

**It's just the right thing to do.**

And although we have a lot to celebrate in terms of our progress, we know there's still work to do to achieve our ambitious goals.

When we embrace diversity and inclusion, talented people stay with us for longer. It encourages people to bring their whole selves to work. And we have a more diverse range of experiences to draw on in our work caring for children and families.

We also need to follow the law. This strategy will help us meet the Equality Act 2010 and other important employment regulation.

It's against the law to discriminate against someone because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We hope you feel supported and encouraged by this strategy. **Like everything we do it's driven by love.**

## **How we developed our strategy**

We've refreshed our last equality, diversity and inclusion strategy and long-term goals but kept our three core objectives.

Inclusive Employers advise using eight steps to create an effective and sustainable framework for equality, diversity and inclusion. So, we've developed our strategy with them in mind:

- Leadership commitment.
- Diversity data collection.
- EDI strategy with targets.
- Inclusive practice.
- Learning and development.
- Inclusive culture, accountability of targets and celebrating diversity.

We also worked with a consultant and listened to our people and staff networks. Our strategy has been agreed with senior leaders, including our Head of Diversity and Inclusion.

## **Our vision for this strategy**

To create a charity that leads the way in diversity and inclusion. That reflects the diverse children and families we support. A charity where everyone's voice is valued, that's passionately anti-racist, and is truly inclusive.



# Achievements from 2020-2024

Our people went to **Pride events** and used important dates like **Ramadan, International Women's Day and LGBTQ+ History Month** as opportunities to celebrate and learn.



We employ nearly **5% more Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic staff** than we did when we launched our previous diversity and inclusion strategy. We know there's more work to do, but we're proud of our progress so far.



In our 2024 survey **87%** of staff agreed with this statement:

***“Overall I feel Action for Children is an inclusive and welcoming place to work, regardless of gender, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity.”***

We launched our **Reciprocal Mentoring programme** which matches senior leaders with Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff to learn and share experiences.



We ran **multiple Developing Potential programmes** aimed at helping staff progress with us. 50% of spaces were kept for disabled and Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff.



We successfully achieved Investors in People **Silver accreditation** – with diversity and inclusion highlighted as a positive area for us. We also achieved Disability Confident Employer status **level 2**. And, in Northern Ireland, we gained a **silver Inclusion Award**.



We launched **useful resources** including a Positive Action Guide, Diversity and inclusion Learning Pathway, anti-racist training, regular diversity and inclusion Q&As and our Disability Confident working group.



We asked an **external expert** to review our diversity and inclusion policies and practices. Diversity and inclusion working groups were set up in each nation and department to boost our reach and accountability.



We now have **11 staff networks to create a more inclusive and supportive workplace**, including Breakthrough – our race equality network, Inspire – our disability and carers network, and our Gender Equality Network.



We work with our Breakthrough network to achieve **inclusive panels for recruitment**. We've also improved the way we provide reasonable adjustments (making changes to support people) for everyone who needs them.



We're pleased our gender pay gap has dropped **from 5.9% in 2023 to 4.4% this year**. This sits within our target of 5% either side of 0%. We're also delighted to report a 0% gender pay gap for Action for Children Developments Ltd.



## Becoming an anti-racist charity

**We're determined to be an anti-racist charity.**

So, we will make sure all our new starters and leaders have mandatory anti-racism training.

We also got involved in campaigns designed to break down barriers for our Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff. These included Race Equality Week, MyNames, Big Promise and the 5-Day challenge.

As a charity, Action for Children was appalled by the racist riots of August 2024. In response we offered solidarity to our people who were affected, created 'safe space' meetings so people felt safe and shared a hate crime webinar – among other initiatives.

We also increased the visibility and voice of our Breakthrough network. Our Breakthrough network chairs meet our CEO every six months to share results and give feedback.

We're working to grow our services to help diversify our workforce. Just one way we're doing this is to focus on areas of the UK – like London and Birmingham – that have a diverse population of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.

# **Our strategy** in detail

All our teams will develop their own plans that build diversity and inclusion in what they do. Our Head of Diversity and Inclusion, their diversity and inclusion Working Groups, and Strategic People Partners will help set targets and actions.

## **Our objectives:**

**1** We'll build a positive, safe and supportive culture for all our staff, volunteers and children and families who use our services.

- We'll do this through a leadership team that embraces inclusivity – encouraging curiosity, learning and allyship.
- We'll continue to support our diversity and inclusion structure. This includes Inclusion Champions, Diversity and Inclusion Staff Networks, Diversity and Inclusion Working Groups and the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group (DIAG).
- We recognise these groups are key to building our inclusive culture. So we'll review our Terms of References and improve the communication and accountability between DIAG and senior leaders.
- We'll also work to get Disability Confident Leader status by March 2028 and apply to become a 'Trailblazer' with Race Equality Matters.
- We'll do research to understand how our people feel about inclusivity at Action for Children. This isn't just about data. It's finding out how our policies, structures and behaviours make people feel at work.

## **What our staff say**

In our 2021/22 survey, most staff (**76%**) responded positively about questions on their experiences of diversity and inclusion at Action for Children. This dropped to **73%** in 2024/25. We're disappointed the score wasn't higher. And we'd like to see more positive results in our next survey. We are pleased that our survey results compare well to similar employers.

Plus, our staff now feel more confident reporting bullying, harassment and discrimination without worrying it will affect their position.



“

**Action for Children champions diversity, inclusivity and equal opportunities”**

– Farhaan, staff member



**We’ll increase the diversity of our workforce at every level. We’ll prioritise representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic and disabled staff, who are still under-represented at Action for Children.**

- We’ll do this by focusing on inclusive recruitment and improving our people’s experiences at work.
- We’ll also take specific action to increase representation at Grade 5 and above (senior staff like managers and directors).
- We’ll aim to increase our diversity declaration rates (the number of people who share information about their protected characteristics such as disability or ethnicity), with a focus on disability data as we have a gap around this. The table below shows our representation targets for 2028.

	Current Action for Children % April 2025	Working population*	Target by April 2026	Target by April 2028
Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic staff	10.7%	18%	11.5%	14%
Disabled staff	3.5%	19%	6.5%	10%
Gender Pay Gap	4.46%	14%	Range of 5%	Range of 5%

\*Current disability data has been affected by the move to Oracle

**3** **We will be an anti-racist charity, ensuring racial equity is at the heart of everything we do.**

- Our anti-racism action plan is now part of our diversity and inclusion strategy, putting it right at the heart of our work.
- Becoming a Race Equality Matters ‘Trailblazer’ will help us become an anti-racist organisation.
- Meanwhile, we’ll continue to support and amplify the voices of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff through our Breakthrough network and Reciprocal Mentoring programme.
- We’ll make sure our staff fully understand what being anti-racist means by continuing to provide mandatory training to all new starters and leaders. And we’ll continue producing anti-racism resources and sharing learning through webinars, blogs and articles.

**“**

***I have seen important changes in Action for Children’s stance on anti-racism. My workplace feels more inclusive and celebratory of diversity.***

**– Staff member, survey feedback**



# Four ways we'll **measure success**

1

We'll include all **quantitative targets** in our People Team plan for each department. Strategic People Partners and department directors will report on them every quarter.

2

We'll **fully evaluate the responses** to our all-staff survey 2025, filtering answers by different characteristics (like disability) to get a clear picture of our progress and challenges.

3

We'll carry out a **full impact review** of our positive action initiatives, Developing Potential Programme and Reciprocal Mentoring programme in 2025.

4

We'll use agreed **measures and targets** on developing and retaining our high-performance workforce objective, and share with senior leaders every quarter. This includes targets on building a diverse and inclusive culture.

## To report on our progress we'll:

- **Measure diversity metrics:**  
We'll continue to track metrics like workforce demographics, our gender pay gap and hiring rates. We'll also use promotion and development rates as a new metric.
- **Run surveys on inclusion:**  
We'll carry out regular surveys to assess our employees' sense of inclusion and belonging.
- **Produce annual reports:**  
We'll publish annual reports transparently sharing the progress of our diversity and inclusion initiatives.



# United in **action**

**We want to say a big thank you for all the everyday actions you take to create a truly inclusive charity that leads the way in diversity and inclusion.**

We're determined to have a charity that reflects the diversity of the children and families we support, where everyone's voice is valued and which is passionately anti-racist. And this strategy will help us get there.

If you have any questions or need support to embed this in your work, please email [carys.jenkins@actionforchildren.org.uk](mailto:carys.jenkins@actionforchildren.org.uk)

