



# Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Action Plan

**The National Children's Bureau**

## Table of contents

### **Introduction ..... 1**

What we want to achieve and why ..... 1

### **Detailed DEI Action Plan ..... 2**

Language and Data ..... 2

Holding ourselves to account for promoting DEI ..... 3

Learning and Development ..... 6

Policy and process ..... 7

Giving our staff the infrastructure to promote equity ..... 9

How did we develop this plan? ..... 13

Our Plan is underpinned by three Core Principles ..... 14

What Our Board Says ..... 15

Further Considerations ..... 16

### **Action Plan Explained ..... 17**

Overview ..... 17

'Race' and Ethnicity ..... 20

Disability and Neurodiversity ..... 23

LGBTQ+ ..... 25

### **Data ..... 27**

### **Measuring Success ..... 28**

### **Appendix ..... 30**

1. Terminology ..... 30

2. Successes and Opportunities from the 2020 plan ..... 32

3. Disability and Neurodiversity Data ..... 37

4. 'Race' and Ethnicity Data ..... 38

5. Ethnicity Pay gap ..... 40

6. Gender Pay Gap ..... 41

7. Additional Data ..... 42

## Introduction

### What we want to achieve and why

NCB's new 5-year strategy 2024-29 *United for a Better Childhood: Building Brighter Futures*, outlines our ambition around DEI "We have made steady progress with increasing the diversity of our staff body and Trustees, but we are not complacent – we still do not fully reflect the society we are here to serve, particularly at more senior levels of the organisation. We will publish a new DEI plan that maintains our current focus on equality issues around disability and race and explores how we can develop a more sophisticated and consistent understanding of the impact of our delivery work and reflect this in our projects. We will also continue to push to make sure that all staff, and all children and their families, feel included and welcome at NCB." And "We will improve diversity, equity and inclusion as part of our work – we have embedded this throughout our strategy rather than an "add-on" specific goal." Our 4 year plan addresses both internal and external DEI.

Both elements will complement each other as we believe that to support our external work and to be able to develop the equity impact of our work, we need to ensure our staff group are more reflective of society and that everyone who works at NCB feels a sense of belonging, as we recognise representation doesn't always equal true inclusion.

## Detailed DEI Action Plan

The table below outlines the details of the plan for 2025-2026. We do, however, have plans beyond this into future years as well which are outlined underneath.

2025-26 Objectives	Owner	Time frame	Impact
<b>Language and Data</b>			
Improve glossary section of the comms style guide to have an agreed approach to language and terminology around various aspects of DEI and disseminate to staff.	People team, comms team and RiP	Q2-Q3	To support and have a shared understanding of what terminology NCB uses both externally and internally. To also give confidence to staff when having conversations.
Update any terminology on Cascade employee diversity page to align with the agreed language and terminology in the comms style guide.	People Team		Have inclusive terminology to encourage employee diversity data to improve our data to be able to make fully informed decisions for our DEI plans.
Separate disability and neurodiversity in diversity monitoring			We know that words really matter in this area, so ensuring that we have

Explore the possibility of additional metrics surrounding social class and care experience to our staff data collection.		Q3-Q4	thought-through terminology that comes from engagement with our staff networks and wider evidence is important for us to speak confidently, both internally and externally.
Once Cascade is updated, do a data drive for staff to complete diversity data.			
Move all internal docs in current use to new terminology.			
Improve the accessibility of language on our website.	Comms team	Q4	Although the primary audience for much of our work are professionals, policy experts or academics, there is still more we can do to ensure more of our evidence, learning and positions reach more people.
<b>Holding ourselves to account for promoting DEI</b>			
Implementation of The Applicant Tracking System on Cascade and roll out which includes anonymised candidate applications. This will also improve data collection and reporting functions	People Team	Implementation starting Oct 24. Due to be rolled out to staff Q1 25/26. Staff support in usage	Removing as much bias from the shortlisting and selection process as possible.  Provide reporting capability to enable the People team to analyse candidate sourcing and drop off points

through the recruitment and selection cycle.		throughout Q1-Q4 to embed usage	throughout the recruitment cycle. for example: do candidates from Black and Global Majority backgrounds get through to shortlisting stage but not interview stage or interview stage but not acceptance on average compared to white candidates?
Roll out a development programme for Black and Global Majority staff.	People Team	Q1-4	Increase our representation of Black and Global Majority staff and create a healthy pipeline for leadership roles. Reduce turnover rates and increase promotion opportunities for Black and Global Majority staff.
Set up Mental Health First aiders across NCB and ensure we live our values of taking care of our staff.	People team	Q1 -Q2	To provide support and signpost someone experiencing poor mental health to the support available to them.
Set up a forum for SLT and network chairs to meet on a 6 monthly basis to listen to each other on DEI matters around NCB.	People team/SLT and staff networks	Q1	To support the networks and listen to any ideas/concerns/suggestions they may have.  For SLT to have a closer relationship with the networks and therefore

			further our DEI work from the top. SLT to be visible and active Allies through building their relationships with the Networks.
Create specific prompts around equity of impact in organisational templates for bids, project management, risk management, SLT and Board papers.	Governance / SLT	Q2	This will ensure that significant decisions in the organisation consistently consider the equity impact on different groups represented in the Equality Act (and others we may choose) – and that we build this consideration in at the ground floor of projects rather than at the last minute when facing a decision.
Ensure that we have an appropriately diverse pool of associates, as well as of staff.	Practice and Programmes	Ongoing	Just as it is important that the diversity of staff reflect the people we serve, so it is important that our associates do – given they are key representatives of the organisation as well.
Establish a DEI champion for each team, who will support in taking forward team DEI objectives (see below) and act as a	DEI lead	Q1	Having a dedicated “point person” in each team will improve communication, help drive team DEI objectives and provide a source of

feedback loop between central DEI governance and teams.			informal advice and guidance on equity aspects of team work.
<b>Learning and Development</b>			
Seek gaps in our knowledge or awareness to look for training, awareness sessions or speakers on DEI topics as well as internal development to further skills and confidence. Internal training may include, for example anti-racist training. Draw on peer review materials and ensure managers are actively demonstrating anti-oppressive practices.	People Team & DEI lead/SLT	Ongoing	To embed DEI, educate and inform staff and nurture an inclusive environment at NCB with regular training/awareness sessions. These will be based on the perceived and real needs of the staff or organisational work needs. Hearing from external speakers on a range of topics will help us make equity more real – both in terms of hearing about the lived experiences that make DEI so important and in terms of practical examples of how this has been successfully reflected in other projects.
Produce a "toolbox" for staff that draws together existing evidence and resources when considering equity impact of a new project.	DEI Lead	Q4	This will give staff the resources and intellectual framework to consider equity impact as required in the previous action.



<p>We will require all teams to have an objective around DEI generally in their annual objectives for 25/26, with a preference for objectives that improve equity in society for those we serve.</p>	<p>DDs and ADs</p>	<p>Q1</p>	<p>This will encourage teams to think collectively about equity in the context of their own work, supported by our new DEI lead – and agree one objective beyond their BAU impact that they want to focus on. This also lays the groundwork for potential personal DEI objectives in the future. Objectives can be taken forward in part by the team DEI champions described in the internal plan.</p>
<p><b>Policy and process</b></p>			
<p>Clarify the policies &amp; procedures on reporting discrimination, by updating the anti-bullying and harassment policy and some related policies, staff communications and clear structures to report outlined on the intranet</p>	<p>People team &amp; Governance</p>	<p>Q1</p>	<p>Staff are clear on the pathways to report and address instances or concerns around discrimination, bullying and harassment.</p>
<p>Compile an ethical procurement and finance policy.</p>	<p>Finance team</p>	<p>Q2</p>	<p>This policy will ensure that our investments and procurement always match our values.</p>

<p>Ensure there is a clear process for providing tailored accessibility support for staff members.</p>	<p>Corporate services</p>	<p>Q2-3</p>	<p>Staff are clear that such support exists and how to access to enable staff to be able to carry out their roles to their best ability. Clear process between all CS teams to ensure needs can be effectively and consistently assessed and addressed.</p>
<p>Establish a policy development process that advances NCB's anti-racist approach.</p>	<p>Policy team and DEI lead</p>	<p>Q4</p>	<p>The application of this process will be important in developing our thought leadership and demonstrating an anti-racist approach to policy development and influencing.</p>
<p>Audit accessibility on other office sites and bring these up to the standard of Mentmore office where possible/feasible.</p>	<p>Facilities</p>	<p>Q4</p>	<p>Accessibility is more consistent across all of our offices.</p>
<p>Produce an ethical fundraising policy to ensure that the work we bid for matches our values.</p>	<p>Development</p>	<p>Q2</p>	<p>This will give staff certainty and confidence in terms of what to consider when bidding for work, as well as a protocol to follow to ensure senior sign-off if required.</p>

Build on our own policy to act as honest brokers for commissioners/funders to encourage more acknowledgement of complexity and more accessibility of end products such as research reports.	Development and Practice and Programmes	Ongoing	To truly create a step change in our external work, we will ultimately need to change the system by which our work gets funded.
Build considerations of the experiences of gender-questioning and trans children, and intersectionality with other protected characteristics and care experience, into wider topics through our programme of policy and comms work.	Policy and Comms	Ongoing	We will build considerations into our programme of policy thought leadership initiated via our corporate strategy in 2024 – highlighting the specific experience of gender-questioning and trans children and the policy response required for them specifically, when tackling wider topics such as the continued reforms to the children's social care system.
Review the Governance Structure surrounding DEI at NCB.	People Team/DEI Lead/SLT		Reassess the roles of the DEI Leads/Networks/DEI Champions/DEI Forum.
<b>Giving our staff the infrastructure to promote equity</b>			
Explore allocating an expected number of "non-chargeable days" per year that will be spent on this.	DEI lead with Finance team	Q1	We have heard strongly that we need to ensure staff have adequate capacity to consider and promote DEI in their

			work. Explore ways to ensure sufficient attention and capacity for staff to do this work well.
Improve the diversity of our participation and advisory networks of children and young people and parents.	Participation and DDs	Q4 and beyond	More diverse networks will ensure that we can build in a fuller range of relevant perspective of children, young people and parents into specific projects.
Improve the diversity of the member organisations in our various specialist membership groups (SMGs).	Practice and Programmes, Digital Team	Ongoing	This will ensure that we are both providing support to, and reflecting the views of, a more representative set of organisations that work on the issues of our SMGs and will therefore help us to promote equity both directly and indirectly.
Develop a stakeholder map of existing NCB relationships that can help us advance equity, either through formal partnerships on bids or through less formal work.	DEI lead with ESLT	Q3	Understanding the range of established partnerships available will help staff build these into specific bids and projects. It will also help us to identify gaps and build strategic relationships to fill these.

Strategic review of NCB learning and evidence to draw out intersectionality of different issues.	Policy team	Q2	Exploring opportunities for funded work that advances a DEI-focused approach to evidence generation, particularly on the intersectionality of race with key areas of focus for us generally, such as care experience and SEND.
Build on the above work and wider evidence, a continuous improvement approach to cultural sensitivity in our training and learning resources.	Practice and Programmes	Ongoing	Given the breadth of our programme of training, professional learning and CPD - ensuring that all of these are equally resonant with all audiences is a very important way for us to advance equity.
Explore potential partnerships with other charities on some of the above (for example evidence reviews).	DEI lead	Ongoing	We know that we many other organisations share similar challenges and have similar thoughts about how to address them, so we will explore where shared endeavours may help us go further, faster. An example would be a programme of external speakers that is open to several charities, a joint bid for an evidence review, or combining

			networks of young people in some cases).
Improve our evidence base to allow for the most effective interventions for gender-questioning children.	Practice and Programmes	Ongoing	NCB has agreed in principle to oversee the Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement for the new PATHWAYS trial on the effectiveness of puberty blockers, which is currently under development led by King's College London.

Further to 2025-2026, we will look into and evaluate which (if any) accreditations/schemes NCB should sign up to such as going from Disability Confident Committed to Disability Confident Employer level in the Disability Confident Scheme or other accrediting schemes such as Investors in Diversity. This will allow us to hold ourselves to account and make improvements via accrediting bodies. It may also attract potential candidates by showing we are an inclusive employer.

We will be looking to embed more inclusive recruitment practices such as supplying questions and/or themes pre-interview as standard. We will also look to train and support managers and panel members.

The Digital & Technology Team will look to develop appropriate digital accessibility policies, process, standards etc to ensure accessibility is considered in technology procurement, deployment and use. We will then be able to direct staff towards guidance on creating material that is accessible.

Further policy will be developed to support the DEI structure of NCB. This will include a Transitioning at work policy to support and embed structures at NCB which support staff and foster an inclusive environment.

## How did we develop this plan?

Listening to our stakeholders is a key part of our strategy and what we do at NCB, therefore this plan could not be developed in isolation. Input to this plan has come from the DEI forum (involving DEI champions and staff network group chairs from across NCB), the new DEI strategy working group, various other stakeholders across NCB and also from the first DEI staff survey to ensure we had input from everyone. We shared drafts with all staff for input and to ensure it reflects the organisation and our aspirations as a whole. Our guiding principle was to develop our DEI work internally to build the organisation needed to achieve our strategic aims. We also consulted with the children, young people and adults we work with to ensure we address any issues the group feel are important to them, focusing on what changes they would like to see in these areas.

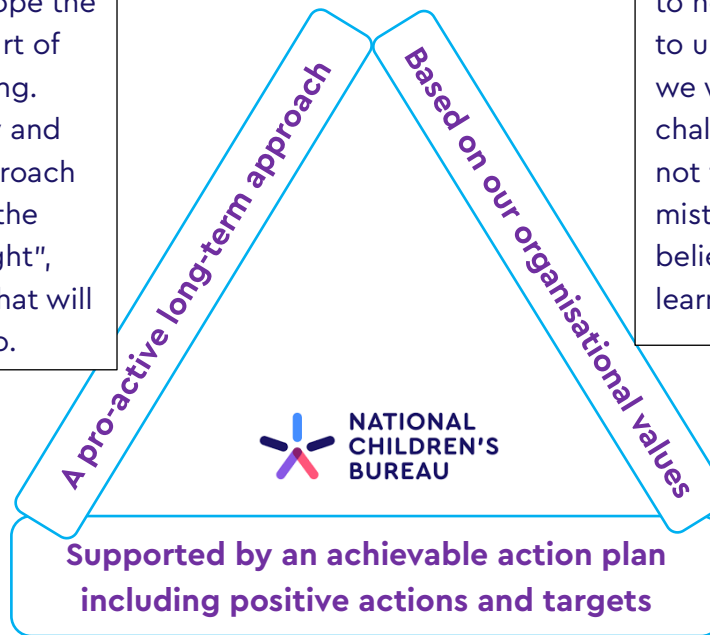
## Our Plan is underpinned by three Core Principles

### 1. A pro-active long-term approach

It is important to recognise that there are no quick fix solutions to improving DEI therefore this is a long-term approach to be monitored on a year-by-year basis. Even then, whilst we hope the progress made becomes an embedded part of the culture of NCB, the work will be ongoing. NCB takes its commitment to DEI seriously and we want to take a strategic long-term approach to how we can improve. We know that at the end of this plan we won't have "got DEI right", rather it is continuous and evolving work that will need to be adapted and updated as we go.

### 2. Based on our organisational values

We will work collaboratively with staff as we know that we are better together and that especially with diversity and inclusion we need to hear from a variety of perspectives to be able to understand how we can improve. Additionally, we will be brave, not shying away from challenges, as staying with the status quo will not further our work in this area. We may make mistakes in some of the work we do, but we believe that it is better to try and to be always learning than not to try at all.



### 3. Supported by an achievable action plan including positive actions and targets

We will review this plan on a yearly basis to see if it continues to meet our priorities or if we need to shift its focus, alongside regular reviews of progress to date on the action plan. The size and resource of NCB also needs to be a consideration when looking at what we can implement and achieve. We have used and will continue to use sector evidence alongside research from the CIPD and governmental reports to inform us on what action to take.



## What our Board says

The commitment to DEI comes right from the top of our organisation, our trustees have worked hard over the past 5 years to diversify the board and show they are committed to the diversity and inclusivity of the Board and staff group in order to improve NCB's governance, performance and outcomes for the people with whom we are working.

Their statement of intent is:

*NCB's Board want diversity, equity and inclusion to be firmly embedded in our organisational culture and champion going beyond simply aiming to meet minimum statutory requirements. This starts with us, the Trustees. A diverse Board supports our leadership, effectiveness and decision making to ensure NCB continues to deliver its mission to build a better childhood for every child. As such, we embrace the following principles that reflect NCB's core values.<sup>1</sup>*

## The Board's principles

- The children and young people who could benefit most from a more equitable and inclusive society will be at the heart of our approach
- We acknowledge that, like in society, there are systemic issues in the charity sector and commit to playing our part to change that.
- We recognise the pivotal role we have in creating change by modelling positive behaviour and taking action.
- We will learn about structural, social, and cultural biases and their impact on leadership decisions.
- We commit to setting standards for DEI that reflect NCB's stakeholders and the areas in which we work.
- We commit to action and to invest resources, where necessary, to improve DEI at NCB.
- We respect all our people as the sum of many parts; a diverse group of talented people collectively working towards our shared vision.

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<sup>1</sup> [NCB Board statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)

## **Further Considerations**

For the further considerations which went into writing the plan please see:

[Appendix 1 – Terminology](#)

[Appendix 2 – Successes and Opportunities from the 2020 plan](#)

## Action Plan Explained

### Overview

The plan has targets for 2025/26 with timelines of when in the year they are expected to be enacted, then suggestions for actions for future years. We acknowledge that this action plan will need to be revisited, revised, refreshed every year as NCB learns, grows and gains input from staff. Priorities may shift and other actions may take their place, but this is what we aim to achieve in 2025/26.

We recognise that a more diverse staff group doesn't automatically mean we have an inclusive culture, we can do all we can to attract a diverse range of staff into NCB, but ensuring everyone feels welcome, included, and wants to stay means that inclusivity is just as important as recruitment, therefore this plan focuses more on inclusivity measures than the last 5-year plan. As part of this, we intend to make sure Learning and Development in this area has a strong focus on increasing people's comfort with the concepts of DEI and how to talk about these confidently with their teams, the wider organisation, and externally.

The actions are based on supporting what this plan outlines we aim to achieve as an organisation alongside other actions that have come through from staff feedback. Alongside an organisational commitment, we believe it is everyone's responsibility at NCB to educate themselves and think deeply about DEI in order for this plan to be a success.

NCB is committed to being a diverse and inclusive organisation for all. Whilst we identify Ethnicity and Disability as priority areas, we continue to monitor other areas of diversity. If this data reveals a need for focus in different areas, we will amend our DEI work plans accordingly. With our limited size and resources, we believe it is better to start in areas where we know we have a deficit and endeavour to increase belonging and inclusion for areas where we feel the statistics are already more representative of the wider population.

We recognise the importance of intersectionality and how the various parts of someone's identity mediate their lived experience, which can be both positive and negative at different times in people's lives. In the workplace this can contribute to inequalities and structural inequities in outcomes and experiences when someone belongs to multiple groups at increased

risk of inequality and discrimination. This could include overlapping or intertwined racism, classism, ableism, sexism, homophobia and/or transphobia. We will endeavour to always consider intersectionality when looking at our DEI work, acknowledging many of our staff may identify with multiple protected characteristics and the organisation requires a cultural shift towards embedding the principles of intersectionality across all aspects of our work. This will be a consideration within our external plan to ensure we are aware of, and accounting for, the intersectional experiences of the children and families we work with and how this can be acknowledged through our external partnerships. We aim to upskill our staff to inform our delivery work to enable them to deliver the DEI vision that is embedded throughout our new organisational strategy. This includes aspects such as working with others to grow our understanding of how systemic racism affects the services children and adults rely on and then reflecting this in our programming.

The internal DEI plan is here to support our staff to be able to do that, to support a culture of learning and questioning all aspects of inequity including systemic racism. We are also striving towards embedding anti-racism practice into NCB through our external and internal plan. How will we do this? By becoming more comfortable around having conversations around racism, through organisational training, listening to our staff with experience of discrimination and creating more of a culture of having conversations around 'race' and racism. However, when developing our corporate strategy, a clear sense emerged that we were missing opportunities to advance equity for children and young people. The most prominent example here is the systemic racism that we know children, adults and families face and that we know compounds many of the other challenges we try and support them with – we want to take every opportunity to highlight this and offer evidence-based solutions that take an anti-racist approach. We will also be looking internally at our policies and procedures to see what adjustments could be required to ensure we are promoting an anti-racist approach where appropriate. This will include exploring supportive partnerships with anti-racist organisations.

We want to drive long-term, sustainable change ensuring our culture, processes and procedures are conducive to an inclusive working environment. We do not want to be tokenistic so are not setting quotas but are setting targets to aspire to and stretch the organisation. If we do not reach our targets, or are not moving towards them at an appropriate pace, we will review and see what we are doing well, what we could do more of and importantly, where we can improve. For example, we will be removing as much bias from the shortlisting and selection process as possible to ensure equitable hiring.

The ability to achieve targets will be affected by the turnover rate of staff; therefore, these targets are aims and not set in stone. At NCB our retention rate, especially at more senior levels, is relatively high (something we celebrate) therefore this needs to be taken into consideration when looking at the pace of change and also impacts on the time taken to see the desired diversity at this level. Whilst our target over time is to increase Black and Global Majority staff at SLT level, we will not be complacent in the meantime with a major focus of increasing all diversity at senior levels generally, so that we have strong succession options in place that will increase diversity from within. We hope our Black and Global Majority talent will stay with NCB; however, we also believe there is a wider responsibility to develop employees regardless, with the understanding that we will be contributing to improving diversity within the sector (and/or society) where representation at senior levels is still in need of significant improvement.

Alongside this we will seek to find other opportunities to further DEI at senior levels such as active Allyship, encouraging diversity of thought, and pulling from all resources to ensure there is limitation on 'group think'. Where there is a lack of representation the focus will be on ensuring the understanding, buy-in, and adherence to inclusive practices, whilst simultaneously working towards our targets.

We also acknowledge that representation is only one part of DEI. In addition to increasing the percentage of certain groups within our workforce, we are also committed to fostering an environment of inclusivity and hope to achieve this alongside our data targets. Allyship is an important aspect of this, and we will continue to empower and encourage our Allies to be visible and active within our DEI plans. We recognise that leadership in this area is central to its success, and as such we will be working on making sure all those in leadership positions are modelling allyship within the organisation.

Integral to inclusion is how we operate together. We are many parts, each with its own specialist expertise, connected by our common values and vision. We appreciate and celebrate each part's individualism, whilst coming together to push for system change. Like a family, each member is unique and we all learn from each other and achieve more together.

We will hold ourselves to account for promoting DEI. This will ensure that significant decisions in the organisation consistently consider the equity impact on different groups represented in the Equality Act (and others we may choose) – and that we build this consideration in at the ground floor of projects rather than at the last minute when facing a decision.

Encouragingly, what emerged from our strategy work was a very clear appetite from staff to seize these opportunities – and much of our new plan is about giving them the tools, infrastructure and inspiration needed to harness this energy.

## 'Race' and Ethnicity

Throughout this document, 'race' is in commas to highlight that 'race' is a social construct that has been made up and used to create hierarchies of power. There is no scientific, biological or anthropological evidence to support that race is a fixed concept relating to human characteristics.

## Internal

Improving the ethnic diversity of our workforce has been a priority stated in our 5 Year DEI Plan created in 2020 and continues to be a focus in this new 4-year plan. Our aim is for the percentage of Black and Global Majority staff at every band to be at least equal to the UK average of the working age Black and Global Majority population (19.3%). Currently, we hold no ethnicity data at all on 8% of staff, which we'd like to improve on.

There has been a significant improvement in the ethnic diversity of NCB's staff group since 2020 especially with a shift from Black and Global Majority staff progressing internally with a significant improvement at band 5 and 6 level. This is very positive news as NCB has a history of staff progressing upwards therefore this may lead to more diversity at higher bands in the next few years – from our current staff around a third have progressed to higher banded positions since starting at NCB. We will be looking at how best to retain and progress our Black and Global Majority staff – see action plan for more details. However, NCB is still not representative of the general population in terms of ethnicity at our highest salary bands (7 and above) which is where our focus needs to be for this 4-year plan.

It should be noted that the recent research from the UK Civil Society Almanac 2023, shows that "The voluntary sector is less ethnically diverse than the private and public sectors, with 90% of its staff identifying as white, compared to 86% for the public and 87% for the private. The proportion of Black and Global Majority, otherwise referred to as Black, Asian and minority ethnic employees in the voluntary sector is low compared to the other two, and has not changed in the last eight years."

NCB compares favourably to the wider charity sector with 19% of Black and Global Majority staff compared to sector average of 10%. Unfortunately, there is no breakdown in terms of seniority in the sector stats so further analysis is not possible.

Our data shows a 22.5% turnover rate for Black and Global Majority staff, compared to 15.8% for the general NCB turnover. This is obviously a concerning finding, and we are prioritising understanding more about what might be the drivers for this. We have already done historic analysis and broken down by different levels of seniority, but initial analysis does not pinpoint a single cause – we have seen a broadly similar pattern for three years now and we have higher turnover amongst Black and Global Majority staff even after controlling for seniority.

Going forward we will be doing further analysis and also looking at qualitative data such as exit interviews as well as discussing the matter with staff groups such as the Staff Networks who provide a supportive, safe space for colleagues, and the DEI forum which is a working group dedicated to progressing our DEI work. Subject to further analysis, the results suggest that, as well as increasing diversity in terms of recruitment, retention and inclusion needs more of a focus as has been outlined in this plan.

For our current data on 'Race' and Ethnicity, please see [appendix 5](#).

## External

We want to put our staff in a position to advance the equity impact of their work as far as possible. We want to find authentic ways to hold ourselves to account on this, avoiding tick-box exercises but also acknowledging that some processes and systems will make this easier for all of us.

Equitable practices address that different people need different tools, policies, and processes to succeed. Equity in an organisation may take the form of reducing or eliminating pay gaps and/or mentoring, developing and promoting staff fairly. We can see this when a person's demographic is no longer a predictor of their success or failure. In order to achieve this, structural imbalances such as systemic racism have to be addressed. Systemic racism goes beyond a person's characteristics and looks at 'race' as a social construct that is inseparable from the scaffolding of society. Systemic racism acknowledges how this runs pervasively deep through systems, laws, policies, and practices. In our external work, this means not just

highlighting where systemic racism affects young people and their families, but how we can apply equity as a viable solution to this.

Both in our most established areas of expertise and in those we're looking to grow, we want to continue to enhance our understanding of the intersectionality of experience, especially how systemic racism affects children and young people's experiences. We want to harness this additional learning to grow our ability to advocate for greater equity of outcomes across different groups of children and young people, building alliances with other organisations where this makes sense.

We will work with others to grow our understanding of how systemic racism affects the services children rely on and reflecting this in our programming. We will also apply a continuous improvement approach to ensuring the cultural sensitivity of our training.

We intend to do a strategic review of NCB's learning and evidence to draw out intersectionality of different issues, especially ethnicity.

We will establish a policy development process that advances NCB's anti-racist approach. This will provide a process to explicitly require staff to consider how racial discrimination, disparities and inequalities play out for children, young people and families. The application of this process will be important in developing our thought leadership and demonstrating an anti-racist approach to policy development and influencing.

At NCB we provide a huge number of training and professional learning opportunities to external audiences like social workers or local authority commissioners. Ensuring that these opportunities reach a representative audience – and resonate with everyone equally regardless of their background – are important ways that we can advance equity in society more widely.

Hearing from external speakers on a range of topics will help us make equity more real – both in terms of hearing about the lived experiences that make DEI so important and in terms of practical examples of how this has been successfully reflected in other projects. We know that we many other organisations share similar challenges and have similar thoughts about how to address them, so we will explore where shared endeavours may help us go further, faster. An example would be a



programme of external speakers that is open to several charities, a joint bid for an evidence review, or combining networks of young people in some cases.

## Disability and Neurodiversity

### Internal

We are specialists in SEND and therefore want to reflect this within our staff and use those expertise as well as learning from others in the sector on how to encourage more neurodivergent and/or disabled staff to work for us and ensure we have an accessible and inclusive environment for those staff members (as well as all staff members) to thrive.

Improving the representation of Disability and/or Neurodivergence in our workforce is a priority stated in this plan continuing from the original 5-year plan. Due to the nature of NCB's work and its focus on disability in children and young people, we believe that it is important to be a disability and/or neurodiversity inclusive organisation and for us to improve our diversity of staff in this respect.

22%<sup>2</sup> of the working age population in the UK report having a disability. We believe that NCB's staff should reflect the UK population. When comparing against the sector, evidence shows that the voluntary sector actually outperforms the other two sectors (public and private) in terms of employing disabled staff, with 26% of staff identifying as disabled.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, we recognise that there is still more work to be done to increase the representation and inclusion of our disabled and/or neurodivergent staff. In April 2020 10% of 104 NCB staff identified as having a disability (at that time we didn't have an additional and/or neurodiversity) which has now increased to 13.5%. To reflect the working age population, we need to increase the number of disabled and/or neurodivergent staff by a further 8.5%.

We hold no disability/neurodiversity data at all on 8% of staff. There may be staff who have not yet disclosed a disability or neurodivergence, we hope with the more inclusive measures we put in place at NCB, the numbers disclosing will improve. Following feedback from the Disability and Neurodiversity Network, an additional action of our plan is to separate disability

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<sup>2</sup> [Employment of disabled people, 2022: Measures | gov.uk](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Voluntary sector workforce - Workforce | UK Civil Society Almanac 2023 | NCVO](#)

and neurodiversity on our diversity monitoring form. We hope this will increase declarations from those who are neurodivergent but do not necessarily see themselves as having a disability.

Over the coming years, we want to strengthen what we do with respect to digital accessibility. There are areas of good practice within NCB at present, but we should look at policies, processes, practices and training to see how we can standardise and strengthen this across the organisation.

We will audit accessibility on other office sites and bring these up to the standard of Mentmore office where possible/feasible.

We have started reviewing our process for how we provide personalised support to individuals who require reasonable adjustments, to ensure we have a robust process for the size of organisation we are now and one that incorporates all relevant teams; also thinking about to how make staff aware of support that can be offered.

To see our current data on Disability and Neurodivergence, please see [appendix 3](#).

## External

Compared to our last DEI plan, this plan has a greater focus on our external impact and many of the actions discussed in the 'Race' and ethnicity section above around giving staff the tools to consider equity impacts more systematically are relevant here as well. As we said in our corporate strategy:

our external impact already strongly advances equity in many ways – the Council for Disabled Children is arguably the UK's leading organisation advocating for the rights of children with special educational needs and disabled children and the work of the Early Childhood Unit helps to narrow the attainment gap between disadvantaged children and their peers, to give just two examples.

To further our work in this area, we will explore how intersectionality affects the children and families we work with, particularly on the intersectionality of race with key areas of focus for us generally, such as care experience and SEND.

## LGBTQ+

### Internal

When looking at our staff demographics compared to the general population, we do not feel the need to set targets in terms of sexuality and gender, although incidentally, we are currently representative according to the UK population. Improving the experiences of LGBTQ+ staff in our workforce is important for NCB and has been solidified through the first NCB LGBTQ+ staff network, established in 2023. NCB acknowledges the current UK political climate when it comes to perceptions of the LGBTQ+ community in general, but also with particular reference to the current transphobic rhetoric. Therefore, there is the need to ensure all staff within the LGBTQ+ umbrella feel safe and welcomed in the workplace, and inclusivity of our LGBTQ+ colleagues is something we have been working on with the network and will continue to do.

We have recognised the absence of some policy, such as Transitioning at Work, and have added this to our longer term plan to make sure we have policies in place to support our LGBTQ+ community at work.

### External

Compared to our last DEI plan, this plan has a greater focus on our external impact and many of the actions discussed in the 'Race' and ethnicity section above around giving staff the tools to consider equity impacts more systematically are relevant here as well. In particular we will continue to monitor the intersectionality of LGBTQ+ identities and our main areas of work, highlighting the specific experiences or challenges of LGBTQ+ children and young people across our policy and practice work.

We acknowledge the impact of the Cass report on both policy and practice, with extremely divergent views and reactions to the report reflecting the polarised nature of the debate around these issues generally. As discussed in the previous section, we will continue to strive to be the best possible employer for trans staff and we see this as relevant to our external work as well, as an action-based rebuttal to transphobia in many segments of society.

We know from a wide range of evidence that intersectionality is an important aspect of the experience of questioning your gender or being trans: it can be more difficult for young people who have also experienced other forms of trauma, who face

marginalisation in the education system due to having special educational needs, and/or who have underlying mental health conditions. Accordingly, we will build these considerations into our programme of policy thought leadership initiated via our corporate strategy – highlighting the specific experience of gender-questioning and trans children and young people and the policy response required for this group specifically, when tackling wider topics through our programme of policy and comms work.

We will also play our part in improving the evidence base for the most effective interventions for gender-questioning and trans children and young people, which the Cass review rightly highlighted was a severely under-researched area. NCB has agreed in principle to oversee the Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement for the new PATHWAYS trial on the effectiveness of puberty blockers, which is currently under development led by King's College London. This will be a very important expansion of the evidence base and also a key way for NCB to develop its own understanding and links into this specific community of children and young people.

We are working to improve the diversity of our participation and advisory networks of children and young people and parents. More diverse networks will ensure that we can build a fuller range of relevant perspectives of children, young people and parents into specific projects which may include LGBTQ+.

## Data

Although we endeavour to look at intersectionality throughout our DEI work, for the purpose of improving the diversity of the organisation we need to break down our stats into groups.

When looking at our staff data there didn't seem to be disparities between NCB staff and the wider population (except for on sex, however this is a sector wide disparity) as there is with ethnicity and disability figures, therefore we have not set targets on other areas of diversity, such as sexuality, religion, sex or age at this current time.

Our data has improved greatly since 2020 with the implementation of Cascade, but there is still some work needed to be completely accurate. There are more blanks in sexuality and religion than other metrics. Some work has been done to increase this data for example explanations and language on the diversity page on Cascade to explain why we collect the data, and we will continue to work with the networks and staff to increase data usage to strive for a near 100% completion rate.

For a full break down of our current data please see:

[Appendix 3 – Disability and Neurodivergence Data](#)

[Appendix 4 – 'Race' and Ethnicity Data](#)

[Appendix 6 – Gender Pay Gap](#)

[Appendix 7 – Additional Data](#)

## Measuring Success

Whilst we are not setting defined quotas, we have targets we are aspiring to, and in order to maintain accountability we will be tracking and measuring the impact of our DEI plan.

To measure improvements in staff perceptions of belonging and inclusion, we will look for at least a 5% increase in inclusion scores from the staff DEI survey. Please refer to the DEI Survey Report for more details.

The amount of people who complete the diversity monitoring form for their diversity data is already impressive compared to others in the sector, however we don't want to become complacent, especially in areas such as religion and sexuality where we have lower disclosure rates. Therefore, we are hoping with our increased inclusion measures (as set out in our action plan below) we will be able to see a 95% average declaration rate across the organisation. We also acknowledge that the number of staff with a disability and/or neurodiversity may be higher than we have recorded due to the fact that it is not mandatory to disclose this data, as is the case in all workplaces. However, we do not want to rely on this fact and will still be looking to target representation in these areas and meet our proposed targets (please see Disability and Neurodiversity, Internal for more details).

Other metrics for measuring success will include analysing our recruitment data (looking at the demographics of applicants, short-list, etc.), improving retention rates amongst our Black and Global Majority staff, exit interview responses, and comparing NCB to other organisations in the sector.

Measuring the equity impact of our external work will be more challenging. Areas we will be able to monitor include quantitative measures such as the amount of Black and Global Majority representation in our work, and the uptake of training and resources we offer by persons of Black and Global Majority. Qualitative measures can be assessed through obtaining lived experience of how the implementation of our plan is affecting the young people and adults we work with. We run a quarterly impact report which will be able to tell us more about what data has and hasn't changed since the implementation of our plan, including the diversity of participants and beneficiaries in different aspects of our work.

We will also ensure that the learning and reflection aspects of our project management guidance capture equity aspects of projects. This will be integral to seeing how we change and adapt over time to make sure we are being as successful as possible in all our identified areas.

We will also measure success through how confident staff are on being able to talk about DEI and the ability for the average staff member to be able to build equity into the work they are doing. This will be a feature of our next staff DEI survey.

## Appendix

### 1. Terminology

We recognise the power and importance of language and how important terminology is when discussing diversity, but also that language changes quickly with some terms being reclaimed but not accepted by others. We want to empower our staff not to shy away from talking about diversity just because they may not feel confident about the language to use. We are trying to develop a 'call in' rather than 'call out' culture, so not shaming people for using the wrong terminology but letting them know and explaining why a term is not appropriate or why a preferred term is better. We are creating a style guide alongside comms colleagues with a diversity section to support staff in how they talk internally and externally to support a shared language. To create this style guide we went out to our staff diversity networks, DEI forum and other colleagues across NCB to ensure we were getting input from the right people. Below are the main language changes that we will be using throughout this document. We appreciate that as our knowledge and experience evolves and we benefit from further advice and shared opinions we may wish to update the terminology we use.

### Ethnicity

We are now using the term 'Black and Global Majority' to be inclusive of people who identify as Black, African, Asian, Brown, Arab and multi-heritage, are indigenous to the global south, and/or have been racialised as 'ethnic minorities'. Globally, these groups represent approx. 85% of the world's population. We have chosen to explicitly add 'Black' so as not to erase the unique experiences and pernicious nature of Black racism. We also acknowledge that Black is an important term of resistance.

We are using the term white ethnic minorities to describe white people who are from ethnic minorities for example some Roma or Travellers, Jewish people or Irish people.

The Internal section of this DEI plan's focus on ethnic diversity within our workforce is to support people who may otherwise be discriminated against because of the colour of their skin or their assumed racialised identities. We recognise and celebrate



the fact that there are white ethnic minorities (including white Irish) amongst our workforce, but we want to be transparent that Black and Global Majority does not include white ethnic minorities. As our focus is on diversifying our more senior staff group in terms of ethnicity, when collecting staff demographics we will be reporting on percentage or number of staff who report being from Black and Global Majority. We will continue to collect data on white ethnic minorities as we want to ensure we can analyse this data if and when needed.

We also want to be clear that the term Black and Global Majority is not perfect and that it is a term that some people are not used to or won't have heard of, or prefer other terms, but we feel that after speaking to our Multi-Ethnic staff network, alongside other stakeholders, that this is the right term for us.

## **Disability & Neurodiversity**

We have been working closely with our Disability and Neurodiversity network and now use both disability and neurodivergence instead of just disability alone. One of the reasons for this is that some people who are neurodiverse do not class themselves as being disabled.

The official definition of disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 in Great Britain and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in Northern Ireland is: 'having a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.' The definition for Neurodivergence, according to the NHS is 'the minority group that diverts neurologically from said "norm". Neurodivergent conditions include Autism/Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)/Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)/ Variable Attention Stimulus Trait (VAST), Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia and Tourette's Syndrome (TS) as well as many other conditions.'

## 2. Successes and Opportunities from the 2020 plan

We are proud of the progress we have made in DEI at NCB. However, we know we can do better, and we also know that we can do more. Some examples of what we have achieved below:

Area	Successes	Opportunities for Further Development
Staff diversity	See staff demographics section below for details. The demographics outline where we are now in comparison to 2020, with increases in staff diversity in terms of ethnicity and disability & neurodivergence. The staff data shows that we have made improvements in both areas, particularly increasing representation of Global Majority staff in more senior roles (bands 5 and 6).	<p>We recognise that this hasn't fully translated to the most senior positions where the staff group is still majority white (bands 7+).</p> <p>There is work needed to ensure we have accurate data from staff to help inform areas for improvement. Completing diversity data can improve with trust, therefore we will be doing a data drive to try to get as complete data as possible. In addition, we have been working with the staff networks specifically the LGBTQ+ network on ensuring our language is as inclusive as possible and uses terminology that represents our staff to encourage higher completion rates.</p> <p>We will look to start collecting data on social class as an additional staff metric to understand our workforce more in terms of socio inclusivity and if we are reflective of the communities we wish to reach.</p>

<p>DEI governance and feedback structure</p>	<p>A new DEI governance structure was created which includes the <b>People and Culture Committee of Trustees</b> (expanding the remit of the originally name Selection Committee) to provide strategy development and oversight. A Trustee DEI champion sits on this committee. A new <b>DEI forum</b> was created consisting of DEI staff champions from across DEI, the purpose of which is to inform and advise on DEI priorities, be a conduit for feedback and embed DEI activities across NCB. In addition to this <b>3 staff diversity networks</b> (Multi-ethnic, Disability &amp; Neurodiversity, LGBTQ+) have been set up, with the purpose to provide a supportive and safe space for members and with the potential to contribute to NCB's DEI agenda. All of the chairs of the network also sit on the DEI forum.</p>	<p>We would like to further the work of the staff networks by creating SLT allies to champion the group and be available to listen to any concerns coming from that network to further our inclusion work and get to the root of any issues that may arise.</p>
<p>Recruitment and Selection</p>	<p>In 2020, NCB started using <b>Positive Action</b> which is targeted measures taken by the organisation to groups that are underrepresented at NCB. It is not a legal requirement but is a way to address that Black and Global Majority staff and staff who are disabled and/or neurodivergent are underrepresented in our workforce. Positive action is different to positive discrimination, which is illegal in the UK.</p>	<p>We want to review our practices and ensure they are all embedded and staff trained appropriately, as well as looking at other inclusive practices to incorporate into our recruitment and selection such as anonymised applications, providing most interview questions in advance as standard as well as other practices.</p>

	<p>An example of positive action in recruitment and selection would be: "to allow an employer faced with making a choice between two or more candidates who are of <b>equal merit</b> to take into consideration whether one is from a group that is disproportionately under-represented or otherwise disadvantaged in the workforce."</p> <p>Positive discrimination would be choosing a candidate who does not have equal merit and is less suitable over another candidate due to their protected characteristic and is unlawful.</p> <p><b>Diverse panels</b> were also introduced, especially in more senior post recruitment to avoid shared bias and to help the candidates feel more comfortable and therefore more likely to have a successful outcome. Additionally, we implemented the <b>Rooney Rule</b> for recruitment of bands 5 upwards, which looks at having at least 1 Black and Global Majority candidate in the shortlisting process if they meet the essential criteria.</p> <p>We recruited our first ever <b>apprentice</b> through the government apprenticeship levy scheme in the people and culture team.</p> <p>DEI credentials and ethos have become key selection criteria when engaging recruitment</p>	<p>We will look to see if the apprentice scheme could work in other teams across NCB, offering more opportunities to young people and those out of work.</p>
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	agencies for senior posts and trustees to ensure we were working with partners who strive to look for a diverse range of candidates.	
DEI Lead Role	We recruited our first ever DEI focused role to support NCB to realise its strategic aims in terms of DEI. This role will mainly be focused on our external-facing work, in particular ensuring that equity is embedded throughout our delivery, policy and communications work.	
People Policies	<p><b>Equality impact assessments</b> were introduced for all our people policies to ensure our policies consider the equality impact on various groups for example sex.</p> <p><b>Updated or additional policies</b> and supporting documents such as the 'Reporting Microaggressions Guidance'. As well as more input to policies from various stakeholder such as the DEI forum to ensure equity.</p>	We would like to ensure our staff group are clearer on the various ways to address instances of discrimination, bullying and harassment.
Developing our knowledge, skills and confidence	We have done some training over the past few years, EDI general training, Anti-racism training, neurodiversity in the workplace awareness session and trans awareness session, as well as introducing mandatory mental health in the workplace and mental health for managers e-	We would like to develop a more consistent approach to our staff development in DEI to have more regular awareness sessions built into our all staff meetings guided by topics that we feel as an organisation will support our culture to be more inclusive and support our staff to feel more confident and comfortable being able to discuss certain subject matters. Building on

	learning that is now embedded into staff inductions.	this, looking at other development opportunities for our staff to build their confidence, skills and awareness to further our DEI work.
Accreditation	Since 2020 we gained the Living Wage Employer accreditation, MIND Bronze Workplace Wellbeing award and became a Disability Confident employer.	We will look to see if any further accreditations would support our DEI work to go further.
Facilities & Digital & Technology accessibility	<p>We have worked closely with the Disability &amp; Neurodiversity staff network to improve our wellbeing room at the London Office in Mentmore Terrace, changing lighting in there as an example. As well as this an evac chair and power assisted doors were installed at the Mentmore Terrace site.</p> <p>The Corporate Services team have worked to provide personalised support to individuals. This has included providing specialist software to meet specific needs, specific laptops or other equipment, advice on how to make use of inbuilt digital accessibility features.</p> <p>We have taken some measures to improve digital accessibility in systems and products we procure, commission and manage.</p>	<p>Over the coming years, we want to strengthen what we do with respect to digital accessibility. There are areas of good practice within NCB at present but we should look at policies, processes, practices and training to see how we can standardise and strengthen this across the organisation.</p> <p>We will audit accessibility on other office sites and bring these up to the standard of Mentmore office where possible/feasible.</p> <p>We have started reviewing our process for how we provide personalised support to individuals, to ensure we have a robust process for the size of organisation we are now and one that incorporates all relevant teams; also thinking about to how make staff aware of support that can be offered.</p>

### 3. Disability and Neurodiversity Data

Progress against stated target:

Number self-identified disabled or neurodivergent	%
April 2020	
10	10%

Number self-identified disabled or neurodivergent	%
May 2024 excl RIP	
20	13.5%

Number self-identified disabled or neurodivergent	%
May 2024 incl RIP	
29	13.5%

When comparing against the sector, evidence shows that this sector actually outperforms the other two sectors (public and private) in terms of employing disabled staff, with 26% of staff identifying as disabled.<sup>4</sup> Therefore we recognise that there is still more work to be done to increase the representation and inclusion of our disabled and neurodivergent staff.

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<sup>4</sup> [Voluntary sector workforce - Workforce | UK Civil Society Almanac 2023 | NCVO](#)

## 4. 'Race' and Ethnicity Data

### Research in Practice

Due to the transfer of almost 70 staff in February from RiP our staff demographics have changed. For comparative purposes, for this year only we will show the stats from NCB with and without the RiP team. At the point of calculating the staff demographics we did not yet have the banding of RiP staff so are only able to provide the total number of staff in the chart below.

Progress against stated target:

Band	Number Black and Global Majority staff NCB, 2020	%	Number Black and Global Majority staff NCB (not incl.RiP) 2024	%	Number Black and Global Majority staff NCB Incl.RiP 2024	%	Target
SLT	0	0%	0	0%			19.3%
7+8	1	5%	2	8%			19.3%
6	2	13%	5	19%			19.3%
5	1	4%	10	30%			19.3%
4	6	27%	5	19%			19.3%
3	3	50%	4	31%			19.3%
1+2	5	42%	8	42%			19.3%
<b>Total staff</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>19.3%</b>

It should be noted that the recent research from the UK Civil Society Almanac 2023, shows that "The voluntary sector is less ethnically diverse than the private and public sectors, with 90% of its staff identifying as white, compared to 86% for the



public and 87% for the private. The proportion of Black and Global Majority, otherwise referred to as black, Asian and minority ethnic employees in the voluntary sector is low compared to the other two, and has not changed in the last eight years."<sup>5</sup>

NCB compares favourably to the wider charity sector with 19% of Black and Global Majority staff compared to sector average of 10%. Unfortunately, there is no breakdown in terms of seniority in the sector stats so further analysis is not possible.

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<sup>5</sup> [UK Civil Society Almanac 2023 executive summary](#)

## 5. Ethnicity Pay gap

We realise the issues with only 'binary' reporting (only splitting staff into white and Black and Global Majority combined), however due to our relatively small size, we feel that for now this is likely the best way to report on it. However, we can break it down further into, for example, ethnicity pay groups according to a larger size with the categories: Asian, Black, multi-heritage, white, other, prefer not to say. That said, this would only be meaningful if we wanted to drill down to that detail and make plans to address particular ethnic groups which would have to be driven by organisational and strategic needs.

<b>Median Ethnicity Pay gap</b>	3.2%
<b>Mean Ethnicity Pay gap</b>	8.54%

This data did not come as a surprise due to the fact that we know that we need to become more diverse at the top of the organisation, especially so from our salary bands 7 up to SLT. However, this is the first time we have done ethnicity pay gap reporting and therefore can give us a baseline to try to improve on.

## 6. Gender Pay Gap

We are proud of our transparent salary structure at NCB with set salaries for each band meaning that there is no requirement for staff to negotiate initial salaries or subsequent pay awards. Whilst we are not required to monitor or disclose gender of ethnicity pay gaps we believe it is good practice to do so as this information informs our actions. The pay gaps we have are not driven by staff doing the same jobs being paid different salaries (as may be the case in organisations with less structured salaries) but by the relative seniority of staff. For example, if an organisation's female staff are, on average, in more junior roles than the average of the male staff there will be a gender pay gap.

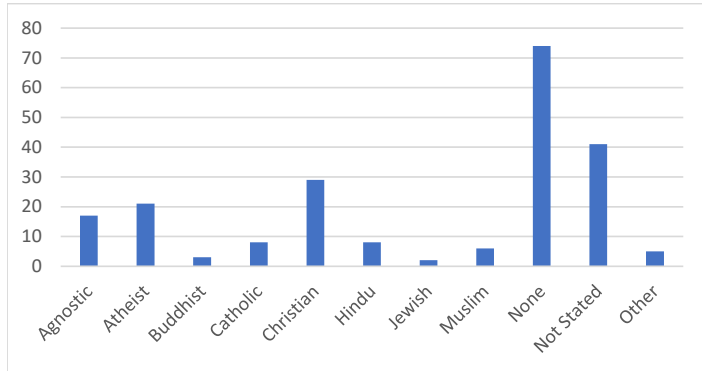
<b>Median Gender Pay gap</b>	2.63%
<b>Mean Gender Pay gap</b>	4.16%

Interestingly although the SLT and ESLT are majority women, the gender pay gap overall for the organisation shows a positive result in both the median and mean calculations meaning on average men are paid more than women at NCB, albeit only by a small percentage. Analysis shows that there are more females in both higher and lower bands, accounting for the statistics. Interrogation of this, and previous data, shows fluctuation both ways without a significant trend which we will continue to monitor.

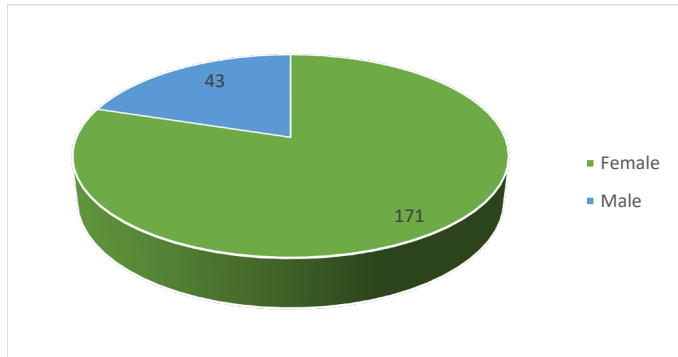
## 7. Additional Data

### Appendix – detailed data

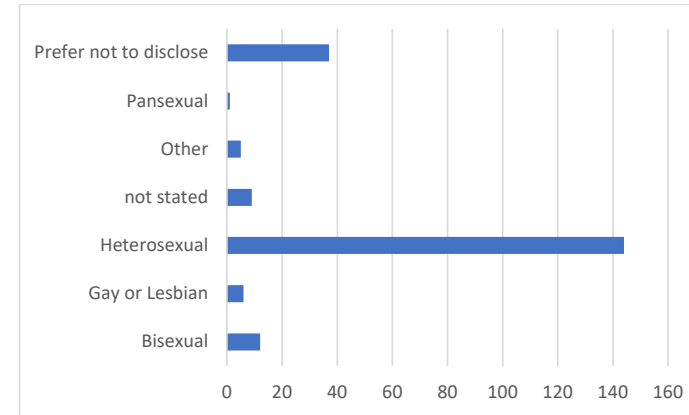
#### Religion – updated



#### Sex



#### Sexual orientation



#### Age

