

## **Not confidential**

**Paper Status: Submitted For Information**

### **CHILDREN AND FAMILY COURT ADVISORY AND SUPPORT SERVICE**

#### **Race Equality Scheme and Equality & Diversity Strategy**

##### **- Annual Report**

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## **1. Introduction**

This paper reports on the progress made in meeting the General and Specific duties of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and against the Equality and Diversity Strategy action plan.

The General race equality duty has 3 components which public authorities are required to meet. These are as follows:

- Eliminating unlawful racial discrimination.
- Promoting equality of opportunity between people of different racial groups
- Promoting good relations between people of different racial groups.

In addition to the general duty, Cafcass also have a Specific duty to have in place a Race Equality Scheme, which demonstrates the actions that we have taken in order to meet the General duty.

The outcome of our review of the Race Equality Scheme and progress against our action plan is as follows:

## **2. Leadership**

Cafcass has commitment for Equality and Diversity issues from the top of the Organisation. Harry Marsh MBE (Board Member) is an active member of the National Equality and Diversity Steering group NEDSG, which is chaired by Sherry Malik (Corporate Director) who also actively promotes externally the importance of equality recently presenting a speech to the President's Conference on Diversity in Dartington (see appendix 1). There have also been links made with the new Commission for Equality and

Human Rights CEHR, through the work of Stuart Cornwell. The NEDSG group meets quarterly and continues to provide leadership on race equality issues within. The group is made up of champions from a cross section of regions and minority groups. Regional Diversity representatives are also required to update the group on a their regions performance against KPI targets.

### 3. Raising Awareness of the Race Equality Scheme.

Cafcass has embarked on a number of activities to raise awareness of the duties and requirements of the Race equality scheme. These are as follows:

- An Equality and Diversity Handbook was produced and distributed to every member of staff.
- A Diversity Conference was held in March 2007, which was well attended and supported by Cafcass staff.
- The diversity monitoring policy and procedure was reviewed and re launched at the Diversity Conference in March 2007.
- A working model on Culturally Competent Assessments was developed in 2006/07 in unison with Dr Begum Maitra, this was also presented at the diversity conference and now being delivered as training to practitioners.

### 4. Providing Statistical data on employees.

Statistical information on the composition of our workforce is monitored and reported on in our Annual report. Cafcass is making every effort to improve representation of minority groups at all levels, but in particular at senior levels within our organisation.

Staff diversity monitoring information has improved significantly over the last 2 years. We are able to confidently report on the ethnic origin of 98% of our employees. Capturing this information for Self employed contractors is more challenging, but should be improved by our HR IT systems (KCS). Cafcass reports on the diversity composition of our workforce in our Annual report and as part of our HR monitoring.

**Table 1. Ethnicity Profile for Cafcass Workforce at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Chinese</b>	<b>Mixed</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>% BME</b>
FSW	3	1	0	1	24	0	0	13.8%
FCA	17	63	0	16	1094	9	7	6.6%
Bank Scheme	1	6	0	0	109	0	1	6.0%
Service Mgr	4	8	0	3	112	0	0	9.4%
Snr Manager	2	4	0	1	38	0	0	13.3%
Specialist Staff	7	12	0	1	75	0	0	20.0%
Admin	19	15	1	2	316	3	0	9.6%
Cleaners	1	0	0	0	11	0	0	8.3%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1779</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8.2%</b>
<b>% Workforce</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>89.5%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	

## 5. Monitoring Grievance, Disciplinary and ET

With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007, Cafcass centralised the monitoring of the ethnicity of employee related cases on a quarterly basis. This includes Grievances, Disciplinarys, Capabilities and Employment Tribunal (ET) cases submitted.

**Table 2. Monitoring Grievance, Disciplinary and ET**

CASE TYPE	TOTAL STAFF	BME STAFF	% OF BME
Grievances	15	2	13.33%
Disciplinarys	3	0	0.00%
Capability	3	0	0.00%
ET Claims	10	0	0.00%
Total	31	2	6.45%

Out of 15 Grievances received, 2 are from employees from ethnicity background. Out of the 31 total cases, 6.45% are ethnic minority employees.

Cafcass will continue to monitor any trends in this information in order to ensure that Black and minority ethnic employees are not unfairly discriminated against by our procedures. We will also be embarking on a series of training for our middle managers during 2007/8 to provide managers with the skills required to handle disciplinarys, grievances and capability issues in a non-discriminatory way.

## 7. Support Groups for BME Staff.

Cafcass encourages and supports Staff support networks. The Black Managers Network initially provided support to 5 Black managers but over the 18 months has seen its membership increase to incorporate all managers within the Organisation. The East Midlands has a well-established support group, and support groups also exist in the West Midlands and North West. Also London has now in 2006 newly created a workers support group.

Cafcass have also ensured that all new starters are made aware of the existence of staff support groups by informing them of the various groups as part of their induction process.

## 8. Service User Monitoring.

Significant progress has been made in the collation, monitoring and reporting of service user information. Prior to the introduction of the Race Equality Scheme Cafcass only had diversity monitoring on 41% of our service users in 2004/05. We believe that the increased awareness of diversity issues amongst our staff and the need to capture this information in order to improve our service delivery has lead to a marked improvement of approximately

82.2% as recorded at the end of August 2007. We still have a long way to go to ensure that we achieve our target of 100%, but we will work with the Courts and local Authorities to achieve this aim.

Practice implications identified from the monitoring can now begin and be used when carrying impact assessments. A breakdown of the current diversity data known (see appendix 2), which is for 78,583 service users since April 2006, highlights particular aspects of policy interest. There is a clear distinction that Asian families are more likely to be involved in Private Law cases. Meanwhile Black families will be more involved in Public Law as a percentage though the difference between black families accessing public and private law services is less acute. Also in FAO there is a clear distinction that Asian Pakistan families may be involved in Family Assisted Orders. On closer inspection three quarters of these cases are handled in the Bradford office.

## 9. Complaints from Service Users

There has been a marginal reduction in complaints based on Racism from 2005/06 through to 2006/07. It is noted that with regards to the monitoring of the ethnicity of complainants it is difficult based on previous performance of diversity monitoring to ascertain the relevance of the ethnicity and nature of complaints other than in cases of racism.

**Table 3. Complaints of Racism received by Cafcass**

Year	Number of Complaints	Percentage of total
2005/06	6	1.3%
2006/07	5	0.8%

## 10. Diversity Resource Pack

Practice guidance on diversity issues has now been compiled into a diversity resource pack to assist practitioners with their everyday work. It forms part of the diversity toolkit, which also includes Cafcass' diversity policies, the Equality and Diversity Strategy and the staff handbook. The guidance documents within the resource pack are:

- **Welfare Checklist Guidance** – guidance on report writing and using the welfare checklist to illustrate the different needs of children.
- **Working with Interpreters** – when, how and what to consider.
- **Female Genital Mutilation Guidance** – protocol and guidance for dealing with female genital mutilation from the London safeguarding children board.
- **Asylum Seeking and Refugee Guidance** – useful information on issues arising from working with asylum and refugee children and families.

- **Working with Race and Culture Guidance** – some key practice points that collectively provide a framework and set of references to reflect on our work in this area.
- **Gender and Sexual Orientation Guidance** – includes definitions and sources of further information to assist Cafcass staff when working with the general public and with each other.
- **Working with Interpreters** – includes how to best use interpreters, including what to do before during and after an interview.

The resource pack is a dynamic set of documents that is constantly being added to. There are 2 further titles to be posted on the site these 'Islam and Domestic Violence' guidance which has been issued by a Scottish based Islamic women's group and a Department of Health guidance on how to deal with Parents with Mental Health Issues'. Both documents need to be reviewed to fit in line with Cafcass' practice models.

## 11. Recruitment Applications from Under represented groups

Cafcass have not as yet set targets for each region to achieve in terms of recruiting Black and minority ethnic applicants, as we did not have meaningful data about our service users. However over the last year regions have been active in promoting our employment opportunities to the BME groups. In October 2005, a Black Male practitioner was featured in a publication called Black History Month, and in October 2006, six black female managers were featured in the 2007 edition of Ethnic Britain. Both of these publications are distributed widely in schools, Colleges, job centres and community centres.

Other examples of Good practice initiatives over the last year are as follows:

- Advertising in the national BME press such as the New Nation, Asian Times, Eastern Eye and Caribbean teams, as well as in the local BME press. A good example of this is in Slough.
- Encouraging balanced recruitment panels where practicable.
- Appointment of interpreters/support workers in our Bradford where we have client groups whose first language is not English.

We have used the concept of 'growing our own' to recruit to Service Manager, Administrator and Heads of Service post where we have identified potential within the workforce. We are developing a talent management strategy, which will incorporate mentoring and coaching opportunities for BME staff. All these initiatives have led to an overall increase of BME staff in all grades since 2005, which is shown in the table 3 below.

**Table 4. BME Staff in post from 2005-2007**

Job Group	BME STAFF IN POST			% BME OF TOTAL STAFF		
	2005	2006	2007	2005	2006	2007
Practitioners	69	115	114	5.1%	8.3%	8.2%
Support Staff	45	63	53	9.7%	12.4%	11.0%
Service Managers	4	8	14	3.1%	6.1%	10.2%

Snr Managers	5	4	7	17.9%	8.7%	12.3%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>

## 12. Recruitment and selection training.

Over 200 recruiters have been trained in effective recruitment and selection techniques. This training is still ongoing to ensure that we meet our commitment as detailed in our Recruitment Code of Practice of ensuring that all members of interview panels have training in anti discriminatory practices.

## 13. Equality Impact Assessments

In order to ensure that we are aware of the impact that our policies and procedures have on the Black and Minority ethnic people we commissioned Trinity Development to run a series of workshops. Our senior managers were amongst the first groups of staff to receive training followed by other key personnel within our organisation such as HR Advisors/manager, and corporate strategists. We have also introduced an equality impact assessment tool for the development of policies as part of the 'Policy Development Framework', which ensure that reports or policies are not approved unless the impact is assessed in advance.

## 14. Consultation.

Following the 'OWLS' review of our Recruitment and selection procedure and HR policies, HR invited a cross section of staff from the East and West Midlands to take part in a focus group/discussion. The key recommendations from this group were distributed to all Black staff within Cafcass, so that we could ensure that all views were represented. Our black managers also reviewed and commented on the findings of the 'OWLS' report, and Cafcass response. Many of the suggestions that followed from these discussions have been incorporated into our action plans and informed our further thinking. For example:

- Our Talent Management Strategy introduces the principle of Mentoring/Coaching BME staff.
- Organising for Quality recognises the need to develop our staff by introducing 'enhanced roles'.
- KLPD have improved links with University students and are continuing to offer practice-learning opportunities for social work students.
- Our secondment policy will help us to 'tap' into the network of experienced social workers in Local Authorities, and enable us to second black workers to other organisations if they wish to enhance their development.
- Our Staff support group policy will encourage more groups to become established and operate within a framework which will help

us to understand more about the diverse communities in which we serve.

- We have invited employees from minority groups who wish to support us in our efforts to have balanced recruitment panels to receive recruitment and selection training.

Resources have not permitted us to address all of the issues raised by the BME focus groups, but significant areas have been addressed.

## **15. HMICA Race Equality Inspection PIR**

There were 6 recommendations following the inspection in March 2006. The inspection process is coming to a close in December 2007 with a Post Inspection review PIR. Progress against each of them is as follows:

- Highlighting the duties under the Race Equality Scheme more explicitly – this recommendation is now fully implemented.
- More effective monitoring of service users - This recommendation requires a 95% monitoring of all service users as per our KPI. Therefore we have only partially completed the recommendation
- A toolkit to support better practice - information directly relevant to practise has been collated in the form of a resource pack. The toolkit as a whole includes the newly revised diversity monitoring policy, equality and diversity handbook, as well as the strategy and action plan. This recommendation is now completed
- Setting workforce targets for better representation: These were issued to all teams in July and team workforce planning has begun in all teams as part of the team business planning process to be completed in October 2007.
- Consult with BME staff to better provide and resource support systems – This is now complete and ongoing.
- Better provision for the diverse religious and cultural needs of staff and service users. The release of the handbook highlights our position to support individual needs, all Cafcass literature available in various languages/formats, support groups fully supported all illustrate this recommendation is completed but also an ongoing activity.

## **16. Equality and Diversity Action Plan**

In addition to focusing on the Race Equality scheme in 2006/07 there has been additional work progressing other elements of equality within the organisation. These can be seen in the action plan (Appendix 3) where we have complied with both the Disability Equality Duty (December 2006) and the Gender Equality Duty (August 2007). This has resulted in series of new actions that will further benefit our staff. Progress against the action plan is monitored by NEDSG.

## **17. Summary**

In 2006/07 since last October there have been a large number of positive activities and results that have contributed to our equality and diversity aims as set out in the strategy in 2005. This work is continuing and highlights the effective leadership and work of NEDSG to bring about these changes. In the coming year this good work is set to continue.

Paul Brown

Anita Davies

**Appendix 1.** Speech Given by Sherry Malik to the President's Conference on Diversity, Dartington, 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> September 2007

If I were to ask you to reflect on the culture that you grew up in and then on the culture you are living in now, you would tell me that there are many aspects of your childhood culture that you have brought with you in to your life today and others that you have left behind. We grow and evolve and our culture changes over time. The way you celebrate Christmas or Eid or Diwali now may be different to how you celebrated it growing up as a child, because your partner's traditions merge with yours and these then form a new culture that you and your children live in and so it goes on.

Culture and we all have one, is dynamic and constantly changing over time. Fans of Richard Dawkins<sup>1</sup> might even want to argue that culture takes on a life of its own constantly evolving as it interacts with its environment. Culture is made up of many different components: food, language, music, history, geography, clothes, values, discipline, tradition, rituals, festivals, religion, collective memory etc.

In Cafcass, we want our staff to start from this perspective. The values and beliefs that people have, are shaped by personal and unique circumstances, which cannot be stereotyped by simply being Indian or Pakistani, Iranian or Turkish, Welsh or English, Scottish or Irish. The 'Molly Misbah' case in Scotland is a prime example of how globalised and complex the issues in our work have become.

Today's Britain is a melting pot of these components, be it food, dress, values or moral dilemmas. It is the families we work with, who are the experts on their own cultures. Open questions such as how do you celebrate birthdays in your family?

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Dawkins is the Charles Simonyi Professor of the Public Understanding of Science at Oxford University. His books about evolution and science include *The Selfish Gene*, *The Extended Phenotype* *River out of Eden* and most recently, *Unweaving the Rainbow*.

What happens at meal times? Who makes what decisions in the family? etc., can tell you so much about how things are done in different families, what traditions and values are important to them, how hierarchies may operate. In our work to safeguard children, this can be used to explore many issues in detail from the family's perspective.

For families in the UK, 'culture' has changed dramatically over the last generation – a massive decline in membership of churches, political parties and other social institutions, a massive expansion in social networking of one sort or another, the continuing marginalisation of people with disabilities of one kind or another, the continuing lack of joined-up services for children whose parents have mental health problems. The patterns of family life throughout England are ever changing and complex, with divorce, reconstituted families, dual culture marriages and children and migration and in our work we can no longer make assumptions about culture. We just have to take the time to find out.<sup>2</sup>

Cafcass is on a journey, one of self-assessment, the desire for continuous improvement and becoming a learning organisation. Put simply it means that we don't want service users to complain about the same things year on year and not change, we don't want to wait for inspectors to tell us what we aren't doing well. We do however want to ask those whom we work with, including children, 'how was it for you?' and learn from this. We want to review how well we are doing on an ongoing basis and be more open and transparent about our work. Above all, we want to keep the unique stories of the families we work with at the very centre of our work, considering each of these within the context of their unique identities and their diverse cultural experiences.

Our self-assessments and inspection reports have been telling us that our reports do not always address diversity issues meaningfully. One judge told me about a report he had just received and how he challenged the practitioner that: 'simply acknowledging that the father was black African Caribbean does not address diversity issues: it's how everything then relates to that issue, how it impacts on the

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<sup>2</sup> The increased number of immigration-related care cases, in teams like Leicester can take up to 3 times as long to resolve.

care of the children is what I want to know more about. It's the 'so what?' question and the answer was missing.'

Whether someone has a disability, is gay or is an asylum seeker, what we must seek to do is to explore how that may impact on the issues before the court. Simply stating it does not mean anything. Over the years many social workers I have worked with have said, the family's race or gender or sexuality is not an issue here, why raise it? How can the essence of **who someone is** not be an issue?

UN Secretary - General Kofi Annan said: "It is one thing to bemoan the persistence of prejudice and quite another to actually do something about it. All too often when faced with bigotry, institutional prejudice and discrimination, organisations and individuals are silent and complacent. This passivity masquerades as tolerance but in reality this is complicity, since it emboldens the intolerant and leaves victims defenceless. True tolerance is more assertive, more active. "

So as an organisation and working within a larger Family Justice System what are **we** actively doing to ensure that our services are relevant and meaningful? When we are working with someone who does not speak English, when we employ someone who is gay or a lesbian, when someone with a disability visits us, are we being fair? Are we providing the same service as we do to others? What is the experience of our diverse service users when they come into contact with us? Indeed **who** are our service users?

The return of diversity monitoring forms currently stands at over 76% (as at the end of June 07) and we are optimistic that this will continue to improve as it has year on year (from a low base of 20% in 2004) This is a statutory duty that we must comply with and which we are taking seriously. These returns tell us that around 18% of our service users are not White British, that Asian families are more likely to be represented in our private law work (around 8%) than Black families (3.1%). In public law proceedings this is reversed although the difference is less pronounced. (4.3% Black Families, 3.1 % Asian families) Mixed parentage families formed nearly 5% of public law proceedings and 3% of private law proceedings. Nearly 6% of our private law service users and over 8% of our public law service users say they have a disability. We need to understand the gaps in our services and we can only do that through proper monitoring which is understood and carried out by all staff as an **essential** part of the work we do. We now expect all our teams to routinely consider

such information along with the management information they use to monitor their work.

When I have visited offices across the country, staff still questions such as: "What is the purpose of these? What do I tell service users who want to know why I am asking questions about their ethnicity or disability?"

Here are some examples of how we are using this data to help us provide a better service:

- **Workforce planning** A significant proportion (54%) of our workforce is over 55 and may choose to retire at 60. This presents us with an opportunity to plan for the future composition of our workforce, so it is more representative of the communities we serve. If we don't understand the makeup and needs of our service users through monitoring, we are simply guessing and not making informed decisions.

#### **Case example: Workforce planning**

Each local area will, as part of its annual business planning cycle, set out its workforce plans. This means understanding past demand and future projections, carrying out an analysis of need within the context of our remit, and matching this against existing skills, the profile of staff<sup>3</sup> and services available in the organisation.

- **Working with families who do not speak English** Many teams face issues in working with interpreters and sometimes dealing with several community languages in a single area. This is a resource planning issue and we propose to use the data to back up local business cases to recruit first language workers, be they family support workers or FCAs, receptionists or to commission an interpreting service.

#### **Case Example: Working with a diverse community in Bradford**

Bradford has a very diverse population, with a large Asian Muslim community.

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<sup>3</sup> We are better at monitoring the diversity of our employed staff at 98%. 5.5% of our staff are disabled although unseen disability is higher, 9.2% of all staff and 8.3% of our FCA's are from BME communities. (source Cafcass Annual Report 2006/07)

Strong partnerships have been developed with a growing range of voluntary groups, in particular with Muslim faith advisers.

It is estimated that approximately 25% of S7 reports prepared by the office involve members of the Asian community. In recognition of this there are two posts designated as Cafcass Support Worker/Interpreter, but who are a regional source. The office has also a full time receptionist with Asian language skills.

- **Translating our materials:** We currently translate our leaflets into other languages on demand, but through accurate data gathered from diversity monitoring we can more routinely consider the translation and interpreting needs of our materials into the principal languages among our service users. Similarly we need to know the requirement for information presented in the form of audiotape or Braille, and accessibility issues for our website.

**Case example: Translation**

Over the past year we've had several requested for leaflets in Kurdish and Polish, which demonstrates shifting demand and the need for ongoing monitoring of which languages our service users use.

- We know we are dealing with increasing numbers of **asylum and immigration issues** which have added to the complexity of the work we are doing, but until recently we have been unable to pull together a coherent response at a national level because we did not know the scale of the work in this area. We need to be able to ask the right questions early on to support children through the additional issues they encounter as a result of immigration and asylum status.

**Case Example: BIA protocol**

Cafcass and the Border Immigration Agency (BIA) are developing a protocol on how to work together effectively to ensure the welfare of children and young people involved with both agencies. The strict rules of confidentiality that govern our work result in particular steps needing to be taken to ensure we share information appropriately, without breaching this confidentiality. We are developing guidance, along with two standard letters to ensure a consistent organisational response to these queries..

- **Religious beliefs and culture, community links:** What links should we make within our communities, with whom and for what purpose? We can only act on this with purpose when we understand more about our service user base. By knowing the communities we serve, we can ensure that partnerships and training for FCAs reflect and benefit the service users. For example, in London where 13.6% of service users are Muslim, the second largest belief after Christianity, we are acting on this information to form links with this section of the community within London and to provide suitable training to staff.

**Case example: Working in partnership**

The Southampton team set up a multi-disciplinary working group with statutory and voluntary organisations to improve outcomes for children from minority ethnic communities. That same team reports 100% returns on diversity monitoring and has developed effective dialogue with religious leaders and groups linked to the minority ethnic community served by Cafcass including asylum seekers.

- **Learning and development needs** cannot be targeted if we do not know the makeup of our service users. We have built in criteria for all our course specifications to include issues of diversity as well as to be child centered. We are also supporting training at 3 other levels, depending on job role and development needs:
  - an online Equality and Diversity certificate which covers legislation and duties for all staff and which is offered at a very nominal fee or in some cases is free in collaboration with local colleges.
  - Team based diversity training, which helps each team to recognise local issues and resolve these. Several regions have rolled out a dedicated programme of team based diversity training.
  - Training for FCA's to support practice issues. Examples include Working with African Caribbean fathers, Working with Black Families, Parental Mental Health.

**Case example: Culturally competent training**

Dr Baigam Maitra, Consultant Child and Adolescent psychiatrist, is helping us to deliver a programme of training nationally between January and March 08 to our FCA's to:

- Understand how larger group beliefs (cultures) influence individual parent's beliefs, parenting behaviour, and ideas about "children's needs".
- Develop skills at observing, interviewing and drawing influences from cross-cultural assessments
- Integrate a theoretical understanding of culture and culture practice with a consideration of the best interests of an individual child.

As an organisation we have signalled our commitment to have Equality and Diversity integral to our developments by providing leadership at Board and Executive level. Harry Marsh, who is a Cafcass Board Member, and I provide this lead and ensure that all our colleagues are actively considering the impact of our policies and developments on all groups of staff and service users.

The case for why the Family Justice system and the various agencies in it need to start to work together has been established very clearly by the work carried out by Julia Brophy and her colleagues<sup>4</sup> who describe the experiences of Black and Minority Ethnic families in the family courts. I have recently started to attend the FJC Diversity sub committee chaired by Khatun Sapnara and pay tribute to the commitment and expertise of its members. This is an arena to work together and I look forward to both sharing the work of Cafcass and to work on new developments with the Committee. In particular I believe the Family Justice System needs to develop a comprehensive strategy, which sets out how it will deal with Equality and Diversity issues and the National FJC can look to its Diversity Committee to lead on it.

Cafcass has made good progress in establishing frameworks: In the past two years we have developed a five-year Equality and Diversity Strategy, a Service User Diversity Policy, which sets out our promise, our new Disability Equality and Gender Equality Schemes and along with our Race Equality Scheme we have put together a

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<sup>4</sup> *Minority ethnic parents, their solicitors and child protection litigation* Julia Brophy, Jagbir Jhutti-Johal, Eleanor McDonald (2005)  
*Significant Harm: Child Protection Litigation in a Multi-Cultural Setting*. Brophy, Jhutti-Johal and Owen (2003a)

comprehensive work programme, which is built into every strand of our three-year Strategic Business Plan. We are routinely carrying out impact assessments on all our new developments, have developed a practice resource guide covering themes such as working with interpreters, diversity and welfare checklist, race and child protection and gender and sexual orientation.

I started by stating our intention to provide every service user, including children, an opportunity to give us some feedback about their experience of our work with them. Currently we have a Quality Assurance system, which has a feedback form for adults, and children and we also use Viewpoint. However, we are developing an online feedback system which will allow individual password protected feedback, linked to our Case Management System (CMS). This will in time allow us to analyse the outcomes for service users and their experiences in a much more robust way. Our needs, wishes and feelings packs is another example of how we seek to ensure individual needs are identified and presented to the court.

But we don't want to stop there. We want to move from consultation to participation<sup>5</sup>. Focus groups, participation boards, sharing of reports before filing them, engaging with those who are complaining: it takes courage to open ourselves up and to work in a more open and transparent way. Our Young People's Board, a very energetic and diverse group of young people, have helped us along this journey enormously, for example being part of recruitment panels, developing policies, informing consultations such as the one on transparency in the family courts. It is only by walking this road that we will begin to provide a meaningful and relevant service which is based on a better understanding of the context of our service users' lives.

As an organisation we are beginning to talk and raise issues of diversity in our practice. For me this is the most positive sign, for we none of us know all the answers. By asking, talking, discussing and sharing we will gain the knowledge and confidence to develop our practice models in working with some very complex issues. Around the country there are some fantastic examples of how individuals and teams within Cafcass are working with complex issues of diversity and we need to more routinely learn from these.

We have made good progress, but much more needs to be done. We need to develop better partnerships, both internal and external. All complex legislation, like

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<sup>5</sup> Cafcass Service User Engagement & Participation strategy 2006

specific equalities legislation, requires partnership working for it to be successful. The key to this will be for Cafcass to be less structurally isolated and to face outwards more, and to learn from other organisations just as they can learn from us. Diversity is a corporate responsibility for all of us in the Family Justice System.

**Questions for consideration:**





- 1) The local authorities monitor their service users diversity, as does Cafcass. Currently the family justice system does not collect diversity statistics. The service user therefore has to give information at various points, which from their perspective, is tiresome. Should we not think this through collectively as a system, understand the value of the information we may gather and then collect diversity monitoring information at the point of application? We can then more usefully share this information across the system to help with planning services.
- 2) What two things could you do at a local level, which would improve the experience of BME service users?





Appendix 2. CAFCASS Service User Ethnic Origin: Cases Received since 1 April 2006 to 31 August 2007







National*	Public		Private		FAO		Adoption		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Asian	26	0.1%	220	0.4%	2	0.2%	14	0.6%	262	0.3%
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	94	0.5%	524	0.9%	2	0.2%	17	0.7%	637	0.8%
Asian or Asian British Indian	118	0.7%	1,566	2.7%	19	1.8%	20	0.9%	1,723	2.2%
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	323	1.8%	2,365	4.1%	64	5.9%	38	1.6%	2,790	3.6%
Black or Black British African	376	2.1%	677	1.2%	4	0.4%	30	1.3%	1,087	1.4%
Black or Black British Caribbean	435	2.4%	845	1.5%	10	0.9%	19	0.8%	1,309	1.7%
Black or Black British Other	29	0.2%	124	0.2%	2	0.2%	3	0.1%	158	0.2%
Chinese	22	0.1%	94	0.2%	2	0.2%	8	0.3%	126	0.2%
Chinese Other	8	0.0%	11	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	0.2%	23	0.0%
Mixed Other	264	1.5%	413	0.7%	2	0.2%	36	1.6%	715	0.9%
Mixed White & Asian	200	1.1%	602	1.0%	10	0.9%	26	1.1%	838	1.1%
Mixed White & Black African	148	0.8%	272	0.5%	6	0.6%	18	0.8%	444	0.6%
Mixed White & Black Caribbean	535	3.0%	721	1.3%	10	0.9%	32	1.4%	1,298	1.7%
Other Ethnic Group	527	3.0%	1,341	2.3%	25	2.3%	95	4.1%	1,988	2.5%
White British	13,781	77.5%	46,122	80.3%	897	83.1%	1,813	78.6%	62,613	79.7%
White Irish	179	1.0%	408	0.7%	12	1.1%	12	0.5%	611	0.8%
White Other	706	4.0%	1,120	2.0%	12	1.1%	123	5.3%	1,961	2.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,771</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>57,425</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,079</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,308</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>78,583</b>	<b>100.0%</b>





\*each region will receive a detailed breakdown.

Appendix 3. Equality and diversity Action Plan




<b>Objective 1. To inspire a culture in which all children and families are respected and valued, and their rights are promoted and supported.</b>						
No.	Priority	Activities/Success Measures	Lead Person	Target Date	Progress	Status
1.1a	Highlight diversity and ensure needs of local communities are taken into account in all corporate documents e.g. business plan, national policies.	Impact Assessment training rolled out throughout the year	KLPD	Mar-08	Dates set for 3 events: 23 January 2008 - Manchester 19 February 2008 - London 18 March 2008 - Derby	
1.1b		All policies documents to be impact assessed at policy review stage	Policy Leads	Ongoing	HR Policies already impact assessed, along with Worforce Strategy, KLD Strategy and Business Plan 2007-10	
1.1c		Communications team to ensure both internal and external publications are reflective of UK society	Takki Sulaiman	Ongoing	Completed - To be reflected in Comms strategy	
1.2a	Cafcass to promote and highlight positive experience stories both internally and externally.	Identify and publicise positive experience stories that can be used nationally from a diverse range of Service Users (SUs)	Takki Sulaiman	Ongoing	2006/07 Annual Report DVD highlights Servie User experience	



1.2b		Promote service user satisfaction in service delivery by developing a range of methods SUs can feedback.	Sherry Malik	Sep-07	New system being launched in Oct 07 which merges viewpoint and QA feedback	
1.3a	Have greater involvement and collaboration with diverse support groups and stakeholder organisations	Use the framework of the engagement and participation strategy to work with local groups	Fiona Green		Recruitment for Partnership managers begun in September 07	
<b>Objective 2. To eliminate all forms of institutional discrimination and ensure adherence to legislation and appropriate codes of practice</b>						
Actions for achieving this objective are covered in the action plans of the Race Equality Scheme, Disability Equality Scheme that are found at the end of the action plan.						
<b>Objective 3. To ensure diversity principles are fully reflected in the actions of all staff and partners within Cafcass.</b>						
No.	Priority	Activities/Success Measures	Lead Person	Target Date	Progress	Status
3.1a	All training for Cafcass staff should have equality and diversity principles included in the content	Roll out of Culturally Competent assessment framework to all FCAs	Christine Smart	Mar-08	Begum Maitra has designed course outline and trainers are currently being recruited	
3.1b		Create Questionnaire to help staff to measure the level of their awareness	Paul Brown	Dec-07		

3.1c		Roll out 3 level of diversity training – online learning (basic), regional training (medium level) and impact assessment training (higher).	KLPD	Dec-07		
3.2	Improve diversity information being supplied from the courts	Work with the courts service to receive diversity information and develop system	Sherry Malik	Dec-07	Diversity information linked to IT upgrade in the family courts. Been informed diversity data being forwarded in Oct 08	
3.3a	Ensure that all Equality and Diversity initiatives are regularly communicated to all CAFCASS Staff	Regular Articles in Channel C	Paul Brown	Ongoing	Article from B. Kirby, Equality and Diversity handbook and Diversity conference all included in Channel C	
3.3b		NEDSG Members to provide a strong link between national strategy and front line initiatives	NEDSG Leads	Ongoing	Updates show activity in regions. Regional diversity conferences and regional training all taking place. Some region little activity	
3.4	Carry out staff survey	Use findings from staff survey to understand diversity implications for all staff and take steps to address them.	NEDSG	Jun-07	Completed - Staff Survey results were released in May 07	
3.5a	Information for Service Users to be made available in easily accessible forms	Ensure all materials can be translated or made available in audio-visual ways upon request.	Takki Sulaiman	Jun-07	Completed - To be reflected in Comms strategy	

3.5b		Multi-faith calendars of festivals in all teams	Paul Brown	Apr-07	Completed - Calendar included in every copy of Channel C. Online Calendar on the intranet	
3.5c		Actively promote good community relations	Service Managers	Ongoing	Guidance needed to provide managers with ideas how to promote good practice	
3.5d		All offices to do an audit to ensure it is comfortable, reflective and meets the needs of all SUs	NEDSG Leads	Sep-07	Linked with Health & Safety, Estates and Sustainable development office audit to be completed in October 07	
3.6	Develop a sustainability strategy	Strategy developed and embedded in teams	Paul Brown	Oct-07	Currently out for consultation in September 07	

**Objective 4. To hold all managers and staff to account through the appraisal process and performance targets**



No.	Priority	Activities/Success Measures	Lead Person	Target Date	Progress	Status
4.1	Use Viewpoint and Service User feedback findings in the appraisal process	Increased use of viewpoint and SU feedback being utilised in teams	Sherry Malik	Dec-07	KPI for 2007/08. Appraisals incorporate section for 360 feedback including service user. Low rate of appraisals	
4.2	Diversity Monitoring rate to reach KPI target	Team action plans and increasing KPI results	Sherry Malik	Mar-08	End of August Diversity KPI at 82%.	
4.3	Diversity is addressed during the appraisal process	100% appraisals - ensuring personal and SU diversity issues are raised - as per revised forms	Jabbar Sardar	Mar-08	Annual appraisals of all staff at 60%	


4.4	To monitor the number of complaints where the complaint is raised on the basis of diversity issues	Findings to distributed to staff through Intranet, Channel, as well as reported in Annual report	David Moy	Ongoing	Completed - Clear regular reporting of complaints including diversity happening	
4.5	Team business plans to address equality and diversity issues within teams	Team plan includes measures to work with local communities and improve assistance for individual staff needs	Sherry Malik	Sep-07	Team plans received in September need to be audited for content.	

**Objective 5. To initiate and deliver appropriate services that respect the needs of individuals from marginalised and minority communities or groups**






Actions for achieving this objective are covered in the action plans of the Race Equality Scheme, Disability Equality Scheme that are found at the end of the action plan.

**Objective 6. To understand the capacity and professional capabilities of our workforce and make necessary changes**









No.	Priority	Activities/Success Measures	Lead Person	Target Date	Progress	Status
6.1	Team self-assessments to be completed for all teams	Team self-assessment inform Team business plans	QA Leads	Jul-07	100% of Team self-assessments received. Team business plans being received in September 07	
6.2	FCA qualifications to be updated onto the KCS system	100% of qualifcations on KCS	Anita Davies	Dec-07	Data cleansing audit of KCS (Mandy Michealsen) underway including qualifications	







6.3	Developing the systems to implement the Local government Equality Standard	Regions to put themselves forward for assessment	Sandy Watkins	Dec-07	Plan for single operational area to act as pilot. Paper to CMt to be submitted	
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**Objective 7. Clarify the types of behaviours that are needed and acceptable, and those that are not.**


No.	Priority	Activities/Success Measures	Lead Person	Target Date	Progress	Status
7.1	Produce guidance and resource pack for staff on effective service delivery on a range of diverse issues	Published and distributed via intranet and Channel C	Paul Brown	Jun-07	Complete - on intranet and advertised in Channel C	
7.2	Diversity resource pack to be incorporated in staff practice manual	Staff practice manual developed and issued to staff	Jane Booth	Mar-08	Unclear of current status of practice manual for practitioners	
7.3	Develop protocol with the Borders and Immigration Authority BIA	Protocol agreed and issued	Fareena Shaheed	Sep-07	Joint workshop with Cafcass and BIA held 1st June 07, basic protocol agreed	
7.4	Treating each other with respect	Sponsor staff/team award for diversity to be awarded annually	Sherry Malik	Mar-08		
7.5	Research findings being used to inform practice	Research findings on diversity issues being routinely shared with staff	Flo Watson	Ongoing		








**Race Equality Scheme: Action Plan (objectives 2 and 5)**






No.	Priority	Activities/Success Measures	Lead Person	Target Date	Progress	Status
R1	Comply with requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act in providing statistical data	Review RES and Publish report on progress to date	Paul Brown	Oct-07	October Diversity Board report includes review of progress against the RES	
R2		Consult with BME staff on further improvements to be made and use staff survey to discuss with BME staff	Anita Davies	Ongoing	Consultations in the last year include BME perceptions of the employer and how to improve recruitment from BME groups	
R3		Achieve 100% monitoring of all staff diversity information	Anita Davies	Ongoing	Complete	
R4		Data published bi-annually internally	Paul Brown	Sept-07 Mar-08	October Diversity Board report includes diversity data.	
R5	Support and Promote a network of BME staff support groups	Profile in Channel C	Anita Davies	Jun-07	Yet to be done	
R6		Involve in consultation purposes on the development of new policies	Policy Leads	Ongoing	Not always systematically involved as a staff group	
R7	Regional diversity forums have action plan on achieving KPI target	Action plans for 2007/08 developed	NEDSG Leads	Jul-07	Discussed at Sept 07 NEDSG meeting	
R8		Effective Teams and Regions to share good practice	NEDSG Leads	Ongoing	Regional updates and initiatives shared at NEDSG meeting	





R9	Encourage applications from under-represented groups	Monitor impact of new recruitment campaigns in particular middle management.	Sandy Watkins	Dec-07	Monitoring of recruitment campaigns now in place. First time reporting in Oct 07	
R10		Roll out of interview panel training for newly recruited managers as well as BME staff	Anita Davies	Ongoing	Interview panel training in place and open to staff from minority groups to attend	
R11	Improve and monitor opportunities for BME staff to advance through the organisation	Consult BME support groups on proactive employment strategies	Anita Davies	Sep-07	Completed - See R2	
R12		Mentoring and Coaching opportunities for BME staff made available	Victoria Phillipson	Mar-08	No information on how this is being taken forward	
R13		NEDSG to annually review grievances broken down by ethnicity	Anita Davies	Jul-07	Completed but late - Reported in Sept 07 NEDSG report	
R14		NEDSG to monitor access to KLD and training opportunities	Claudia Crawley	Jul-07	Completed but late - Reported in Sept 07 NEDSG report	





**Disability Equality Scheme: Action Plan (Objectives 2 and 5)**







No.	Priority	Activities/Success Measures	Lead Person	Target Date	Progress	Status
D1	Achieve the Two Ticks status as employer	Improve recruitment standards, documentation and procedures.	Sandy Watkins	Sep-07	Steps in place to achieve accreditation by end of Oct 07	






D2	Have disabled staff available to be used on interview panels	Recruitment training undertaken by disabled staff and participate on interview panels	Anita Davies	Dec-07	On target - See R10	
D3	Improve the induction process for disabled staff	Staff feel supported and know where to get assistance and help from	Anita Davies	Aug-07	Completed - Induction process updated and staff informed via Channel C	
D4	Personal Escape Evacuation Plans for all our less able employees	Questionnaire and evacuation plan created and used in all offices	Kevin Coley			
D5	Set up Staff Support Network and Disability Advisory Group	Advertised, staff attending and being supported	Margaret Longson	Sep-07	Need to clarify leading role in the group	
D6		Group set up and raise general awareness of legal obligations and issues within CAF/CASS	Paul Brown	Sep-07	First meeting held in August 07	
D7	Disabled Staff trained to carry out Impact Assessments of CAF/CASS policies and Strategies	Training taken place of disabled staff and impact assessments undertaken.	Paul Brown	Mar-08	See action 1.1a - original target was to be trained prior to January 08	
D8	Supervision and Appraisals to be better at addressing the needs of disabled staff	Ensure quality training and better guidance to line managers.	Paul Brown	Dec-07	Audit of appraisals improved the process. Appraisal skills training being rolled out	







D9	Ensure that benefits such as the disabled rail card are used by CAFCASS	Arrange to purchase disabled user rail cards for staff as part of the Travel and Subsistence Policy	Anita Davies	Sep-07	Has been agreed and is in the updated version of the Travel & Subsistence Policy to be relaunched	
D10	Link with Equal Rights/Support Groups eg. RNIB/RNID	Local teams and regions to have awareness of availability of local services and work in partnership	Margaret Longson	Ongoing	No work has yet been carried out	
D11	Update the Internet and Intranet so it is more easily accessible for disabled users	Ability to change font size and colour of text and background.	Takki Sulaiman	Jul-07	Completed - update of the intranet includes accessibility function	
D12	Training on working with disabled clients, visitors or employees to be incorporated into KLD training plans in all regions	KLD program incorporates training around the social model of disability. Training provided in all regions. Workshop given at Diversity Conference	Claudia Crawley	Aug-07	No developments in training including the social model of disability or offered to regions.	
D13	For sensory impaired people, leaflets produced on yellow paper with black writing, available in large print, & also accessible in Braille and audio tapes	Leaflets created and readily available	Takki Sulaiman	Jun-07	Completed - To be reflected in Comms strategy	







D14	Ensure Partnership strategy is Impact assessed and Contact Centres are DDA compliant and suitable for disabled users	In funding applications make sure the DDA compliance is a pre-requisite for funding.	Fiona Green	Aug-07	Impact assessment to be carried out	
D15	Full access audit of all premises, including contact centres, courts, etc, to make sure that all possible adjustments have been made - training provided by presentation	Audit completed. Training given. Adjustments made (eg. loop systems for people with a hearing impairment. Adapted toilets)	Paul Brown	Sep-07	See action 3.5d - Office audit to be merged with H&S, estates and sustainability policies	
D16	Future IT and Accommodation strategies to be impact assessed	Carry out Impact assessment on the future IT strategy to ensure the needs of disabled staff are being met.	Bernd Sass	Aug-07	Part completed - awaiting the new building quality standards policy to be completed by Estates	
D18	Centralise the budget for Assistive Technology with the Health & Safety department.	Efficient and effective allocation of resources distributed across CAF/CASS. Requirements of staff met and no complaints received.	Kevin Coley	Dec-07	Report on assistive technology to be submitted to CMT for discussion and approval	

D19	Carry out audit of all users of Occupational Health and ensure a quality service is delivered	Following audit of employees who have used the occupational health provider compile a impact assessment report and findings on the service.	Anita Davies	Mar-08	Part of Health and Well being strategy	
D20	Car Hire Scheme is simple and designed to ensure disabled staff are not disadvantaged.	Impact assessment undertaken of Car Hire scheme and amended so is clear to use and non-discriminatory.	Sharon Reed	Aug-07	Completed - flexibility introduced to policy to allow discretionary use of personal cars.	
D21	Find out what is happening in regions to the benefit of disabled users/staff and share with the rest of CAFCASS. Such as DVD for Hard of hearing service users.	Good practice is shared and put into use in all regions			No lead on this work to take forward	
D22	Sickness and Absence Recording to be clearly understood and used correctly	Clearer guidance that is understood by both line managers and staff.	Lorraine Moore	Sep-07	Past target date - Work has commenced as part of delivering the health and well being strategy	
<b>Gender Equality Scheme: Action Plan (Objectives 2 and 5)</b>						
No.	Priority	Activities/Success Measures	Lead Person	Target Date	Progress	Status

G1	Highlight gender equality in all corporate documents e.g. business plan/workforce Strategy.	Gender Equality issues appropriately addressed in key corporate documents	Takki Sulaiman	Ongoing	Completed - To be reflected in Comms strategy	
G2	Improve monitoring information for our service users so we can better understand the needs of our male and female clients	Diversity Monitoring forms completed for all service users. Service User feedback forms are given to all service users.	Sherry Malik	Mar-08	Diversity forms include Sexual Orientation. At end of August Diversity KPI at 82%.	
G3	By 2010 to be able to offer more choice to clients re gender of worker.	Increased proportion of available male employees. User satisfaction survey	Jabbar Sardar	2010	Workforce strategy in place to encourage a more reflective workforce	
G4	Children's Rights to review gender equality in their work	All documents and initiatives (inc. Viewpoint) are gender equal and promote equality. Members of Children rights teams to attend Equality impact assessment training	Christine Smart	Mar-08	Impact assessment training to be carried out by Children's Rights Team	
G5	Review Viewpoint findings to see if there is a gender bias in terms of the experience of boys and girls.	Lessons learnt from viewpoint fed back to all teams.	Christine Smart	Oct-07	As part of Service User feedback launch report on findings to date of viewpoint to be issued	
G6	Undertake an Equality Impact Assessment on our staff care policy in situations of Domestic Violence.	DV Policy assessed for impact on gender roles and equality	Policy Leads	TBC	See 1.1b. DV policy will impact assessed when its is due to be reviewed	

G7	Briefing to Regional Management Groups on implications and aims of the Gender Equality Duty	All Management groups briefed by Oct 2007			No lead on this work to take forward	
G8	Cafcass to be involved in the broader agenda around gender differences for childrens placements and needs within the welfare checklist.	QA6 tool to reflect input to welfare checklist.			No lead on this work to take forward	
G9	Ensure that Gender equality is included in all contracts and commissioning agreements where equality is a core requirement in the delivery of the service.	Contracts updated to reflect CAF/CASS's requirements to promote equality.	Fiona Green	Aug-07	See D14 - Impact assessment to be carried out	
G10	Review information in reception areas to ensure that they reinforce our commitment to gender equality.	Introduce office checklist to ensure offices and culturally sensitive and promote gender equality.	Paul Brown	Aug-07	see 3.5d - Linked with Health & Safety, Estates and Sustainable development office audit to be completed in October 07	
G11	Review the recruitment process to ensure that there is no gender bias in the tools we use to assess candidates	Continue to monitor applications at the short listing, interview and appointment stage,	Sandy Watkins	Dec-07	Reported to NEDSG every 6 months.	

G12	Review the sponsorship process to ensure that there is no gender bias in training and development	Monitor all requests, and flag concerns if either gender do not appear to be either applying or receiving sponsorship in proportion to their numbers in the workforce	Claudia Crawley	Dec-07	Reported annually to NEDSG	
G13	To have a positive action recruitment drive to attract males where they are under represented in our workforce	Work with the workforce development council to promote the role of men in social care	Jabbar Sardar		First planning meeting of CWDC diversity steering group to be held in Oct 07. Paul Brown. No steps in place for recruitment drive	
G14	Raise awareness of dignity at work procedures	"Dignity at work week"	Lorraine Coy-Taylor	Mar-08	Planning for the week yet to begin.	
G15	Ensure our employee assistance programme is promoted equally to men and women.	Monitor the take up of the service.	Sandy Watkins	Mar-08	No progress yet made	
G16	Actively encourage male social work students to consider a placement with cafcass	Links with Universities.	Claudia Crawley	Mar-08	No progress yet made	
G17a	To ensure that women returning to work after maternity leave are not discriminated against	Monitor number of women returning to work for periods of 12 week, and greater than 12 weeks.	Sandy Watkins	Mar-08	No progress yet made	

G17b		Monitor number of women returning to the same or a similar post.	Sandy Watkins	Mar-08	No progress yet made	
G18	To increase the opportunities for flexible working across the workforce	Raise awareness of HR policies and practices.	Anita Davies	Dec-07	Flexible working policy in place. Awareness levels to be raised	
G19	Ensure that all jobs are audited as part of the strategic pay review.	Undertake an impact assessment of our job evaluation scheme.	Jabbar Sardar		Strategic pay review in hand	
G20	Ensure that there is no gender bias in appointments to secondments or other interim positions,	Monitor the proportion of men/women offered interim positions or promotion	Sandy Watkins	Mar-08	To be reported annually and reviewed by NEDSG as part of total HR diversity staff report	
G21	Review the analysis from the staff survey and take appropriate action on gender specific issues	Staff focus groups conducted to find root cause of issues. Follow up through staff engagement strategy	Sherry Malik	Mar-08	Work on focus groups and staff engagement strategy has begun	
G22	Interview Panels to have appropriate Gender balance. No single Gender panels	HR Audit to establish panels compliant	Sandy Watkins	Mar-08	No audits yet conducted	
G23	Ensure Gay, lesbian Bi sexual and transgender staff are not discriminated against in the workplace.	Introduce monitoring systems to identify Gay. Lesbian bi sexual and transgender staff.	Sherry Malik	Sep-07	Voluntary sexual orientation monitoring happens for both new recruits, participants of staff survey and service users.	