

Children, Families and Education

Equalities Action Plan for 2008 to 2010

This document is available in alternative formats and can be explained in a range of languages. Please contact:

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Introduction	5
Why is this important?	5
Who are the people of Kent?	6
What have we achieved so far?	7
Our Plan	9
Actions for all staff in Children, Families and Education	9
Actions for all managers in Children, Families and Education	11
What is the scope of this plan?	18
Who is going to deliver this plan?	18
How will we know if this plan is on track?	21

<p>Kent County Council's Equality Strategy (2007 – 2010)</p> <p>5 Priority Outcomes</p>	<p>What this means for Children, Families and Education</p> <p>(2008 – 2010)</p>	<p>Links with Every Child Matters outcomes</p>
<p>1. Equal and inclusive services and information, for all, regardless of age, disability, gender, religion or belief, race or sexual orientation</p>	<p>Equal and inclusive access in all Children, Families and Education (CFE) services.</p>	<p>Draw on and improve the life chances of children and young people to help them Be healthy through informed choices and inclusive services.</p>
<p>2. Creative opportunities for participation and involvement in service planning and decision-making</p>	<p>Involvement of children, young people and their families in the planning, commissioning and evaluation of services with clear evidence of their participation in service delivery.</p>	<p>Increase engagement and participation by young people in education, employment and society in order to prevent disaffection and improve opportunities to make a positive contribution.</p>
<p>3. Work with our partners to ensure the county's most vulnerable groups feel safe and free from harassment and can report incidents in the knowledge that issues will be handled sensitively and effectively</p>	<p>Strong partnerships with other agencies to promote community cohesion and increased confidence in reporting hate crime.</p>	<p>Children and Young People Stay safe and feel safe in the communities where they live, go to school, play and work – with a focus on taking action to reduce the incidence and impact of bullying in school and the community.</p>
<p>4. Enhance the intelligence and monitoring systems to ensure we can target disadvantage in the county where action is most needed and best reflects effective use of resources</p>	<p>Continuous improvement in the use of our data to improve planning, and help shape our policies, develops and evaluates our services.</p>	<p>Continue to improve the proportion of children and young people who strongly agree that they Enjoy and achieve in their life.</p>

<p>5. Maintain our reputation as an excellent employer, promoting a culture where the Council recruits on merit and diversity is valued</p>	<p>Managers and all members of the Children’s workforce are confident in managing diversity in the workplace.</p> <p>CFE strives to increase the number of under-represented communities across all grades to ensure we are proactive across all areas of equalities.</p>	<p>Help families break out of cycles of generational poverty by focusing on Achieving economic wellbeing, increasing employability and offering support to enable families to maximise their disposable income</p>
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Introduction

Community cohesion is about promoting a sense of belonging, positively valuing diversity, tackling discrimination and inequalities. It is also about promoting interaction in the workplace, schools and neighbourhoods. In order to engender community cohesion, individuals & communities need to experience equality of opportunity and social inclusion to support choices about how they contribute and participate as residents, students and workers, without barrier or inequality.

Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and have the opportunity to fulfil their potential. Equality focuses on the key areas of age, disability, race/ethnicity, gender and religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Diversity is about the recognition and valuing of difference in its broadest sense. It is about creating a culture and practices that recognise, respect, value and harness difference for the benefit of those who use our services and for staff who work in the Children, Families and Education Directorate.

Equality and diversity cannot be viewed as separate issues; they are synonymous and need to be advanced in union. It is essential that commonalities and different needs are recognised, valued and embraced if there is to be equality of opportunity and community cohesion.

Why is this important? Contributing to equality and diversity helps to improve service quality and the working environment. Recognising that customers are from different backgrounds, ensures that services are delivered and policies developed, which consider opportunities to enable equality of access, full participation and involvement from all sections of the community. Similarly a diverse and valued workforce is better able to understand different needs within communities. Everyone in Kent has a role in recognising the value of diversity and enabling individuals and communities to feel comfortable and confident that they will be treated fairly when they use our services.

Who are the people of Kent?

The priorities for CFE identified above are a result of our understanding of the people in Kent and our learning from CFE's equality impact assessments so far. Below are some key facts about the people of Kent¹:

- The population of the Kent County Council Area grew by 10,700 people (0.8 per cent) between 2004 and 2005.
- Overall, Ashford Borough has experienced the largest increase in population in real terms, with a growth of 2,300 people between 2004 and 2005. No local authorities within Kent have experienced a decline in population.
- The Kent County Council Area is ranked 106th out of a national scale of 149 most deprived authority areas in England.² A rank of 1 is the most deprived. The Kent County Council Area is the 2nd most deprived county council area of all county councils within the South East Region (excluding unitary authorities).
- There are similar numbers of men and women in the Kent County Council Area. 49 per cent and 51 per cent respectively.
- The total number of pupils in Kent schools as of Spring term 2008 was 206,177
- 5 per cent of Kent pupils have English as a second language³
- 14.8 per cent of pupils on school roll were deemed gifted and talented
- 12.3 per cent of pupils in school roll were from black or minority ethnic backgrounds
- The numbers of people aged 65 and over is forecast to grow by over 30% over the next ten years. The average age of the Kent population is 40 years.
- 41,534 people (3.1 per cent) in the Kent County Council Area classify themselves as from a Black Minority Ethnic (BME) group.
- 17.3 per cent of people in the Kent County Council Area consider themselves to have a long term limiting illness.
- Married couple households are the most common single household type (48.9 per cent) in Kent overall. The 'traditional family' household structure of a married couple with dependent children make up only 18.8 per cent of all households in the county.
- The majority of the population in the Kent County Council Area is of Christian religion (75.13 per cent). The next largest religious group is Sikh with 0.6 per cent. 14.9 per cent state that they have no religion.

¹ Source: Who are the people of Kent, Kent County Council 2006

² Based on the average of lower super output area (LSOA) scores

³ Kent schools does not include Medway

- Sevenoaks District has the greatest concentration of Christians (77.0 per cent of the population state this as their religion), whilst Gravesham Borough has the largest concentration of people of Sikh religion, with 6.7 per cent compared to only 0.6 per cent for the Kent County Council Area as a whole.
- In the county as a whole, the percentage of those aged 16-74 in full-time employment is highest in Dartford, followed by Medway, Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling. These four areas are above the South East regional average.

What have we achieved so far?

Some of our key achievements over the last year include:

- Developed a Young Carers Strategy to promote the early identification and seek multi-agency responses to improve the outcomes for this group of young people and their families.
- Increasing awareness and understanding of KCC's role and services among Kent's residents and schools.
- Addressed "Making the Difference" conference encouraging managers to employ disabled people.
- A CFE representative spoke at the European Network of asylum Reception Organisations Conference in Malta, Trafficking conference in London and promoted Kent as an organisation that supports, advocates for and safeguards unaccompanied minors.
- Children and Young People of Kent: Survey 2006/7 reached over 40,000 pupils who expressed their views about growing up, feeling safe, access to leisure activities locally and health issues.

- Newborn hearing Screening Programmes began within 5 days of consultation with families. External evaluation noted the excellent multi-agency working.
- Development of training modules to prevent and improve management of discriminatory incidents and bullying.
- Tonbridge Cluster held a "Planning for Real" event, one of the largest participation exercises in the country giving voice to children and young people, along with their parents and carers. These contributed key ideas to the planning of the local children's services partnership.
- The cross cluster Ethnic Minorities specialist teaching team in the Maidstone and Malling, has overseen the founding of the International Student Voice Network, in which local English as Additional Language and Ethnic Minority students have welcomed the opportunity to come together for discussion and mutual support.
- Forward thinking policy development to influence change in the interests of Kent residents and schools
- Joint ' Managing Incidents' conference held by Kent police and KCC
- Gravesham Roma project and other locality projects focused on EU Accession State Migrants and generated improved information sharing between agencies, more responsive services and improved access to education.

- A CFE representative is a member of the Anti-bullying Alliance a national body that brings together over 50 organisations into one network with the aim of reducing bullying and creating safer environments, in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

Our Plan

Below are a series of actions for staff, for managers and for CFE's Equalities and Diversity Strategy Group which contributes to achieving Kent County Council's five priority equality outcomes. Divisional business plans contain service specific actions to achieve these outcomes and to learn from our equality impact assessments.

Actions for all staff in Children, Families and Education Directorate

What	When
1. Attend Diversity in Action training for staff. All members of staff should welcome equality & diversity targets as part of their appraisal.	Ongoing
2. Read the Kent County Council's Equality Strategy.	Ongoing 2008-2009
3. Read Kent's Children and Young People's Plan.	Ongoing

Actions for Equality and Diversity Strategy Group

Equal and inclusive services and information, for all, regardless of age, disability, gender, religion or belief, race or sexual orientation			
Activity	Lead	Date	Evidence of action
Scope activity to achieve Level 3 of the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) and assign resource. (This replaces the Equality Standard for Local Government approx. late 2008)	Policy, Statutory & Compliance Officer.	October 2008	Plan for Level 3 of EFLG 'Excellence'
Co-ordinate the Directorate's achievement of Level 3 of the Equality Framework for Local Government.	CFE's Equality and Diversity Group	March 2009	Critical Friend Assessment Completed workbooks/evidence document
Work with senior managers to use outcomes of equality impact assessments to inform the design, delivery and outcomes of services.	CFE's Equality and Diversity Group and Divisional representatives	March 2009	Equality targets in business plans
Work with managers to ensure that CFE contracts are in line with equality duties including when CFE commission consultants' work.	CSS Equalities Group Head of Strategy, Planning and Performance – Sally Morris Children Trust Development Manager	April 2009	Action taken as a result of monitoring contracts

Produce, monitor and review CFE's Equality Action plan.	Policy, Statutory & Compliance Officer CFE's Equality and Diversity Group	March 2009	Directorate progress measured against targets and effective use of information systems.
Provide briefings and identify key performance indicators to CFE managers.	Policy, Statutory & Compliance Officer and CFE's Equality & Diversity Group	March 2009	Regular briefings and guidance produced in various mediums including CFE Newsletter.

Actions for all managers in Children, Families and Education Directorate

What	When
1. Managers with responsibility for recruitment to attend positive action recruitment training.	Ongoing 2008-09
2. Include equality and diversity on every team briefing agenda.	Ongoing during 2008-09
3. Embed equalities and diversity within appraisals and one to ones with staff.	By end of January 2009
4. Assess the equality impact of new and revised policies, projects and services on different equality groups.	Ongoing 2008-09
5. Attend Equality Impact assessment training.	Ongoing 2008-09
6. Attend Diversity in Action training for managers.	Ongoing 2008-09

Creative opportunities for participation and involvement in service planning and decision-making.			
Activity	Lead	Date	Evidence of action
Support and co-ordinate Children & Young People's survey 2008-2009 to take into account ethnicity and encourage young people to participate in decision making within CFE.	Anthony Mort	2008	Service plans updated in light of participation and engagement comments
Engage and participate with representative communities (by age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religion or belief and sexuality) seeking their views to influence service design and delivery.	All managers	March 2009	Service plans can evidence different individuals and communities engaged with

Work with our partners to ensure the county's most vulnerable groups feel safe and free from harassment and can report incidents in the knowledge that issues will be handled sensitively and effectively.			
Activity	Lead	Date	Evidence of action
Extend and develop racist incident management to include disability to increase reporting levels, identify training needs and tackle racist and disability discrimination across Kent schools.	Policy, Statutory & Compliance Officer Advisory Service Kent	March 2009	Racist Incident management tool developed and rolled out across schools
Review Dignity and Respect at work staff reports to reduce bullying and harassment (which may arise due to staff member's age, disability, ethnicity, religion gender sexual orientation) by identifying underlying cause.	Nicky Lodemore in partnership with Policy, Statutory & Compliance Officer	March 2009	Annual figures collated and analysed and used to develop ant-discriminatory strategies.

Enhance the **intelligence and monitoring systems** to ensure we can target disadvantage in the county where action is most needed and best reflects effective use of resources

Activity	Lead	Date	Evidence of action
Review this 2008-2010 plan and report to CFE's Senior Management Team.	CFE's Equality and Diversity Group	Every six months (April and October)	<p>Minutes from senior team meeting that illustrate informed discussion about this plan</p> <p>Examples of reports</p> <p>Plan updated in light of reviews</p>
Analyse responses in children, young people survey 2008 by ethnicity to improve intelligence on experiences of different ethnic groups.	Anthony Mort	April 2008	Use equality data to develop policies and local service delivery for related ethnic groups.
Assess the equality impact of new and revised policies, projects and services on different equality groups.	All managers and services	Ongoing 2008-09	Reports to SMT &/or DMT include equality impact assessment findings.

Maintain our reputation as an **excellent employer**, promoting a culture where the Council recruits on merit and diversity is valued

The actions listed below will contribute to achieving CFE'S best value indicators:

Performance Indicators (PI) (National Performance indicators are under discussion and will be subject to change)			2008/09
Activity	Lead	Date	Evidence of action
Review staff performance indicators and introduce indicators in line with national and local requirements.	Corporate Diversity team and Strategy, Planning and Review team	March 2009	National and local targets aligned to address inequality, social exclusion within the community and staff representation.
Embed equalities and diversity within appraisals and one to one processes.	Policy and Statutory Compliance Officer/Kerena Hunter	Ongoing during 2008-09	Managers setting equality targets in staff development plans
Relevant staff to attend Equality Impact assessment training.	All managers	Ongoing during 2008-09	Relevant staff trained to carry out equality impact assessment
Attend Diversity in Action training for managers.	CFE Learning and Development Group		Ongoing during 2008-09

Actions to improve understanding of different aspects of equalities across CFE:			
Activity	Lead	Date	Evidence of action
<p>Age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support “Bring Our Young People to Work” event. ▪ Support Greenhouse and invite them to participate in CFE’S work. 	<p>CFE Management Team</p> <p>CFE Equality and Diversity Group</p>	<p>October 2008</p> <p>March 2009</p>	<p>Positive feedback from events</p> <p>Age profile of CFE workforce</p>
<p>Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with the voluntary and community sector and disabled children and young people to ensure that their views are heard ▪ Produce guidance to tackle disability related bully or harassment against pupils. ▪ Use Exit interview information to increase retention levels and development of disabled staff. 	<p>CFE Equality and Diversity Group</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout 2008-09</p> <p>March 2009</p>	<p>Clear evidence of how services have responded to the voices of disabled children and young people</p> <p>Baseline data relating to disability harassment</p> <p>Active use Exit interview information to prevent and where appropriate tackle under-represented communities.</p>

<p>Gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Produce guidance about trans-phobia and transgender equality for staff. ▪ Create and achieve targets to recruit develop and promote men and women from under-represented members of the community across all grades. 	<p>Gender Equality champion</p> <p>CFE Diversity Group</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout 2008/09</p>	<p>Raise awareness of transgender and related legislated duties for employment and service delivery</p> <p>Women and men experience equality of opportunity to development and promotion in CFE</p>
<p>Race</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support Black History Month and organise event(s). ▪ Support and promote UNITE and invite them to participate in CFE'S work. ▪ Use Exit interview information to increase retention levels and development of BME staff. 	<p>Race Equality Champion</p> <p>CFE Diversity Group.</p>	<p>October 2008</p> <p>March 2009</p> <p>March 2009</p>	<p>Event held and any lessons learned shared within KCC and with partners</p> <p>UNITE increase membership within CFE</p> <p>CFE actively tackling under-representation among BME staff.</p>
<p>Religion and Belief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish partnership links with Gurdwara, Jewish synagogue and Muslim mosque ▪ Work with SACRE to develop dress and uniform guidance for schools. 	<p>CFE Management Team</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout 2008/09</p>	<p>Opportunities to participate with faith groups taken up by services.</p>

<p>Sexual Orientation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support LGBT History Month and organise event(s). ▪ Support and promote Rainbow and invite them to participate in CFE'S work. ▪ Become member of Stonewalls' Education Champion programme ▪ Work with Stonewall and LGB Services for Young People Forum and invite them to participate in CFE'S work. 	<p>Sexuality Champion</p> <p>CFE Managers.</p> <p>Equality and Diversity Strategy Group</p>	<p>February 2009</p> <p>Ongoing throughout 2008/09</p>	<p>Positive feedback from events</p> <p>Rainbow increase membership within CFE</p> <p>Secure Stonewall as critical friend; establish beacon schools working to promote sexuality equality. Network with other local authority's to share and promote good practice.</p>
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What is the scope of this plan?

This plan is a medium term action plan from April 2008 to March 2010. It applies to all staff and managers within CFE. This plan captures actions for all staff and managers across the Directorate and actions for CFE'S Equality and Diversity Group. Service specific actions relating to the priority outcomes can be found in each unit's business plan.

This plan will be updated in light of CFE'S evolving assessment of equalities during 2008.

Importantly, it will only be successful if it lives in the day-to-day attitudes and behaviours of everyone within CFE both those who provide services directly to our customers and those who work internally.

Who is going to deliver this plan?

Everyone. This plan will only be successful if everyone supports it across the CFE, in particular managers and those who directly deliver our services to the public. They will be supported by CFE'S Equality and Diversity Group, Management Team, CFE's Policy and Statutory Compliance Officer and Kent County Council's four staff groups; Greenhouse, Level Playing Field, Rainbow and UNITE.

CFE's Equality and Diversity Strategy Group

The directorate includes divisional representatives and has a group of "champions" who promote our work throughout the Directorate, the council and outside the council. Their role is to lead, inspire, activate and engage others to achieve CFE'S equality outcomes. The group includes:

Name	Division	Unit	Telephone Number	Email (put in links)
Andrew Hickmott	Children Social Services	Children's Services, West Kent	01233 652145	andrew.hicmott@kent.gov.uk
Jenny Robson and Lindy Whitfield	Commissioning	Minority, Communities and Achievement Service Attendance and	01622 694059 01227 284501	jenny.robson@kent.gov.uk lindy.whitfield@kent.gov.uk

		Behaviour		
Kerena Hunter and Val Jones	Finance and Corporate Services	Personnel & Development Awards	01622 696 379 01622 696570	kerena.hunter@kent.gov.uk val.jones@kent.gov.uk
Ella Hughes and Anthony Froud	Operations	Executive Support Local Children Services Partnerships	01622 694989 01732 525111	ella.hughes@kent.gov.uk anthony.froud@kent.gov.uk
Jennie Landsberg and Heidi Barton	Standards and Achievement	Advisory Service Kent	01622 694984 01622 203800	jennie.landsberg@kent.gov.uk heidi.barton@kent.gov.uk
Lynne Miller	Strategy, Policy and Performance	Policy	01622 694995	lynne.miller@kent.gov.uk
Ana Rowley	Resources	Executive Support	01622 221105	ana.rowley@kent.gov.uk
Richard Murrells	Health	Director Children's Health	01622 696670	richard.murrells@kent.gov.uk

Name	Equality Champion Strand	Unit	Telephone Number	Email
Kerena Hunter	Age	Personnel & Development	01622 696 379	kerena.hunter@kent.gov.uk

Vacant	Religion and belief			
Vacant	Gender			
Nicky Younosi	Race	Minority Communities Achievement Service	01732 525 033	nicky.younosi@kent.gov.uk
Lynne Miller	Sexual Orientation	Policy and Performance	01622 694 995	lynne.miller@kent.gov.uk
Vacant	Social Inclusion		01622	
Veronica Smith	Disability	Advisory Service	01227 284436	veronica.smith@kent.gov.uk

Policy and Statutory Compliance Officer

The Policy and Statutory Compliance Officer provides support to all equality groups across the Directorate and schools. The Officer focuses on issues about the service we provide and reports on employment issues and. For more information about, please contact the officer on:

Telephone: 01622 221 727

Email: jacqui.ruddock@kent.gov.uk

Staff Groups

Kent County Council has four staff groups who each support particular groups of staff. The council supports and assists each group:

Greenhouse A group that is open to all Kent County Council employees under the age of 30 for core membership and to any staff who can actively contribute to the aims of the group

Level Playing Field For all staff employed by Kent County Council who consider themselves to be disabled or who have an interest in disability issues

Rainbow A forum for all staff employed by Kent County Council from lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) groups

UNITE For all staff employed by Kent County Council from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities

Name	Staff Group representatives	Email
Aije Barnes and Sabita Lawrence	UNITE	unite@kent.gov.uk
Jo Jackson Macrae	Rainbow	rainbow@kent.gov.uk

How will we know if this plan is on track?

The Council's Strategic Equalities Group (SEG) is made up of cross-political party members and senior lead officers from every group in the council. The group agrees and promotes the Council's Equality Strategy. The group provide a high level overview, which helps to ensure our own Directorate plan is delivered in line with Kent County Council's overall aims for equality.

The Equality Lead Officers Group (ELOG) is made up of senior officers, people who represent our staff groups and equality experts. The group agrees practical actions to achieve our five-priority outcomes and monitors progress. Furthermore, the group agrees and funds council wide activity whilst supporting directorates, including the Children, Families and Education **Directorate**, in our local activities. The Equality Lead Officers Group play an important role to ensure this plan is delivered.

Finally, at directorate level, service specific equality actions are in our business plans and are monitored as part of the regular performance reporting cycle for those plans. The equality group reviews this equality action plan and provides progress reports to the Children, Families and Education Equality and Diversity Strategy Group.

Useful Links

<p>General</p> <p>Commission for Equality & Human Rights</p> <p>Improvement & Development Agency (IDeA) - equality pages</p> <p>Race</p> <p>Institute for Race Relations</p> <p>(Telephone - 020 7837 0041 / 020 7833 2010)</p> <p>Gender</p> <p>Women and Equality - A good source of statistics on women in the workplace (telephone - 0207 215 5000)</p> <p>Sexual Orientation</p> <p>Guardian - Gay Rights</p> <p>Updated daily, this area focuses on gay rights - both in the workplace and outside of it, (telephone - 020-7278 2332)</p> <p>Stonewall - Professional lobbying group promoting equality and justice for Lesbians, Gay men and Bisexuals.</p> <p>(Telephone - 020 7881 9440)</p> <p>Schools Out</p> <p>Lobby group working towards equality in education for lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and trans-people</p>	<p>Age</p> <p>Age Positive</p> <p>This website has been created by the Department of Work and Pensions to highlight issues around age and employment.</p> <p>Age Concern</p> <p>Leading campaigners against age discrimination, Age Concern supports all people over 50 in the UK, ensuring that they get the most from life. (Telephone - 0800 00 99 66)</p> <p>Department for Children, Schools and Families (link)</p> <p>The Department for Children, Schools and Families objective is to make England the best place for children and young people to grow up.</p> <p>Religion or Belief</p> <p>The Inter Faith Network (telephone: 020 7931 7766)</p> <p>BBC Religion WebPages</p> <p>A great online resource for finding out about religious diversity in the UK.</p> <p>Social Inclusion</p>
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gay, bi-sexual and trans-people.

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Paul Patrick (01282) 441601, 0788 3091678

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Disability

Disability Unit - This is the website for the Disability Unit of the UK government.

Employers Forum of Disability (telephone 020 7403 3020)

Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion

A not for profit London- based organisation dedicated to promoting social justice, social inclusion and tackling disadvantaged (telephone: 020 7582 7221)

Useful Internal Websites

KCC Zone Equality & Diversity pages.

Children, Families and Education Equality Pages on Kenttrustweb.