

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration

Equalities and Inclusion Strategy 2020-2023



Care



Protect



Connect



Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	About Us	3
3	Why Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Matters	4
4	Equality Outcomes 2020-2023	5
5	How we will do it?	7
6	Equality Outcomes and Action Plan 2020-21	9

1. Introduction

SCRA is fully committed to the vision, values and ethos of the Equality Act 2010 and to fulfilling the three elements of the **general** equality duty as defined in the Act.

1. Elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
3. Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The protected characteristics are:-

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy, maternity and breastfeeding
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage/civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to have due regards to the need to eliminate discrimination

SCRA's approach is to go beyond the compliance obligations and to develop an inclusive ethos within the organisation based on fairness, equality, cultural diversity, dignity and respect. SCRA recognises care experience as a "tenth protected characteristic" and we continue to review our practice, policies and processes to reflect this.

2. About Us

The Children's Reporter sits at the heart of the Children's Hearings System, providing continuity as the single point of referral for all agencies with concerns about a child or young person who may be at risk of harm.

Children's Reporters routinely deal with and makes critical decisions on the lives of children and young people facing adversity and trauma such as physical and emotional neglect, domestic abuse, parental substance use, mental health concerns and the physical and sexual abuse of children and young people.

Our core role centres on:

- Receiving referrals for children/young people who may be at risk.
- Ensuring that other public agencies carry out enquiries and assessments into children/young people's circumstances so we can make informed decisions about children/young people referred to us.

- Making decisions on whether to refer a child/young person to a Children’s Hearing if they need compulsory measures of supervision.
- Drafting the grounds for the Hearing.
- Arranging for Hearings to take place when we decide that compulsory measures of supervision are warranted and where there is sufficient evidence to prove the grounds.
- Ensuring fair process takes place within the Hearing, including the rights of those in attendance being met.
- We also have a key role in establishing grounds of referral in court, where these are contested, and in defending decisions of Children’s Hearings which are subject to appeal.

Our Vision: Children and young people will be listened to, protected and supported to have a positive future where they are safe, valued and respected.

Our Mission: We protect and support Scotland's children and young people, by making high quality decisions, upholding their rights and working collaboratively as compassionate, inclusive corporate parents to enable the most positive and personalised experience of the Children's Hearing System.

Our Values: Our values are the shared motivations, beliefs and behaviours that underpin all that we do.

Supportive	We work with kindness to support children, young people and families, our Partners and each other.
Child Centred	Children and young people are at the heart of everything we do.
Respectful	Everyone is respected and treated fairly, inclusively and lawfully.
Accountable	We are responsible for our decisions, our ethics and our learning.

3. Why Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Matters

Creating an equal, diverse and inclusive SCRA will help us better serve children, young people and their families in Scotland, uncover new ways of doing things and keep our people engaged and motivated to do their best work.

What does being inclusive mean for everyone in SCRA?

- An environment where we can all be ourselves.
- Working with talented people from a wide range of backgrounds.
- An environment where we can all perform to the best of our abilities.
- Working in a supportive and flexible environment led by inclusive and effective leaders.
- A culture where we can raise ideas and challenge one another in a respectful way to arrive at the best decisions.
- A place where we understand and respect each other’s differences.

Being inclusive not only makes SCRA a great place to work. It ensures that we are delivering the best possible service to children and their families that is equally accessible to all and meets their individual needs and rights.

3.1 Our Aspirations

SCRA aspires to be a leader in terms of our behaviours and attitudes to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Our 2020-23 Equality Outcomes set out how we will meet our Public Sector Equality Duty and mainstream equality across all parts of our organisation and in the provision of our service to children, young people and their families.

3.2 Our Commitment

SCRA is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce and throughout our organisation at large. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. Our aim is that SCRA embraces, acknowledges and is representative of all sections of society; promoting equality and respect for all so that everyone is able to achieve their potential. SCRA is committed to promoting the practice of equality, diversity and inclusion in all its services, operations and dealings with employees, children, young people and their families and all partner agencies. SCRA aims to ensure that it employs and deploys a workforce that is diverse and equipped with the right mix of skills and experience to deliver a quality service to children and young people.

4. Equality Outcomes 2020-2023

The delivery of equality and diversity outcomes must become integral to everything we do and shape our approach to the service we deliver to children, young people and their families. It is at the heart of attracting, retaining and developing a highly skilled, valued workforce that reflects the Scottish population.

Our Equality Outcomes 2020-2023 have been developed in consultation with the Executive Management Team, Equalities Network Inclusion Ambassadors, UNISON, our partners and wider staff group and equality groups. We also launched a public consultation exercise and considered and reflected all responses in our outcomes.

In creating our new equality outcomes we have worked with managers across the organisation to strengthen the links between their upcoming priorities and our equality outcomes. This included consulting with those responsible for key strategies on corporate parenting, property, digital services and people. This ensures that every aspect of our service provision and employment responsibilities has considered the impact or likely impact of each of the protected characteristics and supports the delivery of our strategic aims which are to Care, Connect and Protect.

A significant proportion of work to achieve our equality outcomes will be embedded in our new people and property strategies; Corporate parenting plan, Communications and Digital

Services. The strategy leads will take ownership of planning, progressing and reporting on progress through their own governance structures.

For more detailed information on our range of work and our plans for the future, please see our [Strategic Framework](#) and [Corporate Plan](#), and our [Corporate Parenting Plan](#). We will challenge ourselves to do all we can to ensure that inclusion and diversity is central to everything we do by 2023. To ensure that we are moving in the right direction, we will formally evaluate our progress by 2022.

We have three strategic outcomes to help drive our continuous improvement approach to creating an inclusive culture and practices, inclusive services for children, young people and their families and a diverse workforce:

Outcome 1: Children, young people and their families are treated fairly and with dignity and respect. They understand and are able to access our services in ways that suit their individual needs.

We have a responsibility to ensure that our services are accessible. Improvements in this area will help support organisational improvements to our processes, increase efficiency and improve the experience of anyone accessing our service.

We recognise the particular needs and different experiences of children and young people with a range of protected characteristics.

We will deliver a person focused service that places children and young people at the centre of the Children's Hearings System, treats them as individuals and ensures that decisions made about them are based on evidence and knowledge.

We will seek to understand and address the challenges and barriers faced by people with different needs. We will find ways to provide confidence to children, young people and families that SCRA is sensitive to issues they may face when accessing our services and engaging with the Children's Hearings System.

We will embed these outcomes in our Corporate Parenting Plan, Property and Communication Strategies and Digital Services.

Outcome 2: We will build an inclusive culture which values and develops our people, providing them with the tools and support they need to be skilled, confident, valued, respected and cared for to maximise their potential.

We value our staff and their contribution to ensuring an inclusive culture, practice and services. We aim to ensure that our staff's physical, emotional and mental health needs are recognised and supported in the workplace. This equality outcome will be explicitly reflected in our People Strategy.

Outcome 3: We will actively tackle under-representation and create a workforce that better reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.

We will make our workforce more diverse through our recruitment and selection processes.

We aim to be more representative of the communities that we serve, by addressing imbalance in SCRA's gender profile for leadership roles and by focusing on certain groups that appear to be under-represented across the organisation, particularly people from a black, Asian or minority ethnic background, people who have experience of care and people with disabilities.

We will embed this Outcome in our People Strategy, our Communications Strategy and Digital Services.

To truly be inclusive, everyone must be engaged and accountable for this ambition. Each of our leaders will have an inclusion and diversity objective and locality plans will reflect work being done at a local level to embed this inclusive approach. Our leaders will be supported and held accountable for their efforts in driving this Plan. We will also regularly report our progress to the Equalities Network and the Board.

Our Equalities Network, Employee Networks and Inclusion Ambassadors will all contribute to the successful implementation of the equality outcomes.

5. How we will do it?

Everything we do as part of the Equality Outcomes will be:

5.1 Evidence led

Our interventions will be based on evidence such as representation data, employee engagement and feedback. We will formally review our progress in 2022.

5.2 Transparent

We will report upon progress in a transparent way. We will be honest in communicating where progress may not have been achieved and we will engage internally and externally to address this. We will seek out feedback on how well we are delivering against this Plan. We will embed Inclusion and Diversity into our organisational governance to give us clear oversight of how we are progressing.

5.3 Led by effective and skilled leaders

Leaders will be enabled to drive this Plan. We will embed Inclusion and diversity into all business areas with leadership objective setting, embedding inclusive leadership standards and promotion of the positive behaviours we expect from everyone which is intolerant of discrimination, bullying and harassment.

5.4 Communications and engagement led

We will actively listen to each other. Everyone has a role to play in creating the workplace environment we all desire.

Other languages/Formats

If you require information from this document in another language or format please contact:

HR Team
Ochil House
Springkerse Business Park
Stirling
FK7 7XE

Email: HR.Helpdesk@scra.gov.uk

If you use British Sign Language (BSL) and wish to phone us using a sign language interpreter, you can use the online video relay interpreting service. For more information see the contactSCOTLAND website.

6. Equality Outcomes and Action Plan 2020-21

Outcome 1:		Children, young people and their families are treated fairly and with dignity and respect. They understand and are able to access our services in ways that suit their individual needs.	
Objective 1:		Our staff will continue to treat all children, young people and their families with dignity and respect.	
Action		Indicators	Leading Strategy / Objective Ref. No.
1.1.1	Our HR policies will be revised to reflect all equalities and inclusion considerations (e.g. gender-neutral language).	1.1.1.1: SCRA Leave policy which covers maternity and paternity is reviewed and reflects equalities and inclusion.	People
		1.1.1.2: SCRA Grievance Policy is reviewed and reflects equalities and inclusion.	
		1.1.1.3: SCRA Disciplinary policy is reviewed and reflects equalities and inclusion.	
1.1.3	Our new case management system (CSAS) will capture relevant protected characteristic data (e.g. gender identity, ethnicity, age, disability) to ensure services meet individual needs.	1.1.3.1: CSAS contains relevant protected characteristics.	Digital
Objective 2:		Our services will be procured, designed, shaped and delivered to meet the needs of children, young people and their families.	
Action		Indicators	Leading Strategy / Objective Ref. No.
1.2.1	We will engage with and listen to the views and experiences of local Young People's Champion Boards.	1.2.1.1: Number of engagement sessions undertaken and number of participants.	Communications & Engagement: 2.1
		1.2.1.2: Views and experiences captured.	

		1.2.1.3: Views and experiences used to improve services (specifically state what this involved).	
1.2.2	We will engage with and listen to the views and experiences of the national Our Hearings Our Voice.	1.2.2.1: Number of engagement sessions undertaken and number of participants.	Communications & Engagement: 2.1
		1.2.2.2: Views and experiences captured.	
		1.2.2.3: Views and experiences used to improve services (specifically state what this involved).	
1.2.3	We will engage with diverse groups, in particular from a care and minority ethnic background and people with disabilities to inform our understanding of their needs to ensure a positive experience and easy access to our services.	1.2.3.1: Number of engagement sessions undertaken and number of participants.	Collette Gallagher & Communications & Engagement
		1.2.3.2: Views and experiences captured.	
		1.2.3.3: Views and experiences used to improve services (specifically state what this involved).	
1.2.4	We will work in partnership with other organisations who are involved with children and their families to provide new insights and make our services as accessible as possible.	1.2.4.1: Identify key organisations.	Operational: 2.2
		1.2.4.2: Type of work undertaken with organisations.	
		1.2.4.3: Types of improvements incorporated.	
1.2.9	We will publish Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments (EHRIA).	1.2.9.1: Title / dates of published EHRIA's.	Equalities Review Group / Communications & Engagement
1.2.13	We will utilise outdoor space (where available) to establish sensory spaces.	1.2.13.1: Detailed update on progress.	Operational
1.2.15	Each locality will develop a Diversity and Inclusion section within their locality plans reflecting their responsibilities.	1.2.15.1: All Locality plans include a section on responsibility for Diversity and Inclusion.	Operational: 3.9

Outcome 2:	We will build an inclusive culture which values and develops our people, providing them with the tools and support they need to be skilled, confident, valued, respected and cared for to maximise their potential.		
Objective 1:	Our leaders will foster a culture where our people feel included, valued, respected and cared for.		
Action		Indicators	Leading Strategy / Objective Ref. No.
2.1.3	We will develop Inclusive Leadership Standards.	2.1.3.1: Inclusive Leadership standards developed.	People: 1.1 & 5.1
2.1.7	We will introduce guidance to support a consistent approach to recruitment (e.g. interview questions).	2.1.7.1: Revised recruitment and selection policy implemented.	People: 1.4
Objective 3:	Our staff will feel supported, respected and cared for.		
Action		Indicators	Leading Strategy / Objective Ref. No.
2.3.1	We will create a culture of support within the workplace where our people can talk about mental health and well-being without stigma and are offered appropriate support.	2.3.1.1: Mental Health at Work Commitment and Standards are achieved.	People: 4.3
		2.3.1.2: individual and personal Wellness Action Plans are developed and implemented.	
		2.3.1.3: Wellbeing strategies developed and implemented.	
		2.3.1.4: Wellbeing model developed and implemented.	
2.3.2	We will launch a revised supervision and appraisal framework and ensure that all staff have regular supervision.	2.3.2.1: Supervision framework relaunched.	People: 2.4

Outcome 3:	We will actively tackle under-representation and create a workforce that better reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.		
Objective 1:	We will make our workforce more diverse through our recruitment and selection processes.		
Action		Indicators	Leading Strategy / Objective Ref. No.
3.1.4	We will further develop our Modern Apprenticeship Programme to provide opportunities to other under-represented groups.	3.1.4.1: Number and types of opportunities provided.	Communications & Engagement: 1.4

**Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
Ochil House
Springkerse Business Park
Stirling
FK7 7XE**



www.scra.gov.uk