

# Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit

Building welcoming, inclusive  
community representation in parent carer forums



A practical toolkit to help parent carer forums to improve their reach and engagement with families from underrepresented communities and groups.

<b>CONTENTS:</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Background	3
Section 1: What are seldom heard and underrepresented groups?	5
Section 2: Your membership	18
Section 3: Getting to know your local community	23
Section 4: Building your networks	25
Section 5: Building inclusion	30
Section 6: Making inclusion 'business as usual'	33
Section 7: It's about race – personal and group development work	41
Section 9: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy	53
APPENDIX	
1: Equality Act 2010	55
2: Membership and Equality and Diversity monitoring	56
3: General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)	59
4: Glossary of LGBTQ+ terms	62
5: LGBT monitoring form	65
Resources & links	68

## Background:

Parent carer forums (PCFs) are groups of parent carers\* in each local authority area in England. They work together with local service providers to develop services that best meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and their families. To do this well they need to know about the experiences of as many families with children and young people with SEND as possible within their community.

\*By parent carer, we mean anyone who has parental responsibility for a child or young person aged 0-25 with SEND. These include foster parents, grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents, kinship parents, etc.

We are Contact, the charity for families with disabled children, we support families, bring families together and help families take action for others. We have been the Department for Education's contracted partner supporting strategic participation of parent carers and the development of parent carer forums since 2008. A number of forums and the organisations listed below helped us to produce this toolkit.

Include Me TOO - a national charity that charity supports disabled children, young people, and their families from a diverse range of backgrounds has over a decade of experience in community engagement and participation, including working and supporting families to have their voices heard and their involvement supported.

Diversity Trust is a UK wide charity working to influence social change to create a fairer and safer society by promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion on the grounds of: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation through the elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and promoting social engagement through education, training and consultation with communities, groups and individuals.

It is important that PCFs are representative of the diverse communities in their local area so that all voices are heard when services for children and young people with SEND are designed, planned, delivered, and evaluated. This toolkit aims to help forums to know where to find information on communities, challenge any biases and give them the confidence to reach out eloquently and ensure that communications and forum events are as inclusive and welcoming to all groups, as possible.

## Introduction

This toolkit is a practical resource to help your PCF to:

- ➔ Look at your current reach and membership make up
- ➔ Understand diverse populations in your area
- ➔ Take action to identify, and reach out to seldom heard or underrepresented groups
- ➔ Strengthen local representation to reflect the diverse backgrounds of parent carers who are underrepresented in your local area and forum

We include some actions that will give you a 'quick start' to becoming more inclusive, as well as providing longer term planning tools. Your forum can dip in and out of this guide to suit your priorities.



# Section 1:

## What are seldom heard and underrepresented groups?

The terms 'seldom heard', 'hard to reach' groups/communities are traditionally used for minority and underrepresented and diverse grassroots communities. It refers to people who may use services, or need to use them, but are less likely to be heard by services and decision makers. There has been much discussion over the years about the language used to talk about groups of people that services and organisations find it harder to reach or engage with. The term 'hard to reach' has been commonly used. We are primarily using the terms 'seldom heard' and 'underrepresented groups' in this toolkit as it emphasises the responsibilities on organisations to reach out to excluded people.

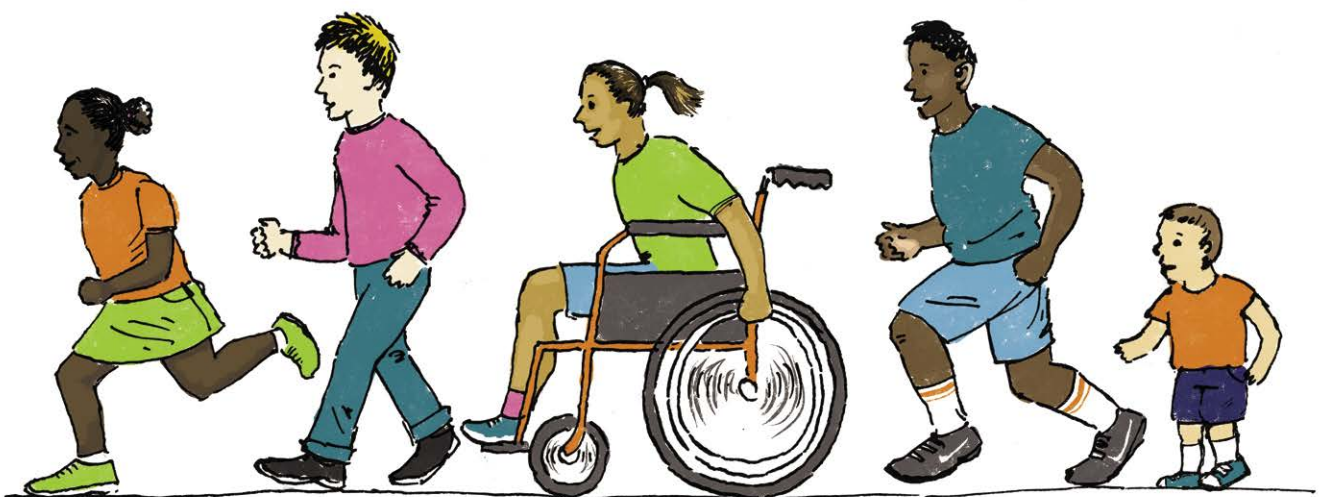
Parent carers of children and young people with SEND have themselves been an underrepresented group for many years, though now that parent carer forums are established, their views are being incorporated into the way services are developed. Within the SEND world there are parent carers who face additional barriers to having their voices heard and it's important that parent carer forums broaden their reach to be more inclusive and remove any barriers.

Which communities and groups can the term 'underrepresented groups' and seldom heard groups apply to? This will be different for every area. Some examples may be:

- ➔ Muslim, Traveller, and Jewish Orthodox faith communities.
- ➔ Polish, Romanian, Somali, Syrian, African, Indian, and Pakistani communities.
- ➔ Families experiencing domestic abuse/substance misuse.
- ➔ Families with unsettled ways of life (e.g., former asylum/recent refugee status).
- ➔ Very low-income families or families whose income drops suddenly due to a change in circumstances, self-employed.
- ➔ Home educated children.
- ➔ Families with a disabled adult parent carer and particularly all those with learning disabilities or mental health issues.
- ➔ Very young or new parent/carers.
- ➔ New to caring role e.g. grandparent/kinship carers/foster carers.



- Rare conditions – children with rare condition, family lacking support network/information.
- Families with limited literacy skills.
- Families with limited or no digital skills, limited or non-use of social media platforms.
- Families with health conditions where disclosing status can have a wide-reaching impact.
- Families who do not recognise their child as having a disability.
- Rural or geographically isolated families.
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender parents with disabled children.
- Families whose disabled children or their siblings are also transgender.
- Fathers and male relatives and carers of disabled children.
- Parent carers in prison.
- Single Parents, recently divorced or widowed.
- Parents of terminally ill children.
- Parents of children with short-term disabilities.
- Parents who are told that their children don't qualify for services e.g. short breaks or direct payments.



## Which communities do the terms Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic apply to?

Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic for the purpose of this toolkit covers the following communities and groups:

**Black** - is used to describe some or all of the people of African, Caribbean, and African Caribbean individuals of African descent, who were born in the Caribbean.

**Asian** - this term includes Asian and South Asian; individuals whose ethnic and cultural heritage originates from the Indian sub-continent. It refers to people from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, China, East African Asian and British Asian.

**Ethnic Minority** - is used to refer to all people who are members of minority ethnic communities whether they are visible minorities or not. The term therefore encompasses all minority ethnic groups including non-white British groups, asylum seekers and refugees, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

## The Debate - BLACK, ASIAN AND MINORITY ETHNIC Over

The use of the acronym for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic, 'BAME' has become contentious by a large portion of the communities it is used to describe. It is considered lazy and arrogant. However, data has been collected using the term for over a decade. Coming up with an alternative is not easy. The UK government is still using it in 2021.

Decide with your forum the best way forward and what your inclusive language approach will be. Until an alternative is devised, we recommend you say each component of the acronym 'Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic' resisting the urge to use the acronym.

Language is powerful, so taking some time to apply a little effort and consideration can go a long way to creating an inclusive culture.

The link below will take you to the 'A for an Inclusive Arts workforce' website for a deeper dive into this conversation.

<https://incarts.uk/%23bameover-the-statement>



**Action:** Share the A for an Inclusive Arts workforce statement (see website above) with forum members to read before a planned meeting. Share thoughts and considerations during your meeting. Taking the time and opportunity to reflect and process this beforehand is what makes for a powerful discussion.

### Alternatives

- ➔ Global Majority
- ➔ Racialised and Minoritised Communities
- ➔ Communities who experience Racism

## Intersectionality

These communities get excluded due to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, language, and/or immigration status.

Parents may identify with more than one of these communities, this is intersectionality is important to acknowledge.

**What is Intersectionality** - [Link to video giving a brief overview of Intersectionality](#)



(3 mins)

## Other underrepresented groups that your forum should be engaging with

### Working with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning and others (LGBTQ+) Community

Inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community is vital to having a fully representative forum. Members of the LGBTQ+ community may feel excluded from the forum because of past experiences of prejudice or may fear being judged by other members of the



forum. This section aims to help to explain diverse families, gender and sexuality, and inclusive language use.

## **Family Structures**

The idea that all families conform to a simple structure of one mother, one father and their children has never been true. People get divorced and re-marry. There are adoptive families, foster families, grandparents as primary carers, single-parent families, and some of those may include grandparents because the parent works. Many other family structures are possible, especially where LGBTQ+ people are concerned.

A child can have two mothers, or two fathers, either through a same-sex marriage, or because one parent has undergone gender transition, or both. An extended family may comprise a lesbian couple, the gay friend who was the sperm donor, and his husband. In a seemingly heterosexual couple, one or both partners may identify as other than straight (as bisexual, pansexual, asexual, etc.) or one or both partners may be transgender. (For example, the male partner may be a trans man who birthed the children.

People with “non-traditional” family structures may be reluctant to seek help or join the forum for fear of being judged as “immoral” or “bad parents”. Reassurance that they are accepted as they are, is important.

## **Gender and Sexuality**

It can be difficult to tell the difference between a person’s gender identity, and their sexuality or sexual orientation. The best way to differentiate between the two is to understand that a person’s gender is about who they are as a person regardless of other people, while their orientation is about who they might have a relationship with. It’s especially important to remember this when considering transgender (or “trans”) people; for example, a trans woman may be straight (attracted to men), gay (attracted to other women), bisexual, pansexual, asexual, etc. Knowing that a person is transgender does not automatically indicate their sexual orientation.

People who refuse to accept the reality of trans identities will often target trans people who are disabled, or who have mental illnesses or learning disorders, claiming that their trans identity is an artificial result of their other traits. There is no evidence that any biological or mental trait can cause someone to become trans.

## **Comfort and Safety**

People who are prejudiced against the LGBTQ+ community will often claim that such people make them feel “uncomfortable” or “unsafe”. Environments where children are present are an easy place to stoke such fears. There is no evidence that members of the LGBTQ+ community are more likely to be violent, sexual predators,

or a danger to children, than any other member of the population. Suggestions that they are should be dealt with firmly. No member of a minority group should be discriminated against simply because someone else claims to feel uncomfortable around them or suggests that their minority status makes them dangerous.

## Language

The terminology used by the LGBTQ+ community can be confusing. The meaning of terms can be a bit fluid, and new ones are constantly being invented. We have provided a small glossary of key terms (see Appendix 4), but there are many others. The easiest approach to take is to ask people (politely and discretely) what terms they use for themselves, and to use those terms with them.

Language is ever changing. It is important to remember that the meaning of words is dependent on context. A word that has been reclaimed by the younger generation may still be deeply offensive to older members of the community, and others that are socially acceptable now, won't always be. Like "BAME," "Trans" is an umbrella term which covers a variety of identities and, some people want to use more specific terms (such as "trans masculine" or "demi-girl") for themselves.

Use inclusive language at forum events or meetings and refrain from using phrases like 'ladies and gentlemen' instead using more inclusive terms such as 'good afternoon, everyone'.

One thing to remember is that no one has a right to the identity, 'normal', in contrast to someone else's identity. You do not have to fully understand a person's identity or the terms they use to describe it to be polite and respectful when using those words.

The use of the correct pronouns for trans people is an issue of concern for many, thanks in large part to the number of scare stories in the media. The vast majority of trans people will not be upset by an honest mistake. However, when people constantly and deliberately use the wrong name and pronouns for them, this is seen as a form of aggression, and can be very upsetting and harmful.

Asking for someone else's pronouns can be difficult as doing so might be seen as a suggestion that someone 'looks trans'. The best approach is to give your pronouns first, before asking for the other person's: "Hello, I'm Jane, my pronouns are she/her". That way you have signalled to someone who might want to give you their pronouns that you are a safe person to open-up to.

## Learning to Apologise

Everyone makes mistakes, even experienced Diversity & Inclusion professionals. Because we will get things wrong at some point, it is important to learn how to apologise well. When you have made a mistake, bear the following in mind:

1. Accept responsibility; don't try to blame the person you have offended or try to excuse your actions with explanations of your intentions.
2. Mean it! People can tell when you are insincere.
3. Try not to do it again and, if possible, slip the correct usage into the conversation when an opportunity arises.
4. Don't make a big fuss of how sorry you are: this is not about you.

### Hints and Tips on Engaging with LGBTQ+ People

- ➔ Display of a rainbow logo can go a long way to demonstrate an organisation's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. The rainbow flag is a well recognised symbol with LGBTQ+ communities.
- ➔ Display of a "Mission Statement", describing the organisation's commitment to the Equality Act 2010 and the protected characteristics included in the Act, will increase people's trust in the organisation's values.
- ➔ Use positive LGBTQ+ images, reflecting the diversity of the community, will increase the number of LGBTQ+ people accessing the service.
- ➔ Use inclusive language, by switching to using the word "partner" instead of assuming the gender when the person's partner is unknown, will increase people's feelings of being included and not discriminated against.
- ➔ Challenge homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia whenever you experience it; always with respect for the beliefs, dignity and safety of yourself and others.
- ➔ Talk to LGBTQ+ forum members, co-workers, and colleagues about what they feel is needed to make the environment a safer and more inclusive place, and work with them to achieve these improvements.
- ➔ Help to promote LGBTQ+ events and display and distribute information about local and national LGBTQ+ groups and organisations.
- ➔ Engage with local LGBTQ+ groups and organisations.

**Source** Diversity Trust [www.diversitytrust.org.uk](http://www.diversitytrust.org.uk)

### Reaching out to deaf parent carers, no matter what their level or type of deafness, or how they communicate.

Deafness is a low incidence disability which may mean that parents of deaf children are the only people representing deafness. Many parents find this quite tricky and don't always feel confident to talk about issues affecting their deaf child.

The RNID (national hearing loss charity) report that one in five adults in the UK is deaf or has hearing loss. To make your forum feel welcoming to those parent carers who are deaf, have some level of hearing loss and/or tinnitus, you could:

- ➔ Arrange for your steering group and volunteers to have some deaf awareness training from a reputable source, such as (but not limited to) the RNDI, British Deaf Association, or the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS).
- ➔ Learn from and share free tools such as the [RNID communication tips](#) and information on [British Sign Language \(BSL\)](#).
- ➔ Review and make changes to your activities (including any online/virtual activities) in line with deaf awareness training or tips.
- ➔ Link with any local deaf organisations to find out more about how deaf parent carers in your area want to be involved in the forum, or simply to let them know about the forum so they can share your information with any deaf parent carers they are in touch with.

### **Reaching out to families with deaf children, no matter what their level or type of deafness, or how they communicate.**

Tips on reaching out to families with deaf children:

- ➔ The [National Deaf Children's Society \(NDCS\)](#) has lots of information about childhood deafness, including [these introductory facts and figures](#) about deaf children.
- ➔ NDCS has advice on [how to make resources accessible to deaf children and young people](#). They also offer [deaf awareness training](#).
- ➔ NDCS is affiliated to around 100 deaf children's societies in the UK. These are local groups run by parents and carers of deaf children. Reaching out to local groups can be a good way to include the views of parents and carers of deaf children in the forum. [Check if there is a group in your area](#), and if there is, make contact to find out how they might like to link, or be involved with the forum.
- ➔ [Children's Hearing Services Working Groups \(CHSWGs\)](#) bring together staff from different services who support deaf children and their families. They usually cover health authority areas. Your local CHSWG may have representation from parents of deaf children, or links with them, along with other information that may help your forum ensure it is representing families with deaf children.
- ➔ [Get in touch with NDCS](#) if you would like more info about your local CHSWG, or advice on how to reach out to parents and carers of deaf children in your area.
- ➔ You could share information on your forum's website, including newsletters and social media, from reputable sources such as NDCS. This may be helpful for families with deaf children to help them feel that the forum is a place they can go to for information, networking and to share their views and influence for change.

### **Reaching out to families whose child or young person has sight loss or blindness, or blind or partially sighted parent carers**

Did you know that the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) reports that every day 250 people lose their sight?

To make your forum feel welcoming to those parent carers who are blind or partially sighted, you could:

- ➔ Arrange for your steering group and volunteers to have some [visual awareness training](#) from a reputable source, such as (but certainly not limited to) the RNIB or [Blind Ambition](#). Or use free tools such as the RNIB's '[Understanding Sight Loss, flexible learning for staff and volunteers](#)' guide to help ensure that your steering group and volunteers are confident in welcoming parent carers who are blind or partially sighted.
- ➔ Review and make changes to your activities (including any online/virtual activities) in line with what you learn from any training, free tools, and those you link with who are partially sighted or blind.
- ➔ There are many local voluntary organisations around the country who support blind and partially sighted people. You can find local support organisations in your area via the Visionary website, which allows you to [search by postcode](#). You could link with any local organisations that support blind and partially sighted people so that they can share information about the forum with any blind or partially sighted parent carers.

## Reaching out to families with blind and partially sighted children and young people

- ➔ Reach out to any local organisations or services that support families with blind and partially sighted children and young people. VICTA is a national charity that provides support to children and young adults aged 0 to 29 who are blind or partially sighted, and their families. They have some regionally listed links that may fall in your forum's area <https://www.victa.org.uk/our-services/charity-links/>
- ➔ Share information that may be helpful for families with blind and partially sighted children. The Royal Society for Blind Children (RSBC) has a range of support for [young people](#), a [families first service](#) that supports the wellbeing of blind and partially sighted children and their families, and a [Facebook parents' network](#).
- ➔ Share information on your forum's website, newsletters, and social media from reputable sources that may be helpful for families with blind and partially sighted children much like you would with other conditions, to help them feel the forum is a place they can go for information, networking, and to share their views.
- ➔ If families with blind or partially sighted children tell you they are experiencing the same issue, your forum might prioritise this as an area for action and influence for change.

## Engaging parents of children and young people in Alternative Provision

### What is Alternative Provision (AP)?

Alternative Provision (AP) refers to all education arranged for pupils unable to attend mainstream or special school and who are not electively educated at home, whether for behavioural or health reasons. AP includes Pupil Referral Units



(PRUs), AP academies and free schools, and hospital schools, as well as a variety of independent, registered, unregistered and further education settings. 83% of the pupils sole or main registered in PRUs, AP academies and AP free schools have been identified with Special Educational Needs.

Depending on the needs of the child or young person, AP can be full-time or a combination of part-time support in AP and continued mainstream education. Where possible, AP should provide temporary support for a child or young person before they are reintegrated back into a mainstream or Special school. However, where it is in the best interests of the child or young person, they may receive permanent or long-term support in AP, for example where they are near the end of Key Stage 4 and due to complete their GCSE examinations.

Parent carers of children and young people in AP may not be easily engaged as they do not have access to information from Schools or Colleges, may not be part of parent networks and may not visit their child's setting on a regular basis. This may reflect the fact that they themselves have become disengaged with the education system. They might also experience stigmatisation or a lack of understanding of their child which may cause them to withdraw, and therefore these parent carers may not hear about the forum or its work. However, the very nature of their situation may mean that local services have not identified or met the needs of their children, and they may have valuable experiences to feed back to service providers to highlight where improvements need to be made. Improving the representation of this group of parent carers within the forum will ensure that you are reflecting a wide range of experiences and providing a network for all, regardless of their circumstances.

## Tips

- ➔ Be proactive when planning a recruitment drive, or events, try to think about parents who may not automatically receive communications.
- ➔ Get to know your local Alternative Provision providers to ensure that parent carers whose children and young people attend receive your forum's information, by:
  - ➔ Reaching out to them directly
  - ➔ Getting in touch with key representative organisations, such as PRUsAP, the National Association for Hospital Education (NAHE) and National MAT CEO Network for AP & SEND
- ➔ Ensure that any communications reflect a diversity of experiences and circumstances to help AP parent carers to feel included
- ➔ Use social media effectively to reach out to different groups of parent carers
- ➔ Hold AP-specific meetings, events or activities to encourage parent carers to share their experiences

## Ideas to reach male parents and male carers

Many service and community environments focused on the family have a majority of staff/volunteers that are female, with a higher engagement of female parent carers.

Some forums find it harder to reach and engage male parent carers. If there is not enough engagement from males, to reach out to male parent carers and increase their representation, you might consider:

- ➔ Flexible times of events / activities including during evenings or at weekends. Males may join in daytime events if they are the main carer
- ➔ Ensure all verbal and printed communications use language that includes male parent carers
- ➔ Ask male parent carers for their input on what they would like to see from their forum and how they would like to be involved
- ➔ If male parent carers do not live with their child, make an extra effort to communicate and meet with them and routinely send them information
- ➔ Ensure pictures, books and posters display a positive image of male parent carers
- ➔ Some forums have invited male parent carers to join in activities and events that might appeal to them including a male parent carers' and kids only event, family sports events, male parent carers' baking competition, or WhatsApp group
- ➔ Give male parent carers space to talk about their feelings, emotions, challenges and experiences with each other and discuss topics such as transition, schools, experience of practitioners etc.
- ➔ Link with local and national groups that can help you develop your forum to reach out to male parent carers

### Tips:

- ➔ The Fatherhood Institute is the UK's fatherhood think-and-do-tank, and it develops approaches to engaging with fathers mainly in the health, education, and family sectors
- ➔ The young Dads collective <https://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/young-dads-collective>

## Working parents

Working parents may not be able to attend daytime events due to work commitments or may require adequate notice to book time off work. Some parents may work part-time and so may be able to plan time around work to take part in forum events or meetings. Recognise that working parent carers may not have as much time to give to forum work and that having their knowledge and experience for some of the time, is better than not having them involved at all.

## Rural communities

It may be more difficult for parent carers living in rural communities to attend face to face forum events and meetings. Many forums are now running online events and as a result have increased their reach. Try to have hybrid events where you also have virtual meeting technology so that those unable to travel to events, can be part of them but remember that not all rural areas have good broadband provision. You might also consider putting on a roadshow to go to different locations in your area identifying local meeting points and ensuring that parent carers know that any travel costs will be reimbursed. Some forums have a support group network in rural communities as a way of reaching out to other groups in their area and they come together as a collective group once a year. You could hold informal coffee and cake events and team up with local providers or champions to tag onto their events or ensure that forum flyers are in surgeries, village halls, parish councils, GP surgeries etc. You might try articles in village publications to get to reach parents in remote communities.

**Tip:** Ensure that you hold events on different days and times so that the same groups of parents are not excluded each time. Better still, repeat events so that you reach as many parent carers as possible.

## Rare conditions and complex needs

Parent carers of children and young people with complex needs and or rare conditions may be daunted by forum meetings and events as they may feel like the only person representing or advocating for their child. Try holding rare condition days or link in with local or regional support groups so that parent carers are notified about the forum early on in their journey and feel comfortable joining as the forum reached out to an organisation that supports their child or young person. Their child may have a rare condition or different needs, experiences may be different, and their parent carers may be able to represent the forum on complex needs boards, but many other issues and challenges they face will be similar to



other parents. Contact has information, advice, and support on rare conditions.

<https://contact.org.uk/help-for-families/information-advice-services/health-medical-information/rare-conditions/>

## **Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities**

The Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities are often marginalised and because of regularly experiencing prejudice, feel vulnerable and are less likely to engage with local services or have access to GPs. Gypsy, Roma and Travellers prefer to engage with people of the same sex and there are certain words and taboo subjects that should be sensitively approached in mixed company e.g. pregnancy, breastfeeding, women's health, and other health issues. Culturally appropriate language is vital when discussing sensitive topics.

Some local authority areas have a dedicated Traveller worker who has earned the trust of the community. Find out who this worker is and make links with them, pass on appropriate forum information, verbally if possible as word of mouth works best, and ensure that the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities are aware of your events, workshops, or meetings, and how they can feed in their experiences anonymously. Gaining their trust and belief that you have good intentions may take time, but is vital for a good relationship, so take real examples or positive case studies to demonstrate how the forum has made a difference and can bring about change. If you can learn more about their culture (all communities) and language (Rromàni Roma), this will be positively received.

Traveller Movement is charity aiming to advocate for and work with Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller people to tackle discrimination and promote equality. Their website has information to help you learn more about the different cultures within the Traveller population. <https://travellermovement.org.uk/gypsy-roma-and-traveller-history-andculture/>

KaskoSan, founded by an East European Roma living in the UK, works with the East European Roma community both digitally and offline since 2009. In collaboration with dedicated partners, they produce cultural content and consultancy.

KaskoSan's films, dramas, art performances and Romani language and cultural workshops aim to inspire critical thinking in terms of Roma inclusion and develop ways to maximise engagement.

<https://kaskosan.org/>

# Section 2

## Your membership

### This section covers:

- How collecting diversity data helps forums
- Reviewing your forum's current membership
- Different ways to collect membership information
- Improving the information your forum collects
- Your forum's responsibilities under data protection

## How collecting diversity data helps forums

All parent carer forums must comply with a range of legal duties including duties under the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act 2010 ensures that people with 9 protected characteristics are considered and supported. It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of a protected characteristic, including their:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Collecting diversity data helps your forum to:

- Understand which diverse groups your forum is reaching and engaging with
- Compare your membership to the total SEND population and local SEND diversity data to see if you are reaching all families
- Help you to plan and target your forum's activities
- Be more representative of your local parent carer community and ensure you are capturing and recording the views of parent carers from diverse groups
- Demonstrate your reach and different perspectives to your strategic partners



- ➔ Help Strategic partners to make decisions based on sound evidence
- ➔ Enable Strategic partners to meet their duties as set out in the Public Sector Equality Act
- ➔ To meet legal requirements
- ➔ To become more inclusive, open, and fair
- ➔ Advance equal opportunities
- ➔ Enable your parent representatives to carry out their roles effectively
- ➔ To monitor changes in your membership

### **The ways that forums collect membership data**

There are different ways that you can collect data. Some examples of how forums collect data are:

- ➔ Social Media groups such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp
- ➔ Surveys and polls
- ➔ Feedback forms/polls from events or training
- ➔ Membership form information, collated and stored on a database or spreadsheet

Some forums have a membership database, and some just use social media groups. You can use a mix of these ways to collect data about which diverse groups your forum reaches and to help you identify gaps.

You can also seek support from your Parent Carer Participation Advisor, Local Authority, and Health Partners as well as local voluntary organisations.

### **Social Media tools**

There are social media analytic tools such as Google Analytics to help you to understand some aspects of the diversity of your members such as age and gender.

### **Membership Database and forms**

Some forums keep databases of members, and some databases collect more data than others. Some simply record names, email addresses, and phone numbers on a spreadsheet. Others may be more sophisticated and ask a range of questions including diversity data, can be automatically linked to your forum's website to record new members and update your database, which saves on administrative time.

The different types of database systems include:

- ➔ Lamplight
- ➔ Charity Log
- ➔ InTouch
- ➔ Salesforce

Other means:

- ➔ Creative Stream Website
- ➔ Google Sheets/Docs
- ➔ Microsoft Excel/Access
- ➔ Mailchimp
- ➔ Engaging Networks

This isn't an exhaustive list, and you can find further information about databases and using technology on Contact's dedicated parent carer forum [YouTube channel](#).

Your forum may want to use an Equality and Diversity form that remains anonymous to capture the diversity of parent carers attending forum events, training, or conferences.

### Range of data to collect

Take a balanced and proportionate approach and only collect information that your forum needs to analyse and report on. Find out what information your strategic partners or funders need to demonstrate the forum's effectiveness. Enlist their help and expertise – you don't have to do this on your own.

### Review the information you currently collect

Communities are represented by diverse families and individuals who have differing needs. It is therefore important to gather equality and diversity information as part of your membership and forum's activity monitoring.

Monitoring equality and diversity of your Parent Carer Forum: Do you gather the following information?	Yes ✓	No ✓
Gender (members and children)		
Age (members and children)		
Disability/SEND information (both of parent carer members and their children)		
Where they live – postcode, type of housing – identifying unsuitable housing, parents in areas of deprivation?		
Child's placement/provision (education setting, in or out of area)		

Services used		
Ethnicity of your forum's members, representatives, and their children		
Spoken and written language. NB these may be different		
Faith and beliefs of your forum's members & representatives		
Sexual orientation (members)		
Parental status – there are many forms of family make up including lone parents, allow for diverse family structures		
Income level		

## General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

Parent Carer Forums need to ensure they comply with Data Protection legislation and the General Data Protection Regulations when collecting, storing, and using personal data.

There are several key principles to capturing and storing data:

- ➔ Lawfulness, fairness, and transparency
- ➔ Purpose limitation
- ➔ Data minimisation
- ➔ Accuracy
- ➔ Storage limitation
- ➔ Integrity and confidentiality (security)
- ➔ Accountability

### Complying with GDPR:

Be clear about the reasons why your forum collects data and obtain your members' written consent in all circumstances. You also need to ask permission if there are changes to how the forum plans to use their data.

### GDPR and Special Category Data

Special category data is personal data that needs more protection because of its sensitivity. This covers personal data that reveals:

- ➔ racial or ethnic origin

- ➔ political opinions
- ➔ religious or philosophical beliefs
- ➔ trade union membership
- ➔ genetic data
- ➔ biometric data (where used for identification purposes)
- ➔ health
- ➔ sex life; and
- ➔ sexual orientation.

You must have additional safeguards and protection in place if you collect, store, or process this data. Your forum would also need to identify a lawful purpose for collecting the information, and a separate condition for processing the data. There is more information about this on the [Information Commissioner's Website](#).

For signposting to specialist help with data, ask your strategic partners, Community Matters, or your Parent Carer Participation Advisor. You could use your DfE parent carer participation grant to fund some support with this.

### **Security Tips**

Restrict access to data to one or two people who have secure access. Every person volunteering or working on behalf of the forum must sign up to the forum's Privacy Policy and be trained in keeping the data safe.

Use secure, regularly changed passwords on all computers, data, and IT systems, and back up the data in case of data loss such as theft of a computer.

Consider how long you will store data as it should be stored for as long as it is needed only, and no longer than 7 years after its last active use.

For more information about securing data, visit the [Information Commissioners Office website](#).

### **Does your forum share personal data with third parties?**

Be clear if your forum would be sharing data with a third party when website hosting. Any third parties need to be listed in your forum's Privacy Policy.

Have a named person that forum members can contact if they are concerned about the use of their data.

For further information on Data Protection and GDPR visit the [Information Commissioners Office](#), and refer to Appendix 3 which contains more detailed information about GDPR.

# Section 3

## Getting to know your local community

**This section covers where to find information about the population of your community.**

Your local authority will have various data and information about the local population, including diversity and SEND data. Your forum can talk to the local authority and other partners about your current reach, as well as any gaps. You can make decisions together about which groups are priorities to target to strengthen your forum's reach.

The key documents to ask for are the local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), and the SEND strategy plan. These should contain useful data relating to SEND. Here are a few examples of other useful links to help find data on your local area (the names may vary so it's best to talk to your local partners if you are not sure):

- ➔ Clinical Commissioning Group local data (CCG)
- ➔ Joint Commissioning Strategy Assessment
- ➔ Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)
- ➔ SENDIASS
- ➔ SEND Partnership
- ➔ Local disabled children's database
- ➔ Multi-Agency Support Team
- ➔ Safeguarding Children's Board – families supported for Early Help Assessments
- ➔ Community Social Work Team
- ➔ Local community officers
- ➔ Voluntary Sector Council
- ➔ Local Councillors
- ➔ Strengthening Families Hubs
- ➔ Asylum and Refugee organisation or centre

You can also source information via desktop searches regarding your local population such as:

- ➔ 2011 census – search for local census information 2021 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census>. Census data will begin to emerge from 2022.



- ➔ Local NHS Strategic Plan, Equality Impact Assessment which provide breakdown of local neighbourhoods, communities, protected characteristics groups etc.
- ➔ Local Clinical Commissioning Groups Transformation Plans
- ➔ Local SEND Implementation Plan
- ➔ Children and Young People's Emotional Well Being and Mental Health Local Transformation Plan
- ➔ CQC and Ofsted joint local area inspection on SEND and children services
- ➔ NHS Statistics <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/>
- ➔ Statistics on pupils with SEN <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-special-educational-needs-sen>

## Consider

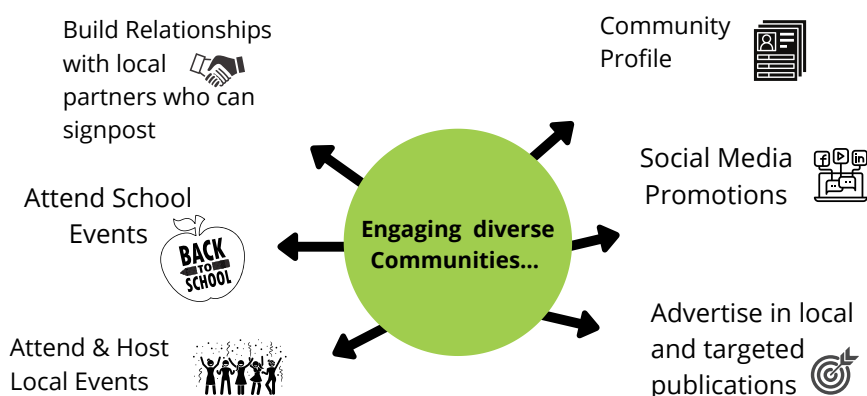
Have you identified specific research or projects to find out more about the needs and issues that matter to the diverse groups in your local area? If there isn't any specific research, this could be a gap for your forum to explore.

## Mapping your local community

Find out what is happening locally – what other groups/services are operating? Is there synergy with your own? Does this present an opportunity to collaborate?

## Suggested Actions:

1. **Quick start:** Take a local map to a forum meeting and get attendees to list the groups and services that they are aware of in the local area. Look for gaps and opportunities to connect and reach out to your target communities.
2. **Longer-term Action:** Create promotional material to target groups and or services working with the communities you want to engage with.
3. **Longer-term Action:** Do some stakeholder mapping, starting with the diagram below. Think about who is aware of the forum and might be able to promote the forum to families they work with to 'sell' it.



**Ultimately Build Trust**

# Section 4

## Building your networks

This section covers how to:

- ➔ Make links with the groups and organisations who are already in touch with underrepresented and diverse groups
- ➔ Recruit a wide range of members and representatives to support your forum's diversity, collective experiences, and reflect all local groups and communities.

There will be a wide range of services and organisations already connected to many underrepresented groups in your area so it's often a good idea to begin finding out who is already in touch with the group(s) your forum wants to reach.

Your forum may already have strong links with a range of organisations such as Education, Social Care, CCG, SENDIASS, and local voluntary agencies. Within those organisations other services will have connections that you can use as a starting point for reaching families from different Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities, as well as families from a broad range of other seldom heard and diverse groups.

You can ask your contacts which diverse groups they connect with, and for advice on how to get in touch with them.

### Quick Start Idea

Use this checklist to identify which groups you're already connected to and identify gaps. It's not an exhaustive list and names of organisations and networks may vary in your area – so add to it and change the names to make it relevant to your forum.

Organisation/service	Connected	Organisation/Service	Connected
Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller service (local authority)		Interfaith Network <a href="https://www.interfaith.org.uk/members/list">https://www.interfaith.org.uk/members/list</a> A local faith leader may be able to help connect you to different faith leaders	

LGBTQ organisations		Social Care Team	
Regional Equality Network		Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units	
Local Authority Equality Team		Mainstream Schools - you can target specific areas depending on your population	
Equality Council in your area		Health Visitors	
Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic Group Networks - there are some in Local Authorities, CCG's, and voluntary agency networks		Child Development Centres	
Equality and Diversity Team in your CCG		Paediatric Clinics	
Community Hubs		YMCA	
Welfare Rights Centres		Substance misuse services	
MASH – multi-agency Safeguarding Hub		Carers organisations – Kinship Carers groups	
Early Years Teams		Healthwatch	
Dad's groups		Women's Groups	
Disability networks		Interpreting services	
Community Radio		Visual impairment support groups	
Council for Voluntary Service or Community organisation – they often have good connections to a range of different groups and hold network meetings for community groups		Shops and businesses in different areas, for example local African, Caribbean, Polish, hairdressers, beauty shops, clothes shops, Halal butchers	
Libraries		Health Centres	
Community Centres or Village Halls		Providers of English as a Second Language (ESL)	
Housing Associations		Support Groups	

Women's Aid/Refuge Services		Fostering and adoption agencies	
Home Education groups		Use social media to identify local groups and networks for seldom heard groups	
Deaf Clubs/support groups			

Prioritise which organisations to approach first and decide who will make contact to find out more about them, talk to them about the forum and see how you can support each other. Make sure you allow time to listen and to learn from the organisations about their experiences and the best way to approach building links and contacts. Identify any barriers that your forum may have to overcome to reach different communities.

These could include:

- ➔ Needing to meet basic needs and not having time to attend meetings or look at surveys
- ➔ Low awareness of services and suspicion of statutory services
- ➔ Not enough thinking/processing time for people with different abilities
- ➔ Communication in meetings is too fast for interpreting/sign language, and people with learning disabilities
- ➔ Lack of transport and money
- ➔ Documents too difficult and complex to read
- ➔ Not feeling welcomed, or not listened to
- ➔ A committee or formal meeting approach isn't the norm
- ➔ Stereotypical views of Black, Asian, and Ethnic Minority Groups, stigma, cultural ignorance, false assumptions, and racism
- ➔ Over Reliance on computer-based communication and web links
- ➔ Too many daytime, and weekday meetings that are not accessible for working people
- ➔ Language and literacy barriers
- ➔ Meetings have too many people

## Quick Start Ideas

Like social media groups and posts from diverse communities and organisations representing them via your forum's social media. Follow groups, share relevant posts, and private message them to introduce the forum. Comment positively on some of their posts and use private messaging to share information with their group about the forum, and always ask permission to share any forum information on their page.

Find out the top 5 languages spoken in your area and produce forum flyers in those languages to share with relevant groups.

Share the list with your forum's steering group and parent representatives – ask everyone to put their name next to organisations and groups they have links to already. Agree who can make links with different services and organisations to promote the forum – spread the workload.

### **Longer-term planning ideas**

Once you identify who you are already in touch with, check that you're making the best use of your existing networks.

- ➔ Are you sharing information with them regularly?
- ➔ Do you know which communities they're already connected to?
- ➔ Are they running events in communities that you can join to share resources and save time?
- ➔ Can they link you with others who can help to promote the forum?
- ➔ Find out if organisations are running any consultations or carrying out research with different groups and see if you can add questions about children and young people with SEND.

Once you're making best use of your existing networks:

- ➔ Identify organisations you're not in contact with and take one at a time
- ➔ Send an email to introduce your forum, and be brief
- ➔ Ask them to promote the forum through their networks
- ➔ Ask if they'll display a poster or newsletter in their waiting rooms/premises
- ➔ Find out if they're running any events in different communities and see if the forum can be part of them
- ➔ Find out if they have any key contacts in different underrepresented groups that they can share the forum's information with
- ➔ Check to see if you can share information about their services on your forum's Facebook page

Remember to keep updating your resource pack and include this in your action plan. Use the table below to plan your forum's approach to building links in your community and consider which are priority, or immediate actions, and which may be longer-term actions or commitments.

- Priority
- Immediate
  - Moderate (within 3 months)
  - Long term (within 12 months)

Collaboration and Community Links

Priority identified	Actions agreed	Deadline	Who's responsible	Completed

# Section 5

## Building Inclusion

### Reaching and including parent carers from diverse and underrepresented groups

#### This section covers:

- ➔ Reviewing your current communication and engagement with parents and carers from underrepresented groups
- ➔ Exploring ideas from other forums
- ➔ Thinking about the resources your forum might need to reach out further

### Review Your Forum's Current engagement:

As a steering group, consider the different activities your forum currently undertakes, and your reach. Enlist the support of other organisations like the Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) or your local authority. Use the list of underrepresented groups and diverse communities in the introduction and your knowledge of your local area to help you consider what else you could be doing to reach new parents and carers. Do you need to run events at different times of the day or weekends, or in different venues and locations?

Think about whether you offer any British Sign Language Interpreters, events, and meetings at different times of day or evening, translated documents, or buttons on your website to automatically translate information into different languages, and videos with subtitles.

Consider any gaps and think about how you might address them in the table below.



Activity	Current underrepresented groups reached	Potential barriers or gaps	Actions
Steering group			
Parent Representatives			
Forum Membership			
Social Media			
Conferences			
Coffee Mornings			
Focus Groups			
Surveys			
Consultation events			
Training			
Newsletter			
Flyers and leaflets			
Other			
Other			
Other			

Your forum can seek support with this activity from your local authority to help you consider what the forum can do with the resources you have, and what additional resources the forum may need to help to reach communities or groups that you are not currently engaging with.

### Quick Start Ideas

Read this blog to help you think about how to market to diverse communities:  
<https://marketingwithmaya.com/blog/how-to-market-to-diverse-audiences>

Identify current members from different diverse communities and enlist their help and support to plan how to reach more families in the area. Find out how they learned about the forum. Ask them to share why they decided to join the forum and for advice and suggestions on the best ways to engage to get their families involved with the forum, and how their community could assist.

Set up an equality and diversity group in your forum to help you with ideas and planning.

You don't have to have all the answers – use your existing members' knowledge and expertise.

Identify the most common languages spoken in your area by talking to your local authority contacts.

Produce translated flyers in these languages to put on the forum's website as well as to distribute to key locations.

Remember that not everyone who speaks a particular language will be able to read their own language and translation of materials is very expensive; audios and films can be useful.

Recruit bi-lingual families to help the forum to create podcasts and carry out research with families whose first language isn't English. You can create short podcasts about the forum in different languages to use on your website and social media. Make sure that you plan the script.

Explore the various local and culturally appropriate options you may use to get the forum's information across to diverse groups such as at community and faith events and festivals, face to face, community television and radio, large print, easy read and plain English with illustrations that reflect the diversity of your local community.

Ensure that the information you share including banners, and social media, use images that reflect the diversity of the whole local community. This makes the forum more relevant, welcoming, and accessible to all communities.



# Section 6

## Making inclusion ‘business as usual’

This section will support your forum to make all its activities accessible, inclusive, and welcoming, and covers:

- ➔ Never make assumptions, always ask
- ➔ Making virtual events accessible
- ➔ Making face to face events accessible
- ➔ Responding to a request for an adjustment
- ➔ Community, faith festivals, and cultural events
- ➔ Dietary needs

## Always ask

Whether your event, activity, or meeting is online or face to face, make it as easy as possible for people to ask for what they need. Always start by asking what people’s needs are and never assume that you know. Ask if anyone has any accessibility (and if applicable, dietary needs) as soon as possible, in advance of your forum’s event, so you have enough time to make any arrangements. Taking this action consistently signals that the forum is open and proactive about making adjustments to ensure that everyone can access their activities. You can use your DfE grant to put in place any adjustments people may need, for example a language interpreter.

## Making virtual activities accessible

- ➔ **Timings** - Manage cognitive overload for everyone by considering the times of your meetings, providing breaks, and sticking to time. Consider and take feedback on what times are good for those groups you want to attend and try repeating the activity at different times.
- ➔ **Chat facility** - Consider whether you need to use the chat facility in virtual meetings. If you do, structure the use of the chat facility so that questions are read out and answered verbally. It is challenging for anyone to listen and follow online instant chat. Blind or partially sighted members won’t be able to see the chat, so it is important if you are using the chat facility that the chat is read out in full.
- ➔ **Information in advance** - Provide information in advance whenever possible, such as agendas or presentation slides. Ensure that any slides have large, clear

fonts, minimal transitions and animations, and are not too busy.

- ➔ **Speaking** - Structure the meeting so that only one person talks at a time, ensuring people have the option to put up their hand or use the hand icon when they want to speak. The person talking needs to be named on screen in text, and the host needs to signal verbally who is speaking. Muting everyone can help to ensure there is only one person speaking at a time.
- ➔ **Face and background** - Ensure that you speak clearly, face the camera so that your face and mouth are visible, and have a plain background in a well-lit room. Keep your face visible on the screen if you are screen sharing as some people may need visual clues from your face and lips to fully understand the content.
- ➔ **Business as usual** - There is no need to signal that you have someone in the audience that requires any of these things, as these points should be considered every time and be 'business as usual.'
- ➔ **Films** - Consider the accessibility of any films or video clips you want to use. You may want to look into audio description and ensuring there is an option to add captions/subtitles. The Royal Association for Deaf People has a short clip about [making videos accessible](#) and there are some good tips in the RNIB's [information about making TV adverts accessible](#).
- ➔ **Language interpretation** can be provided in some platforms, such as [Zoom](#).
- ➔ **British Sign Language** - In virtual sessions, make sure you know how to highlight an individual's feed for all attendees. This feature is called the 'pin' and 'spotlight' function in Zoom and MS Teams. This means that if you are working with a British Sign Language Interpreter, they will be seen throughout the meeting. The UCL [Deaf Cognition and Language Research Centre](#) has published a set of helpful guidelines for using BSL interpreters when remote working (for example, in Zoom video conferences). The guidelines are available in both PDF and Word from the [DCAL website](#).
- ➔ **Recording** - You may want to consider recording the session so that people can choose to go back and watch it again if they need to. General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) will be relevant here, and you will need consent from participants if they are part of the recording.
- ➔ **The digital divide** - Some families may not have the digital skills, or access to the internet or technology, to access activities virtually. Healthwatch has some [tips](#) and an e-learning module about [how to engage people who are not online](#).

## Making face to face activities accessible

- ➔ **Location** - Think about the communities and individuals you are trying to reach, find out what location may be best for them. Check out parking, and public transport links. You can't make the location perfect for everyone but including transport and parking information in advance will help people to attend.
- ➔ **Venues** - Check that the building meets the reasonable adjustments legislation of the 2010 Equality Act by asking the venue. Give information in advance about accessible parking spaces and venue accessibility to help support anyone with mobility issues to feel confident attending. The Voluntary Arts Network has a

great [briefing on making events accessible](#) for disabled people. You may also want to consider a venue with gender neutral toilets.

- **Gender specific meetings** - Consider gender specific meetings and events if required, as in some communities, women/men only meetings and events may be preferred.
- **Faith and cultural community events** - Organise with, or around, faith and cultural community events. Explore collaborating with other local groups to host or attend events to celebrate with the community.
- **A private space** - Depending on your audience, you may consider having a private room for attendees for example a breastfeeding space, or place for prayer.
- **Costs** - Can the people you want to attend afford to? Could the cost of transport or childcare be a barrier to attendance? Regularly review your expenses policy to ensure it helps alleviate financial barriers to attendance. Make sure people understand what they can, and can't, claim for.
- **Alcohol** - Some communities will not attend a venue where alcohol is served or may prefer any bar area to be closed.
- **Reaching out** - If people can't come to you, consider whether you can go to them. Reach out to communities and families that don't usually attend and consider meeting with smaller existing groups. The best approach of engaging with faith and community groups and organisations is often meeting with them face-to-face and agreeing a time they are available to meet you.
- **Childcare** - Could access to childcare be a barrier to attendance? Ensure your expenses policy is clear on reimbursing childcare costs. If you are meeting and children can attend, be clear in advance about what childcare support is, and is not, available at the venue.

## Responding to a request for an adjustment

When someone contacts you to let you know they may need an adjustment or some support to access a forum activity/event, the most important thing is to keep an open mind. You don't have to come up with all the answers yourself, ask the person concerned what they think will work, or for any useful information they may have. You may want to discuss the request with your steering group and any colleagues or partners involved in delivering the event/activity.

There may be factors beyond your forum's control that could make it difficult to be as accessible as you might like in certain situations, for example limitations on funding, capacity, or venue availability. This is understandable, the most important thing is to be honest and continue to be welcoming and approachable. Depending on the circumstances, you may want to ask your local authority or health partners if they have any ideas or can help in some way, and you might want to consider setting some of your DfE grant aside to help with accessibility or any reasonable adjustment requests (for anyone who needs them).

## Community, Faith festivals and events

When planning your forum's events and activities, find out if there are any opportunities to plan something jointly with local community and voluntary organisations or groups who may be organising local community and faith festivals and events. This is a great approach towards community cohesion, inclusion, embracing diversity and strengthening the relations of forums with Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic and other 'seldom heard' families and their communities.

Here are some Community, Faith festivals and cultural events that forums can consider being a part of organising or supporting:

- ➔ Celebrating Vaisakhi
- ➔ Celebrating Diwali
- ➔ Chinese New Year
- ➔ Hanukkah
- ➔ Organising a Sari and Mendi day
- ➔ Celebrating Eid
- ➔ A St Patrick's Day party
- ➔ Marking Black History Month with visiting poets and having themed activities
- ➔ Easter, or Christmas events
- ➔ Pride events and LGBTQ+ History Month events
- ➔ Town and city festivals
- ➔ Disability Pride Month
- ➔ Disability History Month
- ➔ International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Make connections by attending diverse grassroot level community events and hold a stall or run a fun activity to attract families to your forum. Hear directly about what might encourage them to be part of your forum.

### Note:

Connecting with community groups, organisations, and other specialist services may help your forum by providing advice, information, and support to assist planning to improving your forum's reach, representation, and engagement of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic and other diverse groups and communities.

## Cultural and Language barriers to consider

### Note:

For many diverse communities, language and communication continues to be a barrier and can be a key cause of those who are underrepresented not accessing and participating in your forum.

## Consider

Surveys, questionnaires, and online surveys may not be accessible for Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic families and other parent carers due to not being available in their language; they are unable to complete online surveys; or to read their own language.

## Consider

Do you access interpreters to support those whose first language is not English so that they can contribute towards discussions, focus groups, and consultations to share their experiences, needs and aspirations in their preferred language?

## Consider

Lack of involvement and participation from 'seldom heard' groups may be due to gender barriers where parent carers from some diverse communities may prefer to attend and participate in same-gender meetings, discussions, focus groups and consultations.

## Note:

Targeted specific support to increase inclusion for parent carers from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic and other 'seldom heard' and diverse communities does improve their access, engagement, and participation.

## Consider

Could the forum develop a peer support group that provides cultural support and a space to discuss the issues that matter to diverse communities within a cultural context, building their confidence to share their experiences and highlight issues that matter, which can be fed back via forum representation?

## Consider

Consider having a dedicated volunteer, steering group member, or staff member to link with community link workers to reach out and engage with diverse parent carers supporting their access and engagement to the forum. This is good practice and a step towards improving the forum's accessibility.





## Dietary needs

- ➔ Consider the days and times of those who need to 'fast' for religious reasons or need food cooked in a particular way, e.g.: halal, vegetarian, vegan.
- ➔ Work closely with individuals with dietary needs and the catering providers to ensure that appropriate adjustments and safeguards are in place.
- ➔ Do not assume that halal meat will be a suitable meat dish for everyone as other people of faith will not be able to eat, or choose to eat, halal food.
- ➔ Vegetarian food in some communities includes no egg or ingredients made with egg.
- ➔ Keep cooking utensils and preparation areas separate in the kitchen for vegetarian and non-vegetarian food.
- ➔ Ensure meat, vegetarian, and vegan food are on separate serving dishes and are clearly labelled.
- ➔ Always ask in advance about dietary needs. Some people will have multiple allergies or intolerances, so if there is a form for people to complete to order food, make sure it has space for people to include this.
- ➔ Parent carers with food allergies or intolerances, or Coeliacs may not attend or not feel included at events with food or refreshments if they know that they will not be catered for or will be put be at risk.
- ➔ Always ask about dietary requirements and be prepared to cater for all, or none.

How does your forum currently share information or gather views and feedback from families with children and young people with SEND?

How might you do this differently to improve the forum's accessibility to underrepresented groups?

# Action Plan

Use the space to consider what you have read about making events more inclusive and plan what the forum needs to do to make improvements, and who will be responsible.

- Priority
- Immediate

■ Moderate (within 3 months)

■ Long term (within 12 months)

## Improving the Engagement, Participation and Inclusion of underrepresented groups and communities

Priority	Action required	Timescale	Named Person

# Section 7

## It's about race - personal and group development work

### Challenge your thoughts, perceptions, and biases

This section aims to challenge individual thinking and offers opportunities for group activities and personal reflection. There are also some short films and links to reading materials on understanding white privilege and becoming anti-racist.

**Consider:** Taking some of the exercises and working through them in your forum. Maybe complete one exercise at each committee or steering group meeting or take them in turn and work through.

Also consider reading anti-racist texts or watching films individually and come back to discuss as a group.

## Suggested Actions

- 1. Short-term Action:** Facilitate an Inclusive language activity where old and new language is compared and discussed across the 9 Protected Characteristics recognised in the Equalities Act 2010 (reference to protected characteristics in appendix). Language is continually evolving, and this does require participants to draw upon historical context, some of which they may find offensive.
- 2. Longer-term Action:** Set up an Inclusive Language Task and Finish group and create an Inclusive Language policy and or statement.

## Personal Development Work

### Language - A Conversation Starter

People worry a lot about using the correct language with minority groups. We all know that certain words are slurs, but others are more complex. For example, most people would probably view “half-caste” as an offensive term, but fewer may know that “dual heritage” is generally preferred to “mixed race”. In some cases, terms that used to be universally viewed as slurs have been reclaimed by young people or activists.

How do we feel about the term, “handicapped”? Do you think it would be similar to how LGBTQ+ people feel about the word “queer”? Have a conversation with your forum colleagues about language use. Can you think of other examples? How could you find out what the particular community affected feels about the words?

There is more discussion about language in the section on working with LGBTQ+ communities and on the section about Gypsy, Roma, and Travellers.

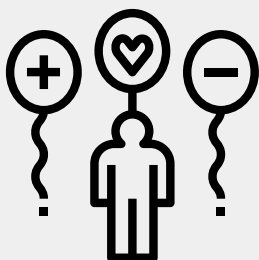
Challenge parent carer members to look at their individual selves and see how Bias can creep into their own thinking, contributing to hostile environments for seldom heard communities.

Creating inclusive cultures is the ultimate outcome.

[Understand the difference between Prejudice and Discrimination.](#)

See the diagram below to understand the difference between Prejudice and Discrimination.

## What is the difference?



### **Prejudice**

A negative attitude or feeling towards certain groups based on faulty, inflexible generalisations.

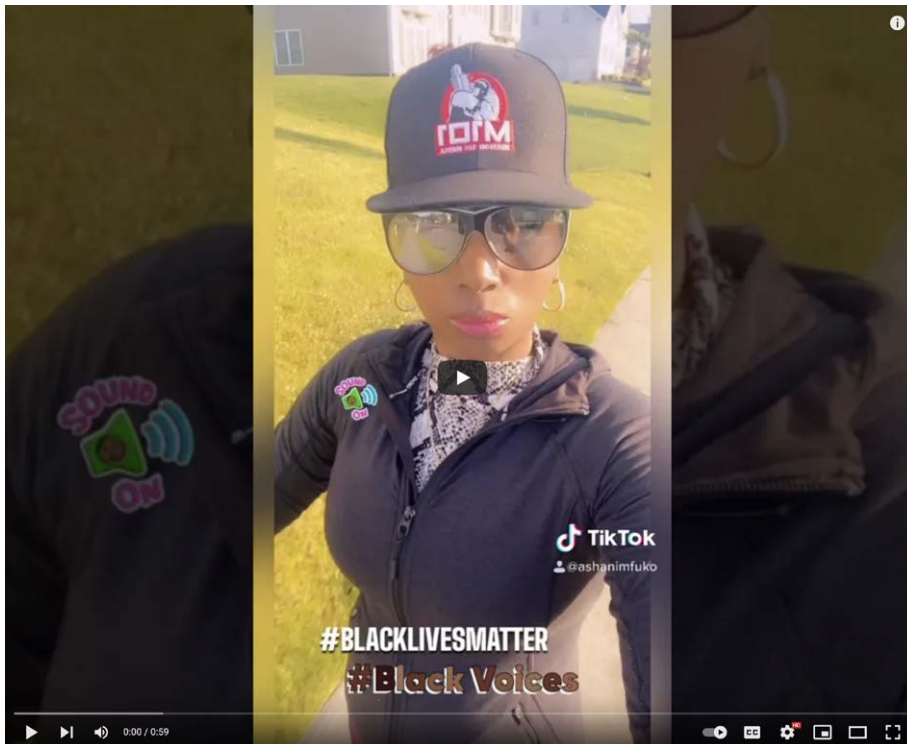


### **Discrimination**

Is the restrictive treatment of a person or group based on prejudiced assumptions of group characteristics, rather than individual judgement.

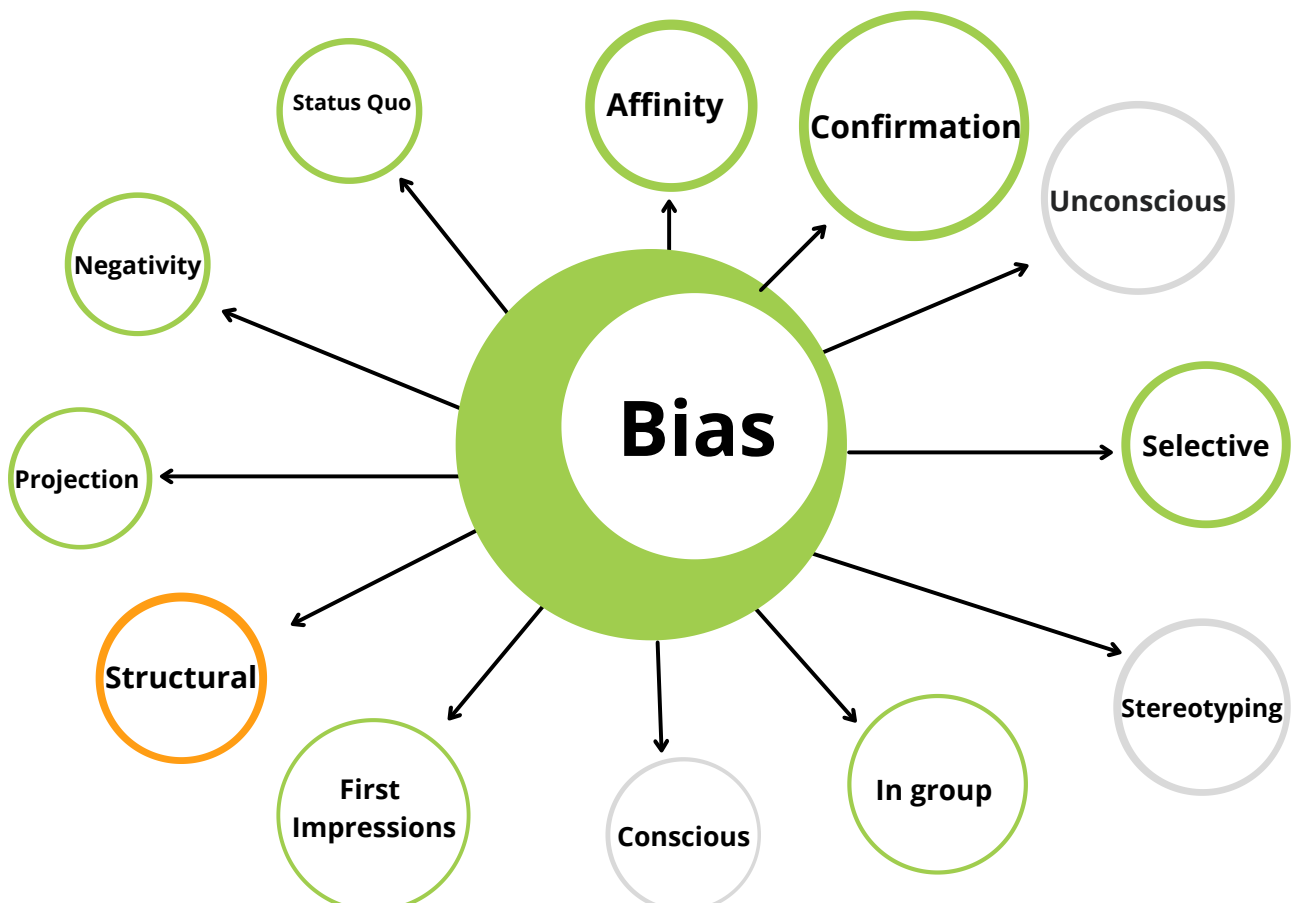
Have you, your children, or other forum members been subject to prejudice or discrimination?

How does it make you feel?



## We all have Bias

Bias is complex – multifaceted – can be present simultaneously. Please see [this link](#) for more detail on Cognitive Bias



**ACTIVITY** - Select one or two Biases in this diagram to present at a team meeting. Discuss how they might show up in your forum.

## Bias in our Children

Bias starts to take hold in our children from around the age of 7 years old. This is likely to show up as preference for people that look like us, talk like us etc. The more exposure to diverse groups of people, reading materials, films etc. The more we mitigate Bias tendencies in adulthood.

### Videos

- Doll Test: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRZPw-9sJtQ&t=32s>
- Unconscious Bias and Gender Stereotypes in Children - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3Aweo-74kY>
- Stonewall: <https://youtu.be/RUNzW7-P9bQ>

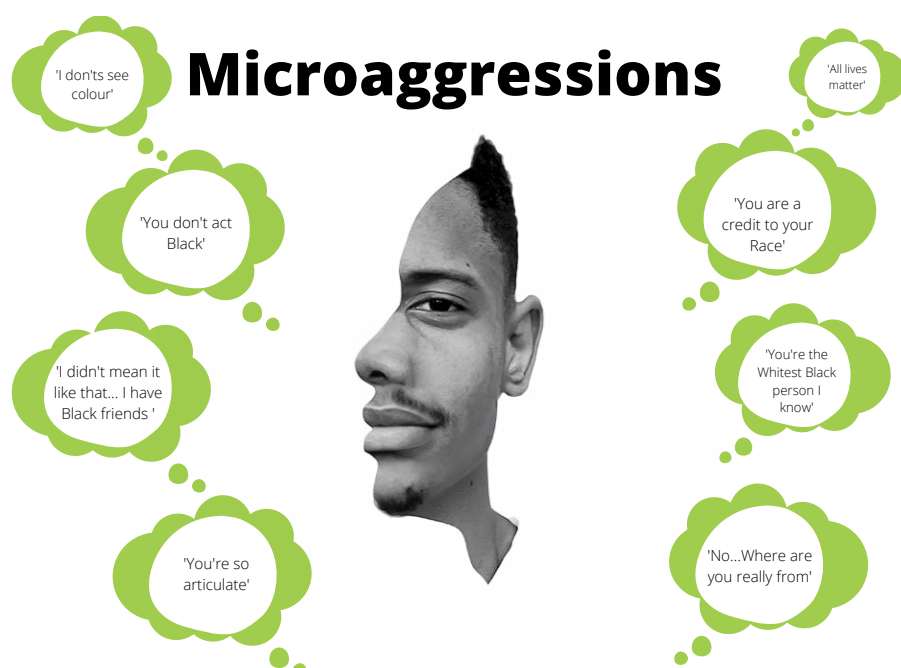
## Microaggressions - Description

### Micro-aggressions or Micro-incivilities...

"Microaggressions are the everyday slights indignities, put downs and insults people of color, women, LGBT populations, or those who are marginalized, experience in their day to day interactions with people"

Prof Derald Wing Sue, Columbia University

Microaggressions sound like this -



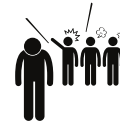
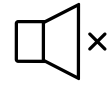


Microaggressions look like -

## How is Implicit Bias manifested?

### Micro-aggressions/incivilities

- ➔ Non-verbal communication
- ➔ Lack of inclusion
- ➔ Avoidance
- ➔ Lack of eye contact
- ➔ Ignoring and interrupting
- ➔ Lack of interest
- ➔ Assumptions about a person's skills, ability and temperament
- ➔ Mispronouncing a person's name
- ➔ Constant criticism
- ➔ Unfair appraisals



## How Diverse is your network? Personal Audit

### ACTIVITY

**Activity** – Now that you have a better understanding of what is meant by ‘seldom heard’ communities, consider how diverse your own network is. If continued engagement is the antidote to bias, and one way in which we can build our cross-cultural intelligence, consider the 5 closest people to you, how many people in your network do you know with a Protected Characteristic and, or, are living with the challenges they bring?

[Microaggression – Mosquito bites video](#)



### Understanding Privilege - Activity

Ask Participants to hold up their hands and extend their fingers. Ask the following questions -

1. Bend a finger if you took out loans for your education
2. Bend a finger if you had fewer than 50 books in your house whilst growing up
3. Bend a finger if you have ever been bullied or made fun of for something that you cannot change
4. Bend a finger if your academic, artistic and athletic skills are often attributed to you race
5. Bend a finger if you have ever been diagnosed with a neurodiverse condition
6. Bend a finger if you move through the world in fear of sexual assault
7. Bend a finger if you were embarrassed by your clothes or house growing up
8. Bend a finger if you came from an unsupportive family environment
9. Bend a finger if your religious festivals are not a national holiday
10. Bend a finger if showing affection to your romantic partner in public causes fear of violence or ridicule

**Conclusion** - Fingers bent symbolise barriers faced, and fingers extended symbolise privileges enjoyed.

## Understanding White Privilege

# White Privilege

“an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day .... An invisible, weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank cheques”

..... “I was taught to see racism only in individual acts of meanness, not in invisible systems conferring dominance on my group”

Peggy McIntosh 'White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack'  
Peace & Freedom Magazine, July/Aug 1989



### ACTIVITY

#### Activity – Answer the questions below

## White Privilege

- Being favoured by those in authority
- Learning about my race in school
- The media's blatant and positive bias towards my race
- Escaping violent stereotypes associated with my race
- Ignorant of racism and its effect

What other white privileges exist?



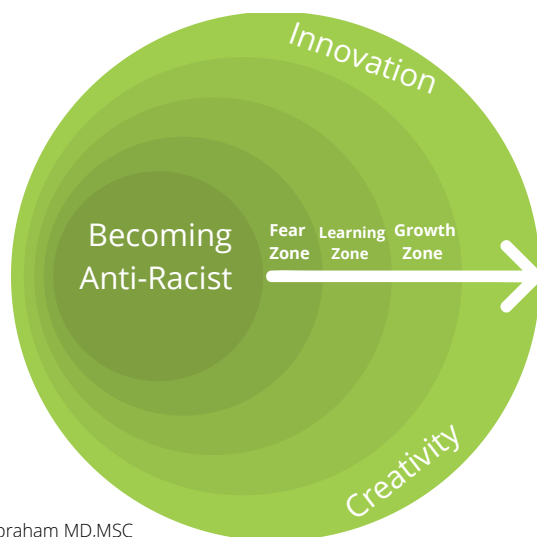
Take some time to think about any forum members' experiences of white privilege.

## Weaponising White Privilege - Example



## Start where you are - Becoming Anti-Racist Mapping Activity

### ACTIVITY



Creator - Andrew M. Ibrahim MD, MSC

## Becoming Anti-Racist Model

Start where you are...

### Fear Zone

- I deny racism is a problem
- I avoid tough questions and conversations
- I strive to be comfortable
- I prefer to engage with others that look and think like me

### Learning Zone

- I recognise that racism is a current problem
- I ask questions that make me uncomfortable
- I understand my own privilege in ignoring racism
- I educate myself about racism and structural racism
- I am vulnerable about my own knowledge and bias gaps
- I listen to others that think look and think differently to me.

### Growth Zone

- I identify how I may unknowingly benefit from racism
- I promote and advocate for policies and leaders that are anti-racist
- I sit with my own discomfort
- I speak out when I see racism in action
- I educate my peers on how racism harms our profession
- I don't let mistakes deter me from being better
- I yield positions of power to those otherwise marginalised
- I surround myself with others that look and think differently to me.

# Becoming Anti-Racist Model



Start where you are...

## Be an Anti-Racist - Are you racist? No, isn't a good enough answer!

We need to:

- Hold people to account
- Accept that what hurts one of us hurts all of us
- Stop thinking that injustice going on in the world isn't to an extent our fault
- Stop being a non-racist and start being an anti-racist



# Group Development Work

## Building Trust with Seldom Heard Communities

### Representation

It is important to see people that reflect your community involved with the forum. It can help to lessen the awkwardness and anxiety of some parents if people from seldom heard communities are present at forum events and meetings.

### Connection

When a family from a seldom heard community joins your parent carer forum, you can contact a representative of their community to ask if any other families in the area identifies with that family and help them to connect with each other. This could help them in knowing they are not the only ones going through it.

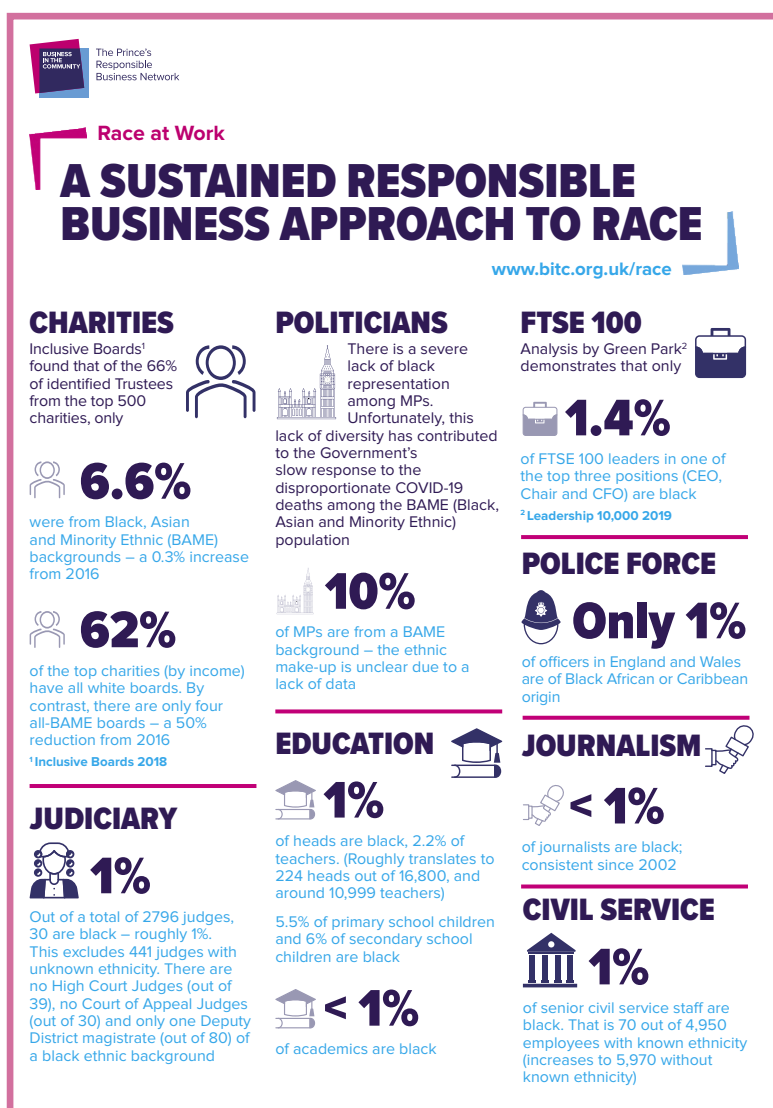
### Receptivity

A willingness to be open to another individual's ideas or opinion about certain topics can reduce the annoyance and the pressure of parents trying to fit in within parent carer forums.

### Fairness

Equitable access to all information within the forum will eliminate the strain that parent carers may feel when they need to contact different people to get help and to answer questions they may have.

Embracing and implementing the processes above will increase member retention rates as forums will foster attitudes that remove barriers to families having a positive experience of the forum.



## Self-reflection and wider reading materials:

The following resources are useful for anyone wanting to discover or learn more.

### Self-reflection, Knowledge and White Privilege:

- ➔ Harvard Implicit Association Test (IAT) on RACE follow the instructions and choose the Race (Black-White IAT) <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>
- ➔ Criticisms of the IAT - John Jost (2019) '[The IAT Is Dead, Long Live the IAT: Context-Sensitive Measures of Implicit Attitudes Are Indispensable to Social and Political Psychology](#)'
- ➔ [How 'white fragility' reinforces racism](#), Robin DiAngelo
- ➔ [The Privilege Walk](#) - Walk of Life
- ➔ [How to become aware of privilege](#) - Robin DiAngelo and Ibram X. Kendi
- ➔ [Deconstructing White Privilege](#) - Robin DiAngelo

### Active processes:

- ➔ [5 Tips for Being and Ally video](#)
- ➔ To take [Dr Eddie Moore 21-day challenge](#)
- ➔ [Anti-racism and allyship in the workplace a brief guide](#) - Business in the Community
- ➔ [Racism and inappropriate behaviours: five actions for allies](#) - Business in the Community
- ➔ Read Layla Saad's book: '[Me and white supremacy](#)'

### Other useful videos:

- ➔ Doll Test: <https://youtu.be/WXygTlvnoFc>
- ➔ Stonewall: <https://youtu.be/RUNzW7-P9bQ>
- ➔ Unconscious Bias: <https://youtu.be/Pb8urdmsScs>
- ➔ How Can We Win - [Kimberly Jones](#)

### Recommended:

1. Project Implicit is a long-term research project based at Harvard University that aims to measure people's preferences for certain social groups over others.

Please complete the Harvard Implicit Association Test (IAT) on RACE. Follow the instructions and choose the Race (Black-White IAT) <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

2. [Red Card to Racism](#) - North Bristol Trust (2:17)



## Other Resources:

1. [Black boys & schools: Lammy Review](#)
2. Criticisms of the IAT - [John Jost \(2019\) 'The IAT Is Dead, Long Live the IAT: Context-Sensitive Measures of Implicit Attitudes Are Indispensable to Social and Political Psychology'](#)
3. [Whose fault is it?](#) - Brené Brown on Blame (3:25)
4. Book: Woken Leader – Wake up the leader in you, by Dr Howard Haughton (if you would like to purchase the book, see [here](#))

## Possible training Ideas

There are a wide range of training topics on offer – here are some examples of trainers and a list of providers found through a Google search. We are not endorsing any of these organisations.

- ➔ Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- ➔ Achieving cultural competence
- ➔ Understanding, managing, and mitigating Bias
- ➔ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender awareness
- ➔ Inclusive Leadership
- ➔ How to effectively challenge discrimination and harassment
- ➔ Cultural awareness

## Training providers:

Diversity Trust - <https://www.diversitytrust.org.uk/>

EW Group - (Equality Works) - <https://theewgroup.com/>

Diverse Matters - <https://www.diverse matters.co.uk/our-services/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-training>

High Speed Training - <https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/>

Diversiti - <https://diversiti.uk/>

Include Me TOO - <https://includemetoo.org.uk/>

# Section 9:

## Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

It is important to embed equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within all areas of Parent Carer Forums' work. EDI should be a priority when planning, through clear and agreed actions, processes, EDI training, and clear outcomes in work plans which demonstrate a commitment to working towards EDI and increasing the membership, representation, and participation of underrepresented and diverse parent carers.

The aim for EDI planning is to increase confidence, awareness, and understanding of the diverse communities which comprise underrepresented and diverse groups and communities and improve cultural understanding amongst Parent Carer Forums.

### Note:

#### Consider

Do you have an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy? Review your relevant policy as part of the action planning to improve your forum's access, engagement, and representation of underrepresented diverse groups and communities.

#### Consider

Review your current membership and monitor areas to improve on and communities that are underrepresented.

#### Consider

Is information regularly collected on the forum's representation from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic and other diverse groups and communities about the forum's membership, steering group members, attendance at meetings, focus groups, consultations, and forum events?

#### Consider

Obtaining access to local data and reports that focus on or highlight Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic and other diverse communities and their emerging needs.

## Consider

A communication strategy to improve access to your forum's information to Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic and other diverse groups and communities.

## Consider

You will need to plan time in your forum's activities and workplan to have members, representatives, and steering group members actively engage with these groups and communities.

## Consider

Do you have a Mission Statement?

Mission statements including reference to equality, diversity, and inclusion provide a strong message about the forum's commitment to address the inequalities experienced by those 'seldom heard' and diverse backgrounds.

These need to be clearly visible and accessible in all your information, literature, and social media sites.



# Appendix 1

## Equality Act 2010:

The Equality Act came into force in October 2010, bringing 116 pieces of legislation into one single Act.

The Equality Act 2010 provides a legal framework with the aim of protecting the rights of individuals from unfair treatment, prompting fairness and advancement for a more equal society.

The nine main pieces of legislation that were merged to form the Equality Act 2010 were:

- ➔ the Equal Pay Act 1970
- ➔ the Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- ➔ the Race Relations Act 1976
- ➔ the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- ➔ the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- ➔ the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- ➔ the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- ➔ the Equality Act 2006, Part 2
- ➔ the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007

The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination on the following grounds, referred under the Act as protected characteristics:

- ➔ Age
- ➔ Disability
- ➔ Gender reassignment
- ➔ Marriage and civil partnership
- ➔ Pregnancy and maternity
- ➔ Race
- ➔ Religion or belief
- ➔ Sex
- ➔ Sexual orientation

You can find further information regarding the Equality Act 2010 at: Equality and Human Rights Commission: [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com) Government Equalities Office website: [www.equalities.gov.uk](http://www.equalities.gov.uk)

# Appendix 2

## Membership and Equality & Diversity Monitoring

Parent Carer Forums' membership forms are a good method of capturing information to support forums' equality and diversity monitoring. Here are some suggestions to improve your monitoring of reach, engagement, and diversity of parent carers accessing your forum.

This data can be collected separately to the parent's contact details so that individuals are not linked to data. This helps you to keep sensitive data anonymous.

### Parent / Carer Details:

**Gender:** Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

1. Male
2. Female
3. Intersex
4. Non-binary
5. Prefer not to say

If you prefer to use your own gender identity, please write in below:

Is the gender you identify with the same as your gender registered at birth?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Prefer not to say

**Age Group:** Under 25 years ☐ 26 - 35 years ☐ 36 - 45 years ☐ 46 - 55 years ☐  
56 years plus ☐

**How you would like to receive information:**

Email ☐ Text ☐ Large print ☐ Post ☐ Phone ☐

## **Ethnic/Cultural Background:**

### **White**

English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British Irish

Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller

Any other White background, please describe

### **Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups**

White and Black Caribbean White and Black African White and Asian

Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background, please describe

### **Asian/Asian British**

Indian

Pakistani Bangladeshi Chinese

Any other Asian background, please describe

### **Black/African/Caribbean/Black British**

African Caribbean

Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, please describe

### **Other ethnic group**

Any other ethnic group, please describe

## **Religion/Belief:**

## **About you:**

**Language:** If English is not your first language, what is your first language? (This question is optional)

## **Disability:**

**Do you consider yourself to have a disability?** Yes ☐ No ☐

## **How would you describe your disability or long-term condition?**

Two or more impairments and/or long-term conditions ☐

Neurodiversity e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, or AD(H)D ☐

General learning disability (e.g. Down's syndrome) ☐

Neurodiversity e.g. autistic spectrum condition ☐

A long-standing illness or health condition ☐

A mental health condition ☐

A physical impairment or mobility issue ☐

Deaf ☐

Hearing impaired ☐

Blindness or a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses ☐

**Suggestion:** As forums strive to be pan-disability, gathering information regarding your members' child(ren)'s SEND, and additional needs can help you to identify the range of families that your forum is representing.

### How many children do you have with SEND?

#### CHILD 1

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Physical disability <input type="checkbox"/>    | Learning disability <input type="checkbox"/>    | Autism <input type="checkbox"/>               |
| Hearing Impairment <input type="checkbox"/>     | Visual impairment <input type="checkbox"/>      | Complex health needs <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Behavioural challenges <input type="checkbox"/> | Neurodiverse <input type="checkbox"/>           | Mental health <input type="checkbox"/>        |
| Blind <input type="checkbox"/>                  | Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/> |   |

#### CHILD 2

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Physical disability <input type="checkbox"/>    | Learning disability <input type="checkbox"/>    | Autism <input type="checkbox"/>               |
| Hearing Impairment <input type="checkbox"/>     | Visual impairment <input type="checkbox"/>      | Complex health needs <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Behavioural challenges <input type="checkbox"/> | Neurodiverse <input type="checkbox"/>           | Mental health <input type="checkbox"/>        |
| Blind <input type="checkbox"/>                  | Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/> |   |

#### CHILD 3

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Physical disability <input type="checkbox"/>    | Learning disability <input type="checkbox"/>    | Autism <input type="checkbox"/>               |
| Hearing Impairment <input type="checkbox"/>     | Visual impairment <input type="checkbox"/>      | Complex health needs <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Behavioural challenges <input type="checkbox"/> | Neurodiverse <input type="checkbox"/>           | Mental health <input type="checkbox"/>        |
| Blind <input type="checkbox"/>                  | Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/> |   |

#### CHILD 4

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Physical disability <input type="checkbox"/>    | Learning disability <input type="checkbox"/>    | Autism <input type="checkbox"/>               |
| Hearing Impairment <input type="checkbox"/>     | Visual impairment <input type="checkbox"/>      | Complex health needs <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Behavioural challenges <input type="checkbox"/> | Neurodiverse <input type="checkbox"/>           | Mental health <input type="checkbox"/>        |
| Blind <input type="checkbox"/>                  | Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/> |   |

You can find further information regarding measuring equality: A guide for the collection and classification of ethnic group, national identity, and religion data in the UK from the Office for National Statistics.

[www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk)

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/measuringequality/ethnicgroupnationalidentityandreligion>



# Appendix 3

## General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

Parent Carer Forums should all have a Data Protection policy to ensure that their members know what personal information you collect to assist your objectives and that it is used accordingly, and responsibly, as set out in the DPA 2018, along with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR - which also forms part of UK law).

The GDPR ensures that you consider why, and how you use data, and sets out seven key principles:

- ➔ Lawfulness, fairness, and transparency
- ➔ Purpose limitation
- ➔ Data minimisation
- ➔ Accuracy
- ➔ Storage limitation
- ➔ Integrity and confidentiality (security)
- ➔ Accountability

### Complying with GDPR:

Parent Carer Forums should have a Privacy Policy in place covering the following, in compliance with GDPR.

Be clear that the data your forum collects is legitimate and necessary to the effectiveness of the forum.

Ensure you are clear about the reasons why you collect data, obtaining your members' written consent in all circumstances, and asking permission if there are changes to how the forum plan to use their data.

Explain that the forum collects personal contact details, so that you can communicate with your members, share information about your work, events and that you may need to ask for their bank details in case you need to reimburse their costs.

For equality and diversity monitoring purposes individual's personal information is requested as part of the membership such as gender, ethnicity, age, address, access needs or dietary requirements. This information is needed to organise events or to

show funders the diverse families represented by the Parent Carer Forum and to monitor the reach and effectiveness of the forum's engagement of parent carers.

Why does your forum collect such data?

Clearly set out the reasons, and ensure these are clearly set out in your Privacy Policy as required under GDPR:

Example reasons for forums are:

- ➔ To enable members to be to participate in your events and activities.
- ➔ To disseminate information, through Newsletters, or mailings for members.
- ➔ To communicate and share information on social media.
- ➔ To collect views by running surveys or consultations.
- ➔ To apply for funding and to report to funders.
- ➔ To collect data on the diversity of the forum and the communities that it is representing, along with details of the SEND of the children and young people that they advocate for to ensure inclusivity and accessibility.

How does your forum make sure the data it collects is used and stored safely?

Have a responsible person or persons who have secure access to the relevant data. Every person volunteering or working on behalf of the forum must sign up to the forum's Privacy Policy and be trained in keeping the data safe.

Use passwords on all the systems and back up the data in case of physical or technical accidents.

Consider how long you will store the data as it should be for a limited time only, no longer than 7 years after its last active use.

Does your forum share data with third parties?

Be clear, for example, if your forum would be sharing data when website hosting. Any third parties need to be listed in your forum's Privacy Policy.

Have a named contact person that members can contact if they are concerned about the use of their data:

You can find further information regarding Data Protection and GDPR at the Information Commissioners Office [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

Here are direct links you can access

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/>



# Appendix 4

## Glossary of LGBTQ+ terms

### Glossary of Terms (Gender Identity)

Please note the definitions of some of these terms can vary, according to the context and source, and are used here only as a guide. It is also important to be aware that people may not choose to use a particular term to identify themselves, even if they fit within the definition. For example, some Trans people post-transition would not identify with the identity Trans.

**Note on gender/sex:** in this document, sex is used to refer to a person's physical sexual characteristics, and gender to refer to their identity. British law tends to use the two terms interchangeably.

**Cisgender:** term for people whose gender identity and / or gender expression aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Coming out** refers to the experiences of some, but not all, LGB and Trans people as they explore/ disclose their gender identity and/or sexual orientation.

**Gender Identity Clinic (GIC)** is a specialist NHS service providing assessment for Trans people who are seeking hormone treatment and / or surgical gender reassignment procedures. They are usually run by consultant psychiatrists who may or may not have other types of NHS staff working with them.

**Gender Reassignment Surgery (GRS)** medical treatment to enable Trans people to alter their bodies to match their gender identity is highly successful and has been available through the NHS for several decades. The medical process is known as 'Gender Reassignment Surgery' or 'GRS'.

**Gender Variant (see also Trans)** an umbrella term for those people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth, whether that be transsexual, genderqueer etc.

**Intersex:** someone who is born with sexual anatomy, reproductive organs, and/or chromosome patterns that do not fit the typical definition of male or female'.

**LGBT/LGBTQ/LGBTQI** acronyms for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans. Increasingly including 'Q' for "Questioning" and / or "Queer", "I" to include "Intersex", "A" to include "Asexual" and "P" to include "Pansexual".

**Non-binary:** an umbrella term for people who do not identify as either male or female. Non-binary people may or may not identify as trans. There are a wide range of non-binary identities including, but not limited to: genderqueer, genderfluid, agender, third gender, neutrois.

**Queer** a 'reclaimed' word used by some people to self-identify as part of a movement that may include LGB and Trans, A (Asexual) and I (Intersex). Queer tends to be defined by what it is not- i.e. not having a prescribed view of gender identity and / or sexual orientation. Queer is also sometimes used to indicate a commitment to 'non-normative' gender and sexual fluidity (rather than to fixed categories of person).

**Questioning:** someone who is discovering their sexual orientation and/or gender Identity both of which can change throughout the lifespan. Trans people in particular can spend many years struggling with self-doubt before coming out as trans. This process is sometimes referred to as coming in.

**Trans (Transgender):** an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and / or gender expression diverges in some way from the sex they were assigned at birth. As with any umbrella term, there is some disagreement as to who and what should be included. For example, some people from non-Western backgrounds such as Two Spirit people or Hijra may reject Trans as being a Western concept that does not fit with their culture.

**Transition** can have two elements, social and medical. Some Trans people transition through both, but others may only go through a social transition. Medical transition includes hormones, surgery, GPs - anything medical. Social transition involves social aspects, such as coming out, changing documents, names, clothing etc. Not everyone will do all the things in each category such as not having surgery or not having all surgeries available etc.

**Transmasculine/Transfeminine:** terms used mostly by non-binary people to describe how they relate to traditional views of masculinity or femininity without going so far as to identify as a man or a woman. So, for example, a non-binary person might present in a fairly masculine way, but not identify as a man. That person might say they are transmasculine.

**Transphobia** a reaction of fear, loathing, and discriminatory treatment of people whose identity or gender presentation (or perceived gender or gender identity) does not "match," in the societally accepted way, the sex they were assigned at birth. The refusal to accept trans people's identities as valid. The response of other members of society that results in Trans people experiencing discrimination,

harassment, hatred, and victimisation.

**Trans Man (FtM)** a person who was assigned female at birth but has a male gender identity and therefore proposes to transition, is transitioning or has transitioned to live as a man, often with the assistance of hormone treatment and perhaps various surgical procedures. Trans Man is a subset of Man.

**Trans Woman (MtF)** a person who was assigned male at birth but has a female gender identity and therefore proposes to transition, is transitioning or has transitioned to live as a woman, often with the assistance of hormone treatment and perhaps various surgical procedures. Trans Woman is a subset of Woman.

### **Note. Pronouns of Choice**

If you are unsure how to identify a person in relation to their gender identity or sexual orientation, it is acceptable to ask which term they would prefer you to use to describe them.

### **Children and Gender**

While most children don't consider issues of sexuality until they start puberty, matters of gender identity can be settled much earlier. Cisgender children (that is, children who are not transgender) typically acquire a firm gender identity between the ages of 2 and 3. Trans children (children who are not cisgender) will sometimes take longer, as they may have complex issues to work through, but it is not unusual for a child to express a firm gender identity which is not the same as their gender assigned at birth, and possibly to transition socially (if not medically) well before puberty.



# Appendix 5

LGBT monitoring from LBGT Foundation, opposite

Considerations when monitoring your forum's membership and demographics around transgender people.



## **Briefing Sheet: Trans Status Monitoring**

LGBT Foundation supports monitoring trans\* status as there is a significant lack of evidence about the needs and experiences of trans people. We believe that monitoring, sensitively implemented, is a clear way to address that lack of evidence and make our needs and experiences heard. Not counting trans people as part of wider equalities monitoring suggests that trans people's needs don't count, and we want to contest that.

Trans status monitoring is important because it enables health and social care bodies to better understand the needs of the local population and to target services more effectively and efficiently. It is also important because, by law, all public bodies must consider how they treat trans people fairly and equally to protect them from prejudice and discrimination (see the Equality Act 2010's public sector equality duty).

LGBT Foundation encourages government, statutory bodies and voluntary and community sector organisations to monitor trans status. This briefing sheet outlines the benefits of monitoring, some considerations for implementation, and sets out a best practice question and answer format.

### **Benefits for the organisation of monitoring trans status:**

- It can highlight inequalities between different groups.
- It is better able to identify issues that affect trans people.
- A better understanding of the potential barriers to services.
- It is better able to provide appropriate and tailored services, and to improve existing services.
- It is easier to monitor incidents of discrimination and prevent them from happening.
- It is better able to measure performance and make changes and improvements to tackle problems.
- Recognising diversity maximises an organisation's investment in its workforce.
- Making the effort to understand staff leads to higher levels of staff satisfaction, higher productivity, and increased employee retention.

### **Benefits for individual service users and staff:**

- Ensuring equality of access to services.
- Improved services that are more specific to service users needs.
- Ensuring equality of access and opportunity at work.
- Creating a culture of inclusivity and openness with the service provider and employer.
- Building up this confidence will lead to increased openness and recording elsewhere.

\*Trans is an umbrella and inclusive term used to describe people whose gender identity differs in some way from that which they were assigned at birth; including non-binary people, cross dressers and those who partially or incompletely identify with their sex assigned at birth.

Our recommended question and answer format for monitoring trans status has been agreed as best practice by LGBT Foundation, CliniQ and Action for Trans Health with input from trans communities and the National LGB&T Partnership. This format will be implemented by Public Health England and the Health and Social Care Information Centre in future data collections.

#### *Q1 Gender identity*

Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

- 1. Woman (including trans woman)
- 2. Man (including trans man)
- 3. Non-binary
- 4. In another way
- Z. Not stated (PERSON asked but declined to provide a response)
- X. Not known (not recorded)

#### *Q2 Trans status*

Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were given at birth?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- Z. Not stated (PERSON asked but declined to provide a response)
- X. Not known (not recorded)

A few things to remember when implementing trans status monitoring:

- If at first response rates are low - don't be discouraged. It takes time to embed successful trans status monitoring and build up a culture of openness.
- It is important to find the appropriate time to monitor trans status and repeat it on several occasions – people may not disclose at first but may feel more comfortable later on.
- To be successful, monitoring needs political will from those at the top of an organisation with the drive to make changes to operational systems if necessary.
- You will be collecting sensitive information so having a clear and comprehensive confidentiality policy is essential.
- Staff and service users have to understand why trans status information is being collected, how it will be analysed, what the information will be used for and how it will be safeguarded.
- Trans status shouldn't be treated as a special subject. This means asking it at the same time as questions about other protected characteristics, and asking it of the same people.
- Use your data to improve outcomes for staff and service users – develop targets, plan interventions, and use it as evidence in commissioning services.

For further information on monitoring trans status or sexual orientation, please contact [research@lgbt.foundation](mailto:research@lgbt.foundation)

# Resources and links

## SEND Data Dashboard

The Council for Disabled Children has developed the 0-25 Multi-agency SEND Data Dashboard, a commissioning tool containing health, education, and social care data to support local areas to understand their data relating to children and young people with SEND.

The dashboard is designed to support local areas to understand their data through 3 lenses:

- ➔ Local profile: understanding local need.
- ➔ Governance and assurance: 'what did we do and how well are we doing it?'
- ➔ Qualitative Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): 'how do we know we are making a difference?'

The dashboard uses data already captured by local areas - as part of national data collection - to display data at a local area level. Parent carer forums may find this data useful to support evidence gathering and case building when seeking to influence or overturn local decisions. It is not an easy resource to navigate, and CDC may conduct a webinar for PCFs on how to use it.

For further information and to view the dashboard visit [CDC's website](#)

## Accessing information - useful accessibility sites.

Recite Me believes in accessibility for all, allowing everyone the opportunity to use the internet in the way that it is intended.

[UserWay](#) creates advanced website accessibility solutions that help ensure ADA compliance without refactoring your website's existing code.

## Additional resources and links

[Contact](#) We are the charity for families with disabled children. We support families, bring families together and help families take action for others.

[Council for Disabled Children](#) CDC is the umbrella body for the disabled children's

sector with a membership of over 300 voluntary and community organisations and an active network of practitioners that spans education, health, and social care. They provide a collective voice that champions the rights of children, young people and their families and challenges barriers to inclusion.

[KIDS](#) We are a national charity that provides a wide range of services to disabled children, young people, and their families in England. Our services include drop-in crèches and nurseries for the under 5s to youth clubs, short breaks, and residential stays for young adults. Projects include building the participation of children and young people with SEND, Kids Participation Training and Personal Budgets guide for young people.

[Disability Rights UK](#) We campaign for the rights of all disabled people to be included in every aspect of life. We bring the lived experiences of disabled people to everything we do. We challenge policy makers, institutions, and individuals to remove the barriers that exist for us.

[PACT](#) is a national charity that provides support to prisoners, people with convictions, and their families through a range of services,

[Gingerbread](#) is a charity which works to improve single parents' lives, through championing the voices and needs of single parent families and providing effective support services. Whatever success looks like to a single parent - a healthy family, a flexible job, stable finances, or a chance to study.

[LGBT Consortium](#) is the largest Network of LGBT group, projects and organisations in the UK offering organisations the chance to connect, collaborate and co-deliver projects and services. From sharing best practice to accessing peer support.

[Stonewall](#) is a national advocacy organisation for the LGBT+ community which does a lot of work with schools.

[Diversity Trust](#) - influencing social change to achieve a fairer society. They promote equality, diversity, and inclusion through the elimination of discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

[Gendered Intelligence](#) A national charity run by trans people for trans people.

[Mermaids](#) A charity that specialises in supporting families with transgender children.

[Friends, Families and Travellers](#) Active since 1994, a leading national Traveller led charity that works on behalf of all Gypsies, Roma, and Travellers regardless of ethnicity, culture, or background.

[Women's Aid](#) A national charity working to end domestic violence against women and children.

[Language Line](#) provides a range of services in over more 20 languages ranging from interpreting and translation services, face to face, over the phone interpreting etc...

[Inter Faith Network](#) for the UK works to promote understanding, cooperation and good relations between organisations and persons of different faiths in the UK. Providing opportunities for linking and sharing good practice, providing advice and information.

[ROTA](#) is a social policy research organisation that focuses on issues impacting on Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities. As a Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic-led organisation, all ROTA's work is based on the principle that those with direct experience of inequality should be central to solutions to address it. Their work is actively informed by the lived experiences of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic communities and their organisations.

[JCORE](#) stands for Jewish Council for Race Equality. They work to engage the Jewish Community in social action in the wider society, focussing on race equality and justice for refugees and asylum seekers. The 3 main areas of work are education on race and asylum issues, campaigning and practical support for refugees and asylum seekers and Black / Asian / Jewish dialogue.

[Refugee Action](#) Provide support and resources for organisations working with refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants across the UK

[RNIB](#) We're the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), one of the UK's leading sight loss charities and the largest community of blind and partially sighted people. We recognise everyone's unique experience of sight loss and offer help and support for blind and partially sighted people – this can be anything from practical and emotional support, campaigning for change, reading services and the products we offer in our online shop.

[NDCS](#) National Deaf Children's Society work to overcome barriers that hold deaf children back. They give expert support on childhood deafness, raise awareness and campaign for deaf children's rights, so they have the same opportunities as everyone else

[RNID](#) We are the charity making life fully inclusive for deaf people and those with hearing loss or tinnitus. Together, we campaign for an inclusive society. We connect people to practical advice and pioneer new treatments for hearing loss and tinnitus.

[Include Me TOO](#) supports and promotes social justice, equality and rights for all disabled children and young people. We provide a range of support including peer support, befriending services, activities and holiday clubs for disabled children,

outreach and information and advice to families.

[KaskoSan](#) founded by an East European Roma living in the UK, works with the East European Roma community both digitally and offline since 2009. In collaboration with dedicated partners, they produce cultural content and consultancy. KaskoSan's films, dramas, art performances and Romani language and cultural workshops aim to inspire critical thinking in terms of Roma inclusion and develop ways to maximise engagement.

[Traveller Movement](#) is charity aiming to advocate for and work with Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller people to tackle discrimination and promote equality. Their website has information to help you learn more about the different cultures within the Traveller population.



We are Contact,  
the charity for  
families with  
disabled children.

We support  
families, bring  
families together  
and help families  
take action  
for others.



## GET IN CONTACT



020 7608 8786



[fundraising@contact.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@contact.org.uk)



[www.contact.org.uk](http://www.contact.org.uk)



[twitter.com/contactfamilies](https://twitter.com/contactfamilies)



[facebook.com/contactfamilies](https://facebook.com/contactfamilies)



[youtube.com/contactfamilies](https://youtube.com/contactfamilies)

Contact Head Office  
209–211 City Road  
London EC1V 1JN