



Northumberland Education and Skills Equality Statement 2017



NORTHUMBERLAND
COUNTY COUNCIL

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Published equality information

Each year, to ensure that the County Council complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) we submit information about our context, our schools and settings and the challenges we face with regard to equality and protecting the rights of people with protected characteristics.

We also supply information about how we are working to help achieve the equality objectives the whole County Council has identified and is working towards on a four year cycle. We are required to report annually on our progress towards these.

The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender identity
- pregnancy and maternity (which includes breastfeeding)
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership for employees, but not service users.

In analysing the data we have for these groups, it is important to acknowledge that some people have multiple protected characteristics and this may increase the equality impacts for these people.

The first question we have to answer is :

What information does the group or service area have about people for each of the protected characteristics?

Our information

We analyse data from the School Census each January to give us the context with regard to ethnicity and language in the school population.

The following information was collated from the school census in January 2017.

The total number of pupils in Northumberland schools on this date was 45,797.

Ethnicity

Ascription of ethnicity was refused by parents or carers of 64 pupils

There are 61 pupils for whom schools have not yet obtained an ethnicity.

95% (43,508) pupils are ascribed as White British (or Cornish).

4.7% (2,159) of the pupil population has been ascribed a BME ethnicity.

As a percentage of all minority ethnic groups in Northumberland schools there are :

24%	Any other white
12%	Any other mixed
11%	White and mixed
8%	Asian
8%	Other Asian
6%	Pakistani
5%	White and Black African
5%	White and Black Caribbean
4%	Chinese
4%	Bangladeshi

Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Irish Traveller pupils constitute 0.12% of the pupil population and 2.5% of the minority ethnic pupil population



Language (January 17 School Census)

In Northumberland schools 50 community languages in addition to English are spoken . One of these is British Sign Language.

There may be languages which are spoken in addition to this number, but they are not ascribed. 40 pupils had their language ascribed as 'other', 9 as 'believed other' and 2 were not obtained.

14 pupils are the unique speaker of their community language in any of our schools.

These languages are: Bulgarian, Welsh, Ebir, Efik-Ibibio, Gujarati, Hebrew, Maltese, Pahari, Indonesian, Shona, Slovak, Vietnamese, Visayan-Bisaya and Yoruba.

The capacity within the team delivering support in English as an Additional language (EAL) doubled in 2017 due to the arrival of Syrian Refugee families and some funding which has been made available through the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme.

The most linguistically diverse schools in the county in January 2017 were Berwick Academy and Ponteland Middle School, each with 11 community languages spoken.

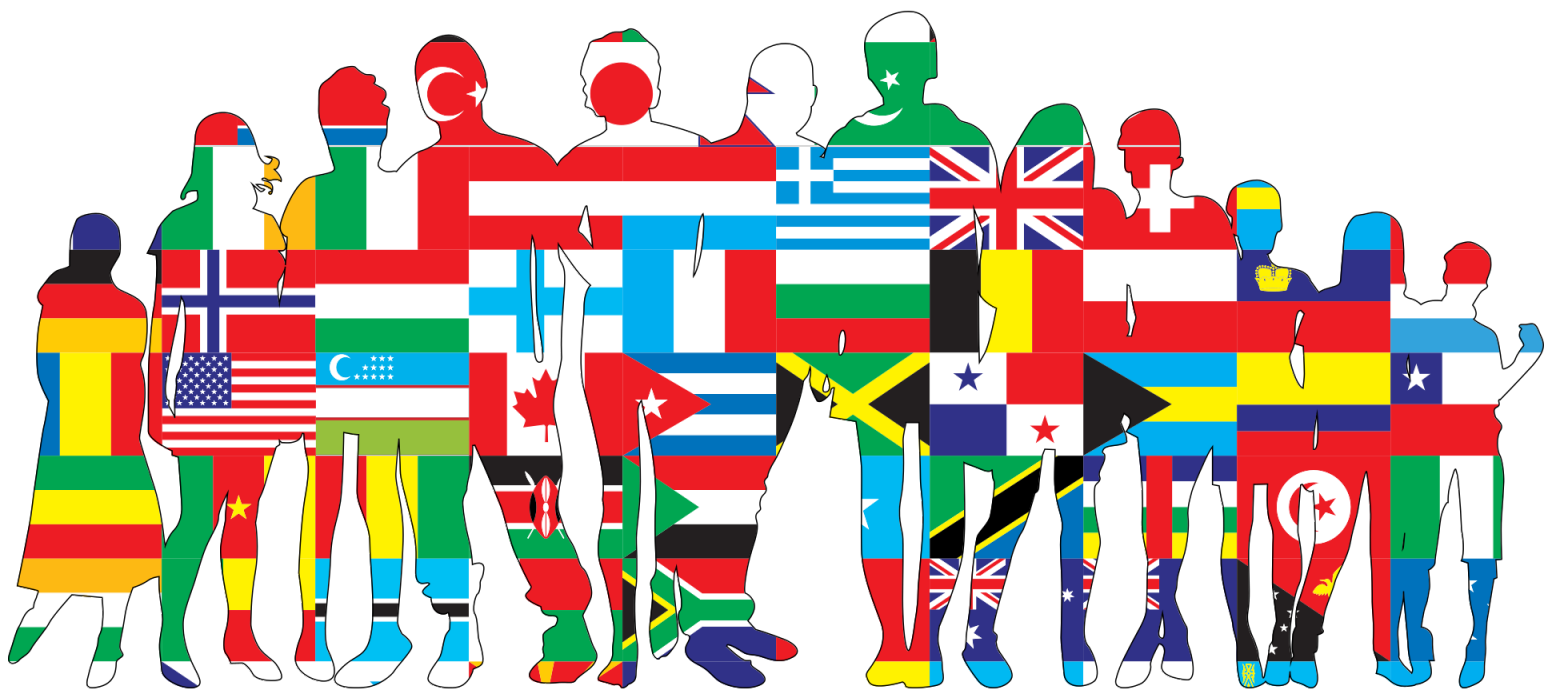
Hexham East First School has only one community language spoken by 6 pupils, all of whom speak Romanian.

30% of Northumberland schools have no speakers of languages other than English.

70% of Northumberland schools have at least one speaker of a community language.

The languages spoken by significant groups of bilingual learners in Northumberland in January 2017

Community Language	Number of pupils	% of the EAL pupil population	% of the pupil population
Polish	141	20	0.3
Panjabi	77	11	0.17
Chinese	76	11	0.16
Bengali	51	7	0.1
Romanian	30	4	0.06
Tagelog/Filipino	30	4	0.06
Arabic	27	4	0.05
Urdu	26	3.6	0.05
French	21	3	0.04
Portuguese	21	3	0.04
Russian	20	2.7	0.04
Thai	20	2.7	0.04
Lithuanian	16	2.2	0.03



RACIST INCIDENTS AND HATE CRIME

All schools are able to log racist incidents with the LA and there were 94 incidents recorded in 2016-17. There is no question that these are under-reported.

Schools are able to request further support in dealing with racist and religious hate crimes when they use the online form to report an incident to the Local Authority.

Further support can be requested by schools from Northumbria Police's Community Engagement Team, and Show Racism the Red Card.

The number of hate crime offences in 2016/17 for the five centrally monitored strands nationally were as follows:

62,685 (78%) were race hate crimes (up by 27%)

9,157 (11%) were sexual orientation hate crimes (up by 27%)

5,949 (7%) were religious hate crimes (up 35%)

5,558 (7%) were disability hate crimes (up 53%)

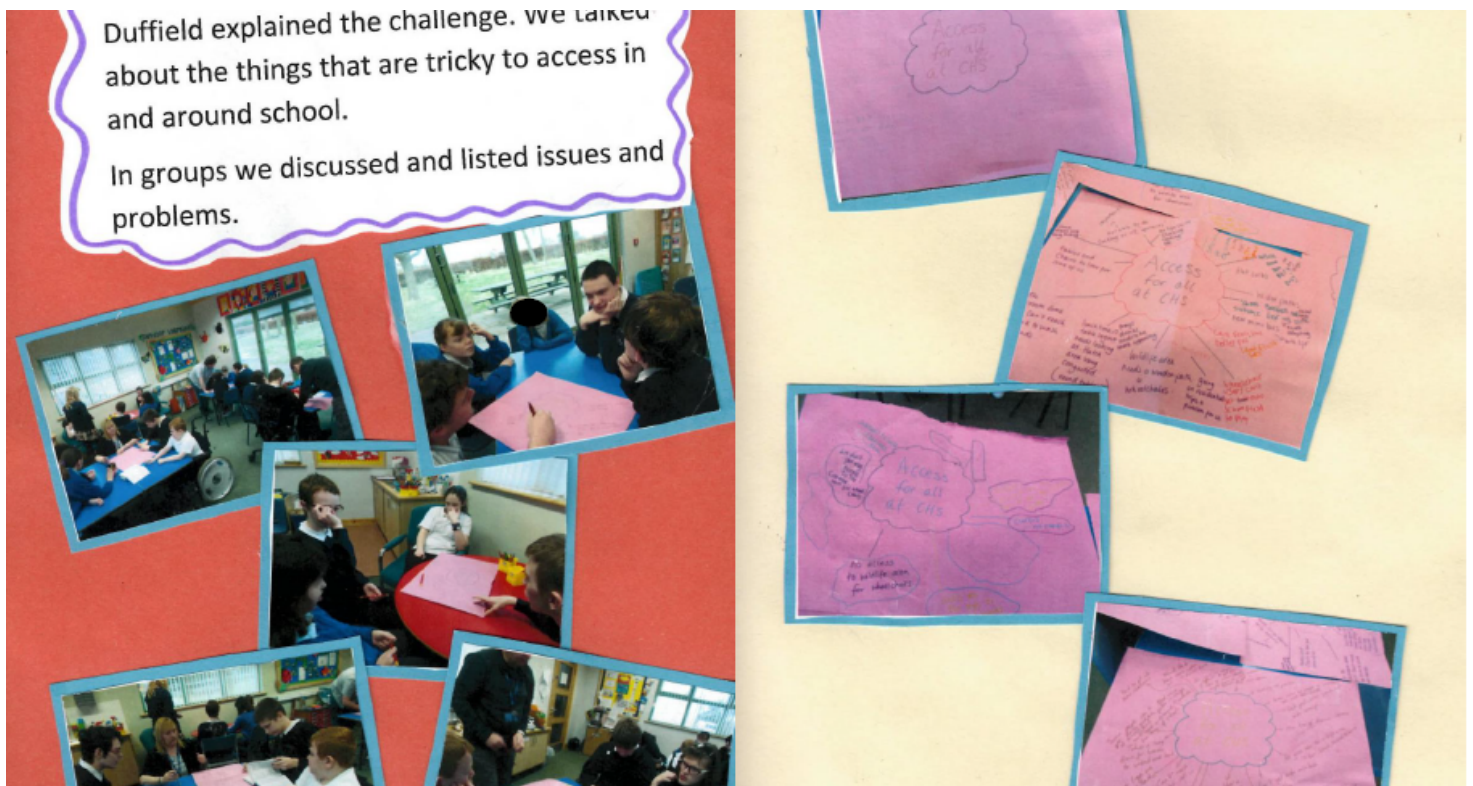
1,248 (2%) were transgender hate crimes. (up 29%)

(Source: [Home Office, Hate Crime England and Wales 2016/17](#))

Nationally, high profile political events such as terrorist attacks and the vote to leave the European Union resulted in an increase in the number of anti-Muslim incidents. Perpetrators often drew upon racist ideas associated with immigration, terrorism and the EU referendum when attacking their victims. 1,223 cases of anti-Islamic hate were reported to Tell MAMA in 2016 and 64% took place offline.

Most involved abusive and threatening behaviour with nearly 20% of these incidents involving physical attacks. Nearly half of the incidents were in public spaces and on public transport. 56% of the victims were women yet two-thirds of the perpetrators are men. Source ([Tell MAMA annual report](#). 2016).

LGBT pupils of faith are somewhat more likely to have tried to take their own life than those who aren't of faith (30 per cent compared to 25 per cent). ([Stonewall School Report 2017](#))



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY

The [Inclusive Northumberland](#) annual report for 2016-17 tells us that:

Special school overall absence has improved over time and after a significant improvement in 2016 is now well below the national average.

Persistent absence for pupils with a statement or Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan is better than the national average but at 19.78% is more than three times as high as those pupils with no identified SEND.

In Northumberland, FSM (eligible for Free School Meals) pupils are twice as likely to be persistent absentees.

Characteristics of Northumberland's permanently excluded pupils 2016-17:

- male /female split varies year on year, but males are always in the majority
- eligible for free school meals: 79%
- SEND support: 45%
- EHCP: 7%
- White British: 97%

Some children have persistent difficulties due to mental health issues, special educational needs or chaotic lifestyles that mainstream schools find it hard to solve. According to our pupil census data (January 2017) more than 1300 learners have an identified behavioural, emotional, social/mental health difficulty (BESD) and up to 300 of these learners have statements/ EHC Plans.

The number of fixed period exclusions decreased in special schools from 65 in 2015-16 to 58 in 2016-17, a decrease in the rate of fixed period exclusions from 9.92 per cent to 8.15 per cent. Northumberland's performance is much better than the national rate for 2015-16 at 12.53 per cent.

Education Other Than in School (EOTAS) Tuition is delivered on a one to one or small group basis for pupils with health and medical needs, including those with mental health needs, pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers. A total of 14 different venues were used by EOTAS to deliver tuition on a one to one or small group basis to 52 pupils, and the average length of time in provision was 7.5 months

Pupils with SEND and EHC Plans who are electively home educated can present with more complex legal and safeguarding issues, and it is challenging to ensure that they receive their entitlement to full time education and compliance with the SEND Code of Practice. In Northumberland the insufficiency of special school places and appropriate alternative providers can pressure parents towards choosing to electively home educate and then use personal budgets to fund provision which professionals and the local authority are not able to monitor robustly

Approximately 3% of the school age population will have complex Special Educational Needs (SEN), as reflected in both local and national pupil numbers having EHC Plans. This accounts for approximately 1400 school age children in Northumberland. This does not include a wider group of children who do not have EHC plans, but are identified and recorded as needing additional Special Educational Needs (SEN) support. Taken together, this accounts for approximately 16% of the school age population and 7000 thousand children.

The most prevalent areas of need identified are speech and language and communication (SLCN), moderate learning difficulties (MLD) and social emotional and mental health needs (SEMH). The proportion of pupils with MLD attending special schools is much lower than average, reflecting that MLD pupils are much more likely to remain integrated in mainstream schools

All children and young people referred to health teams are seen within 18 weeks. Outcomes for children and young people who attend special schools in Northumberland are at least good and in many cases outstanding.

Since 2014/15 participation of SEND learners in the Northumberland Adult Learning service (NALS) has nearly doubled, pass rates have risen from 84% to 90% and the achievement gap has been narrowed to less than 2% with those with a declared disability and / or learning difficulty out-performing those with no declared disability or learning difficulty. 22.The proportion of 19 year olds qualified to level 2 including English and mathematics with EHCPs / Statements is high in Northumberland.

There are sixteen registered children's centres in Northumberland and split into four localities, the majority of which are rated as Good or Outstanding by Ofsted . Over 90% of all children 0-5 are registered with a children's centre. There is a clear universal offer for all children 0-5 and their parents delivered jointly by health and Early Years Practitioners through 'Learning Together Through Play' sessions. Further targeted support is delivered to specific groups of children and their parents including targeted groups of children with SEND enabling early support to the child and the family.

Early intervention and prevention services are in place with Early Help family workers (0-19 age group) based in each locality. Early Help Hubs identify and arrange appropriate services via Early Help Assessments.

After an initial slow start, 95-100% of EHCP's are now being produced within the correct timescale. Advice from health and care professionals is being provided in a timely manner, though more work is required to raise knowledge around EHCP's with care staff.

Support for pupils with SEND

In 2015 the Sensory Team (VI and HI) was developed to offer new services for children with Multisensory Impairments. New staff were recruited and trained to respond to emerging local needs regarding those with deaf-blindness, rarer physical/genetic conditions and need for habilitation support. Identification and support from birth of sensory needs, including Multisensory Impairments (MSI), is well established with NHS partners

Feedback from Parents / Carers in April 2016 highlighted parental concerns about the area approach to dyslexia and waiting times for pupils with social, emotional and health needs.

In November 2017 Northumberland County Council Careers Guidance Team arranged a dedicated event for young people with special educational needs (SEN) to enable them to begin planning their future pathways.

Held at the Woodhorn Museum, Ashington, the Careers Guidance Team, along with colleagues in the SEND (IASS), invited a range of exhibitors from a variety of areas to discuss options available to the students as they transition into post 16 education and adulthood, as part of the national SEND Preparing for Adulthood pathway.

Nearly half of disabled LGBT pupils (48 per cent) have tried to take their own life.

[\(Stonewall School Report 2017\).](#)

In Northumberland in 2017, one of our Special Schools accepted the Home Office Funded training delivered by the LGBT FED.

Bliss, T4Y and Trinity Youth all support children and young people in special education, and Trinity Youth are able to also offer support to staff and carers. Trinity Youth estimate that approximately 30% of the young transgender people they work with will also have Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Trinity have recently been successful in gaining funding to support their work and interventions



with trans young people under the age of 14.

This is a growing demographic in Northumberland, with many children identifying themselves as gender nonconforming while still in primary education.

Recognising the vulnerability of LGBT children and young people to abuse and neglect (sometimes within their own family relationships when carers try to resist the child or young person accessing their rights), a collaboration between Trinity Youth and Education and Skills will develop and deliver a training module to the Children's Services workforce through the NSCB in 2018.

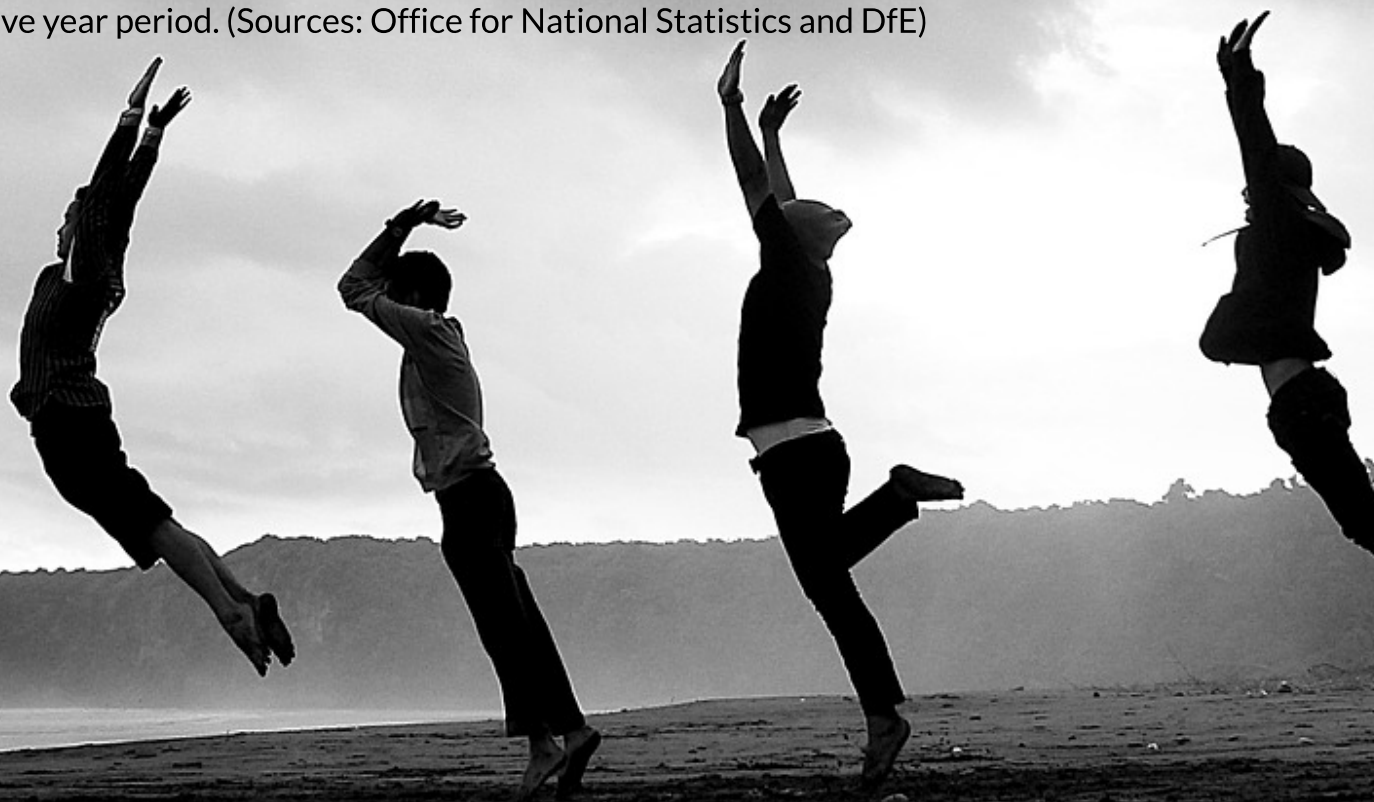
Overall, slightly more males are known to be home schooled than females up to the end of key stage three, however, this trend reverses in key stages four and five where there are more females than males known to be home schooled/ (Source: [ADCS](#)).

Female and non-binary LGBT pupils are more likely to deliberately harm themselves than male pupils. ([Stonewall School Report 2017](#))

PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY

Teenage pregnancy: Under-18 conception rates for Northumberland (per 1,000 females) in 2014 were 22.9, similar to the figure for 2013, and a reduction from 32.6 in 2010.

The 2014 figure for Northumberland was similar to the England figure of 22.9, and lower than that of the North East, where the figure was 30.2. Figures for all three areas show a reduction over a five year period. (Sources: Office for National Statistics and DfE)



Adult Education

Of the 4458 learners enrolled in 16/17 across all programmes:

52 % were unemployed

19 % have declared special educational needs or disabilities

37% are living in the top 20% deprived areas

1.2% are from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic groups (BAME)

The service provides targeted careers guidance for schools and for 16-18 year olds who are not in employment, education or training work related learning for school aged children supported internships, traineeships and apprenticeships for 16+ study programmes and adult education for 16+. Technical and professional education at level 3 and higher, funded through student loans, employability support and coaching for young people and adults on Department for Work and Pensions Work Programme contracts, Generation North East and Work X programmes

Wider enrichment opportunities for learners are good and are used to enhance learners' experience. For example Syrian refugees on full time construction programmes participate in a community ESOL programme, but are also leading the painting and decoration project of a new learning centre in Alnwick

The proportion of learners undertaking external work experience is increasing. There are excellent examples of learners using volunteering opportunities to achieve their learning e.g. a visually impaired learner undertook 3 weeks of intensive work placement in Information Services which has progressed to an Apprenticeship

“Hot Topics” continue to be used in all sites, lessons and learner reviews to effectively cover the themes of Safety, Health, Equality, Diversity, Safeguarding and Sustainability (SHEDSS). Prevent, Contest and British values were included in 2016 and in 2017 we introduced further hot topics on health and wellbeing and e-safety.

Adult Learning applies a ‘zero tolerance’ approach to bullying, harassment and discrimination at all levels. It has successfully created, and continued to maintain, its culture of equality and inclusion, with all aspects of equality and diversity and safeguarding embedded into its core processes and curriculum. As a result, staff and learners are aware of and are positive about the active promotion of mutual respect. Feedback from learners shows that the quality of learner treatment and respect by staff rated as good or better is 97% in 2016/17. (Source: Adult Learning Self-Assessment Report 2016-17)



What consultations or engagement has the group undertaken, were there any differences in results for different protected groups?

SEND

We recognise the importance of co-production and engagement and are consulting widely and considering a range of options to help us address some of the issues we have identified, which include:

- A lack of places in specialist schools to meet age ranges and SEND.
- Rapidly increasing demand for provision for learners with high needs Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)
- A different pattern in the service needs of younger age groups
- Specialist provision is difficult to access across the whole of the county
- Transition pathways need to be better coordinated across education, health and social care.

In the autumn term of 2017, there has been extensive engagement and [consultation](#) with families of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in order to address the need for more school places for children with SEND.

The local authority Sensory Support Team identified an issue with isolation for hearing impaired students. Working with young people, they introduced a “Teen Experts” group which has resulted in a range of social events organised by the young people and a student council to help shape service delivery

Looked after children through their ‘I PROMISE’ initiative have a major impact on how we deliver our services

We believe that our engagement and co-production with parents and carers is developing strongly and that there is increasing evidence of co-production and families taking a strategic role in the development of provision in Northumberland. The local authority IASS service and Northumberland parent carer forum together arranged large scale consultation events across the county.

Nearly 8000 families received a letter giving details of the local offer and co-produced a SEND guide for families, plus an invitation to attend the ‘SEND Roadshow’ events. More than 300 parents and young people plus many professionals and third-sector providers attended the seminars, the ‘market place’ stalls for services 0-25 years and took the opportunity to speak directly with service managers from health, local authority SEND services and Social Care. The county-wide sign-up to the parent carer network hugely increased and 114 parents and young people agreed to complete evaluations.

The most common answers to 'what would improve SEND services in Northumberland?' were:

- improved use of modern communication technologies to inform families about SEND matters
- improved communication between agencies
- new local provision for ASD and sensory needs and specific medical diagnoses
- less service change and increased service capacity
- reduced waiting times
- increased funding
- better transitions

Gender identity and sexual orientation

As part of the process of identifying what teachers need to know in order to better support the growing numbers of transgender young people in schools, we undertook a consultation with these young people in 2016. Some of their experiences, which have helped to form the [guidance](#) we have developed for schools is contained in that resource.

In 2017, a new [Stonewall School Report](#) was published, giving an insight into the lives of LGBT young people in the UK. This group is extremely vulnerable; frequently reported to have difficulty accessing their rights in schools:

- The majority of LGBT pupils – 86 per cent – regularly hear phrases such as ‘that’s so gay’ or ‘you’re so gay’ in school
- Nearly one in ten trans pupils (nine per cent) are subjected to death threats at school
- More than two in five trans pupils (44 per cent) say that staff at their school are not familiar with the term ‘trans’ and what it means
- More than four in five trans young people (84 per cent) have self-harmed. For lesbian, gay and bi young people who aren’t trans, three in five (61 per cent) have self-harmed
- Three per cent of LGBT pupils – including six per cent of trans pupils – experience sexual assault
- Four per cent of trans pupils are threatened with weapons at school compared to just one per cent of LGBT pupils overall.
- One in five LGBT pupils (19 per cent) – including one in four trans pupils (25 per cent) – are bullied in changing rooms.
- Fewer than a third of bullied LGBT pupils (29 per cent) say that teachers intervene when they are present during the bullying
- Just thirteen per cent have learnt about how to have healthy relationships in relation to same-sex relationships
- Three in four LGBT pupils (77 per cent) have never been taught about or discussed gender identity and what ‘trans’ means. Just one in ten LGBT pupils (10 per cent) have learnt about where to go for help and advice about being trans.
- Three in five trans pupils (58 per cent) say that they are not allowed to use the toilets they feel comfortable in at school. Two in three (67 per cent) say that they are not allowed to use the changing rooms they feel comfortable in at school
- Two in five LGBT pupils (38 per cent) – including half of trans pupils (52 per cent) – don’t enjoy going to school.

Our proactive work continues to increase the levels of understanding and capacity to offer helpful interventions across the Northumberland children’s workforce.

The rights, abuse and neglect of LGBT young people will be addressed through new resources and training packages. The Education and Skills service continues to be a part of the national Stonewall Education Champions Programme, supporting the planning of Northumberland Pride, LGBT and BME staff networks within NCC and a regional collaboration: ‘Trans Lives Matter North East’.

Are there any good practice examples or progress in improving services or employment opportunities for people with protected characteristics within your group or service areas?

A designated member of staff supports schools with equalities; this includes collating racist incidents, completing an annual submission to the Stonewall Education Equality Index (EEI), supporting schools to meet their statutory equality requirements (including publishing equality information, setting objectives, and Accessibility Plans).

A member of the workforce attends the annual Northern Pride parade in to represent the Council and is now involved in planning the proposed Northumberland Pride with the aim of making this a child and family friendly event.

All of the refugee and asylum seeker new arrivals in the county are supported to enrol in education provision and the SVPRS young people can access EAL support in their school setting.

Staff in all schools are made aware of the [Unlocking Opportunities](#) online training module from the EHRC and John Moores University in order to better understand how to take steps to remove or prevent barriers to learning for children and young people with disabilities.

We have members of staff in Children's services who have volunteered to become equality allies and also have a representative from Education and Skills on the Council Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Steering Group.

During the course of the academic year, schools receive information and resources to help them teach about, develop and demonstrate a commitment to the values of tolerance, mutual respect, justice and social responsibility. These include:

- Hate Crime Awareness Week (October)
- Black History Month (October)
- Anti-Bullying Week (November)
- Day of Transgender Remembrance (20/11)
- World AIDS Day (December)
- Holocaust Memorial Day (27 Jan)
- LGBT History Month (February)
- Day of Transgender Visibility (March 31st)
- IDAHoT Day (May 17)
- Refugee Week (June)

Between March and July 2014, Healthwatch Northumberland facilitated several focus groups with young people aged under 25 to establish how they should best engage with them to obtain their views. In response to the question: 'What should the number 1 priority of Healthwatch be in Northumberland? The three top priorities defined by the focus groups were 1. Mental Health (26%)

2. Increasing health and social care services for young people in north Northumberland (15%). 3. Sexual Health (11%) (

Source: [Emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people in Northumberland. Local Transformation Plan 2015-2020](#). The objectives and aspirations defined in this plan will be helped by government plans for £300 million investment announced in December 2017 to improve the provision of mental health services in schools by recommending that each school should appoint a designated lead for mental health, supported by mental health partnerships with the NHS.

What actions have been taken or are planned within the group or service area to achieve the NCC equality objectives?

1. To ensure that our services are accessible for all customers we will improve collection of data about their experiences to help us improve our services for everyone in Northumberland.

The consultations mentioned earlier in this document provide the best evidence for this.

School performance data also drives continuous cycle of improvement where groups of pupils are or appear to be disadvantaged as a result of protected characteristics.

It is not mandatory to collect data about some protected characteristics and we rely upon anecdotal evidence and requests for support to inform us of the needs of protected groups such as gender diverse, LGB, or asylum seeker children. We are always working to refine and improve how we communicate with one-another as agencies and how we accelerate early help and support to vulnerable young people and their families.

2. To improve access to, and the experience of, council services for disabled people, and in particular older disabled people, to help bring their life opportunities more closely into line with those of other groups in the community.

The SEND consultation and the work that is already taking place to improve provision in the county for disabled children will improve life opportunities for the population of people with disabilities in the county over time and should offer increased support to those who are providing care for a disabled person.

3. Promote and foster an accessible and inclusive culture and working environment for all our staff

All of the resources, training and work streams of the EYFS Inclusion Coordinators (Area Senco's), Portage Team, EAL Teachers, Sensory Support Teachers, Traveller Family Liaison worker and Schools' Equalities Coordinator contribute to this ambition on behalf of the Education and Skills service. The role of each is to improve outcomes for children with protected characteristics, develop cultural competence, build capacity and model best inclusive practice.

A practitioner network group for professionals delivering work about British Values is being developed by NCC, NFRS and Northumbria Police in partnership. This will ensure that staff collaborate and ensure uniformity in approach for those incorporating the themes and learning about tolerance and mutual respect, justice, democracy and the rule of law when working with vulnerable groups of young people in education, community, informal and residential settings.

4. Work with communities to prevent hate incidents and crimes and encourage reporting

Within school communities, we have the opportunity to tackle hate and develop tolerance and mutual respect through a number of partnerships and Service Level Agreements:

Show Racism the Red Card: Are contracted to deliver football fitness and anti-racist education in 22 of our schools annually.

Stonewall: Northumberland County Council is a member of the Education Champions programme, which gives us access to resources, support and advice for schools in supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender pupils.

SACRE: The Northumberland SACRE draws its membership from a wide community of faith based representatives and professionals, including Humanism, to inform the teaching of Religious Education and other protected beliefs in all schools.

Northumbria Police: All Northumberland schools are eligible to have Hate Crime Awareness Workshops delivered by Northumbria Police's Community Engagement Officer. This is accessed by 15-20 schools annually. This work also links schools to the local Prevent strategy, as hate crimes are often seen to be the precursor to extremism.

Recording and reporting racist incidents continues and provides useful community intelligence, and a mechanism for schools to obtain further support.

Gill Finch

Schools' Equalities Coordinator. December 2017.

