



Child Support Agency

Disability and Gender Equality Schemes and
Race Equality Scheme Progress Report

child support agency

Part of the Department for Work and Pensions

Contents

Foreword	5
Our vision	6
Our purpose	6
Where we are now	6
General diversity	13
Disability equality action plan	15
Gender equality action plan	16
Race equality action plan update	17
Progress reporting and reviewing	18
Other aspects of diversity	18
Further information	19
Annex 1 – Assessment of functions and policies	20
Annex 2 – Disability equality action plan	21
Annex 3 – Gender equality action plan	24
Annex 4 – Race equality action plan	27

Foreword



The Child Support Agency exists to ensure that, where an application for child maintenance has been made, parents who live apart contribute financially to the upkeep of their children.

It has been widely accepted that problems facing the Agency are deep-rooted, complex and wider than the operational. Therefore the Agency is undergoing fundamental and significant organisational change through the implementation of a three-year operational improvement plan, which makes clear our drive for change in order to deliver more money for more children.

Building on the principles of diversity and equality already firmly established within our organisation, we aim to ensure that diversity and equality are embedded in everything we do. From service delivery to employment practices and through our commitment to improve, we will develop a service that is more accessible for clients and is delivered by people with the right skills and knowledge to deal with their needs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Geraghty'.

Stephen Geraghty
Chief Executive

Our vision

We exist to deliver a professional, efficient and sensitive child support service, which plays its part in ensuring that children whose parents do not live together are financially supported.

Our purpose

The purpose of the Agency is clear – to ensure that parents who live apart from their children contribute financially to their upkeep. We have a number of Public Service Agreement targets for 2006/07, including:

- increasing collection rates;
- improving maintenance outcomes;
- improving accuracy; and
- reducing debt.

Please see the Child Support Agency business plan and operational improvement plan for further information.

<http://www.csa.gov.uk/new/oip.asp>

Where we are now

Our challenge is to work through what is a complex environment to bring some degree of financial stability for children.

Our overarching operational improvement plan sets out how we can change how the Agency delivers its services in order to provide a much stronger focus on the things that matter to our clients.

The plan focuses on four key elements:

- getting it right;
- keeping it right;
- putting it right; and
- getting the best from the organisation.

Having improved in many areas since April 2004, the Agency's performance is currently stable and we continue with our approach to making diversity and equality an integral part of everything we do; providing a supportive, responsive service where clients will be directed to the right people, who have the right knowledge and skills to tackle their issues in the right way.

Building on the principles of diversity and equality already established within our organisation, where we have clearly demonstrated our commitment through the achievements outlined below, our operational improvement plan provides a firm foundation for the future.

Achievements

- We have undertaken training to improve employee awareness of diversity issues, with the main focuses being race and disability. Up to 75 per cent of staff have received this training, with further events planned to ensure delivery to remaining staff.
- Impact assessment guidance and training workshops have been provided to key middle managers to equip them with the skills and knowledge to carry these assessments out. Middle managers have been targeted as they are seen to have the responsibility and influence to embed this process within the Agency.
- The Child Support Agency publishes a six-monthly report that highlights and monitors the ethnicity, disability, gender, working patterns and age of the staff employed within the Agency. This monitoring helps to identify the need for diversity initiatives and a possible steer for future policy.
- Our executive team has approved a programme to raise staff awareness on diversity. We have introduced a culture strand whose role is to build a culture across the Agency that will ensure successful delivery of the operational improvement plan and future change programmes. To become the organisation we aim to be, we have embarked upon a rolling programme of training on inspirational leadership.
- We have published our service standards via our client charter, giving guidance for clients who require translation and interpreting services, Braille, large print and audiotape communications. (Please see our website: www.csa.gov.uk.)
- We have utilised our Agency-specific reasonable adjustment budget to fund adjustments for our disabled staff.
- We have promoted the disability equality scheme to all Child Support Agency employees via our improved communication strategy. A variety of communication methods, such as articles on staff websites, will embed diversity within the working culture.

- Working with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, we have arranged 'Lunch and Learn' information sessions for staff, in order to promote and raise awareness of diversity issues. Our most recent event was delivered by Royal National Institute for Deaf People.
- Over the past three years, each of the Child Support Agency centres has appointed an ethnic liaison officer, to help improve service delivery and future policy for our ethnic minority clients.
- A number of Agency business units undertake client callbacks to monitor client service and to improve performance.
- Our website is currently ranked first in a monthly independent review of 57 government websites. It has achieved the Royal National Institute of the Blind standard for their See It Right campaign and is also AA Bobby Approved.
- Departmental internal assurance recently completed independent audits in a selection of our operational areas and reported positive findings regarding workstation assessments and follow-up action.
- Disabled employees who use assistive technology have been actively encouraged to join the Department's group EDUCATE. This is a group of people from across the Department who are expert domain users championing assistive technology equipment. They offer help to one another; share good practice; promote accessibility; and are proactive in reporting accessibility problems and in getting accessible services delivered.
- In 2005, our North West business unit achieved the Navajo Lesbian and Gay Friendly Charter Mark.
- We have diversity assessed our functions and policies.

Case Study 1

In order to develop a workforce that is more reflective of the community we serve and that has a better understanding of the cultural issues and problems faced by clients with special needs, we have delivered diversity toolkit workshops across the business.

Each event was designed to enable all attendees to participate in discussions about the subject matter. Although the foundation content material for the workshops was supplied centrally by the Department, the delivery, content, focus and style were developed entirely by the local team to ensure a bespoke approach. We took care to arrange times and locations that took into consideration the different working patterns of staff, and used a venue that was fully accessible.

Consultation and involvement

As part of our notification to staff about the new equality schemes, we invited staff to comment on the current schemes. We held workshops, inviting staff with a particular interest in diversity matters, and consulted with them on our proposals for action plans and to seek suggestions for improvement.

To produce the action plans and equality schemes, we involved and consulted:

- the Department's ethnic minority forum and disability forum; and
- local voluntary organisations through outreach work conducted by our 'face-to-face' officers, ethnic liaison officers, customer service managers and individuals dealing with the armed forces.

Our staff have talked to clients by telephone and during home visits about their individual needs, enabling us to identify perceived barriers and gaps in our service, which can then be addressed.

Outcomes from our consultation, including those from the Employers' Forum for Disability, have been shared with appropriate areas within the Child Support Agency. Our action plans show how they are to address any concerns relating to their area and how they will comply with the targets or deadlines that have been proposed. We will monitor progress on a six-monthly basis and issue an annual report on our findings.

The Child Support Agency took part in the benchmarking exercise as part of the Disability Standard 2005, devised by the Employers' Forum for Disability.

Monitoring and evaluation

At present we do not ask or capture from our clients details of disability or ethnicity. We use client surveys, discussion forums and analysis of data for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

- The available data points to a relatively low level of ethnic minority representation among Agency clients, with between 5 per cent and 7 per cent of clients coming from the black and Asian communities.
- The information we have regarding disability status shows that before the advent of the new scheme roughly 4 per cent of non-resident parents claimed incapacity or disability benefits, and a baseline survey found that 10 per cent of parents with care were receiving incapacity benefits or Disability Living Allowance.
- The client age and gender information we collate is gathered from the Agency's application forms.

The Agency's two client groups tend to be split between parents with care, the majority of whom are women, and non-resident parents, who are mostly men. The ongoing review of our functions and policies will ensure that we capture the needs of our diverse client base.

With regard to the diversity of our staff, we currently monitor by means of our twice-yearly diversity monitoring report. The data is entirely dependent on staff voluntarily declaring their ethnicity and whether they have a disability. Ninety-one per cent of staff have provided this information. More staff information is provided below.

The extent to which policies, functions and services meet the needs of disabled people

Following the consultation we have undertaken, we accept that there is much the Agency needs to do to improve our service for all of our clients. The action plans for disability and gender provide the details of what we intend to do to improve our service.

Employment information

Disability

Grade*	Target 2008	Actual June 2006
Senior management		
Grade 6	3.0%	0.0%
Grade 7	3.5%	2.0%
Senior Executive Officer (SEO)	5.0%	2.6%
Middle management		
Higher Executive Officer (HEO)	5.0%	5.0%
Executive Officer (EO)	4.8%	3.8%
Administrative		
Administration Officer (AO)	4.5%	2.1%
Administration Assistant (AA)	4.5%	3.4%

Ethnicity

Grade*	Target 2008	Actual June 2006
Senior management		
Grade 6	2.5%	0.0%
Grade 7	3.0%	2.1%
SEO	3.0%	0.9%
Middle management		
HEO	3.5%	2.5%
EO	5.0%	3.6%
Administrative		
AO	4.9%	4.9%
AA	5.4%	4.2%

Gender

Grade*	Female	Male
Senior management		
Grade 6	11	15
Grade 7	21	28
SEO	57	59
Middle management		
HEO	286	170
EO	1,838	947
Administrative		
AO	5,853	2,259
AA	779	389

The diversity data for gender indicates that the Agency has a 70:30 split between women and men; although the ratio of women to men in the lower grades is higher and this is reversed at senior management level, there is evidence that the margin of imbalance is steadily reducing.

*Civil Service grades cover a diverse range of roles in different posts and functions. Senior Civil Service grade roles are at deputy director, director or director general level; Grade 6 and Grade 7 jobs can be described as senior management roles; SEO, HEO and EO roles are managerial grades; and AO and AA grades are administrative roles.

Impact assessments

Staff from the Agency's diversity and equality team attended a Departmental-led workshop to gain an understanding of the impact assessment process. The Agency has promoted the process by holding workshops for key staff. To further meet the duty, we have made Agency-specific products available to staff via the diversity and equality team internal website. We have published our assessments on our Agency website and will continue to do so.

Procurement

We have fully integrated our diversity requirements into the Agency's commercial contracts team so it fully addresses diversity and equality issues when contracting out. The process also encompasses the social agenda and fair trading.

Publishing

In line with Departmental strategy, we routinely publish information via our internet and our internal website. A wide range of information is made available, including our client charter, annual reports, business plans, race and equality schemes, impact assessments and progress reports.

Disability and race: how we aim to meet the needs of disabled and ethnic minority people

We provide information about what we do and how we do it through a variety of media, including our people.

We have published an Agency client charter setting out our service standards.

We provide access to our services via information on our websites, both internally and externally, and via post offices and other government offices.

We provide information in Braille, on audiotape, in large print and minority languages on request. All our leaflets are available in Welsh. As part of the operational improvement plan, our standard letters and communications are being improved to help our communication with our clients.

To further support customer service, we offer a 'face-to-face' and interpreting service for clients who have a disability or who do not have English as a first language.

General diversity

Involvement and consultation

We are reviewing our existing practices and will introduce consultation processes to ensure that all new and amended policies are appropriately considered for their equality impact. Details of how we involve disabled people in developing our scheme are included in the Departmental equality schemes.

As part of the review process, we will:

- determine the links required between the different levels of policy making, service delivery and consultation, for example when national and/or local engagement is appropriate;

- examine current methods of identifying stakeholders and inviting participation in consultation; and
- share best practice and seek creative solutions to encourage active involvement from people of all cultures to ensure that our decisions are not based on assumptions and that our services reflect community needs.

Priority areas that partners and client representatives would like to see as part of our disability action plan are:

- continued staff training on disability awareness;
- improvements in services for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired; and
- better communication between agencies and other government departments.

Priority areas that clients would like to see included are:

- simplification of letters;
- alternative communication formats, including CDs;
- improved service to people who are deaf or hard of hearing;
- better communication between the Department and other government departments; and
- disability awareness training for staff.

Within the scope of our operational improvement plan, over the next 12 months we will look to consult with our clients on our overall service standards.

Monitoring and evaluation

Clients

The Agency understands that, in the long term, it can improve services only if it understands its client base and monitors the service provided to all client groups.

Our operational improvement plan outlines how we can better support our clients in the future.

An approach to stakeholder engagement has been introduced by the deputy chief executive to monitor and evaluate stakeholder feedback. The Agency will meet selected stakeholders at six-monthly intervals to share views on how well the Agency is meeting the needs of its clients and ideas about where improvements can be made.

As stated earlier, we currently record age and gender details of our clients from their application forms. In the longer term, we hope to collect holistic diversity data automatically through our computer system to enable us to improve our service. This will involve complex changes to the computer system and/or our forms, and is therefore a long-term goal.

Staff

As previously stated, we currently monitor the age, gender, ethnicity, working patterns and disability of our staff. We have provided details above.

Staff will be able to record their ethnicity and disability status on our new self-service IT resource management system in the near future, which will provide further meaningful data and an enhanced employment picture.

Disability equality action plan

Following staff consultation, the following proposals were made for consideration in our action plan:

- to improve disability awareness among line managers;
- to establish a specialist, central team for staff who require adjustments under the Disability Discrimination Act;
- to create a reasonable adjustment history document whereby any adjustments made for a member of staff are recorded and used when the staff member transfers to a different area, enabling a 'fast-track' assessment or alteration;
- to take into account accessibility issues for staff on training courses and at external Agency events; and
- where possible, to ensure IT compatibility with specialist equipment.

The current position of services and functions for disabled employees in the Child Support Agency

The Agency has allocated specific funding to a disability budget. Line managers, who are integral to the process of facilitating reasonable adjustments, follow the procedures set out in our *Line Managers' Guide*.

Types of adjustments we have funded

- IT and telecom-related adjustments, with additional funding from our IT budget
- Furniture and desktop equipment
- Accommodation adjustment screening
- Travel to work costs.

Other types of adjustment

In line with the legislation, line managers will consider reasonable adjustments where appropriate. Further guidance will be issued to provide support to managers on what kind of adjustments we should consider.

Examples of good practice

The following are examples of good practice that have been undertaken within the Agency over the last 12 months:

- **Internal diversity and equality website:** We promote disability issues on our internal website for staff and signpost to other areas and services outside the Agency, for example the availability of the disability element of Working Tax Credit and the Disability Rights Commission website.
- **Car parking:** We provide designated car parking spaces for our disabled staff and visitors in accordance with the British Standard 8300 regulations.

Gender equality action plan

Included within the gender action plan is the Agency's approach to the gender equality duty. Having consulted our staff, feedback received highlighted the following areas as a possible focus for gender activity:

- developing further training on gender issues, mirroring the approach to race and disability;
- conducting research into our job adverts, exploring the levels of interest to both sexes to ensure we are appealing to both as an employer; and
- increasing the awareness among staff of gender issues such as gender reassignment.

Case study 2

We provide access to on-site nursery care and subsidy payments in order to continue to encourage and support staff within the Child Support Agency who have childcare responsibilities and commitments. We have also nominated a childcare representative within each business unit to provide support, advice and guidance on our childcare policy.

Race equality action plan update

Ethnic liaison officer role

The role of the ethnic liaison officer has been to engage with ethnic minority communities and help them access our services, and therefore to improve our customer service to them. In the past year, work has varied from attending large organised events, such as the Mela at the NEC in Birmingham and Aston Pride Community Day at Villa Park football stadium, to attending surgeries at community centres for smaller community groups.

General barriers to achieving race equality

The following barriers have been identified:

- a lack of awareness of the services provided by the Child Support Agency;
- a lack of interpreting and translating services;
- the myth that ethnic minority communities were 'looking after their own', which resulted in a shortfall of services or inappropriate service provision from mainstream providers;
- a lack of cultural and religious awareness among service providers, which reduced the quality of services and therefore their take-up; and
- the failure to communicate with ethnic minority communities via outreach work to identify their needs and determine priorities.

The race equality action plan covers the period 2005–08. The priorities were developed in consultation with customers, representatives, partners and staff.

Progress reporting and reviewing

We will assess progress and provide an update on outcomes and progress against action plans on a yearly basis. We will consult on progress and take on board ongoing consultation comments and outcomes from impact assessment proposals in relation to policies and processes we introduce. We will revise and publish our action plans in accordance with legislation.

Other aspects of diversity

Age

- Child Support Agency representatives regularly meet and contribute to the Departmental staff network group on age, where staff and policy issues are discussed and addressed.
- Within the Department and the Agency there is flexibility for staff to work beyond retirement age.
- We have worked with the Department to look at age legislation to identify what it means for clients and staff. Plans are in place to raise staff awareness of age legislation; these include simplified guidance and short, user-friendly, individual handbooks for distribution.

Sexual orientation

- Child Support Agency representatives regularly meet and contribute to the Departmental staff network group on sexual orientation.
- The Agency's diversity and equality team issued the Departmental civil partnership video, *Getting it right*, to the business units for use in staff communication sessions. Additionally, copies were issued to training areas to show during staff induction courses.
- A leaflet on sexual orientation was distributed to staff, raising awareness of sexual orientation and the legislation on civil partnerships.

Religion or belief

- Business areas provide a quiet room or suitable space for prayer and contemplation.
- Line managers are encouraged to take a flexible approach during religious festivals.
- The diversity and equality team website lists religious festivals to raise awareness among all Agency staff.

Further information

We have included the links to our website for reference to our Agency business plan, the operational improvement plan and our client charter:

www.csa.gov.uk

About us

The Child Support Agency invites and welcomes comments on its equality scheme. We can be contacted as follows:

Address: Central Communications Team
BP6201, Alnwick House
Longbenton
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE98 1YX

E-mail: paul.lumley@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Telephone: 0191 225 0468

Minicom/Text 08457 138 924
phone:

Annex 1 – Assessment of functions and policies

Child Support Agency

Owner: chief executive

Functions and policies	Priority		
	Race	Gender	Disability
To make speedy and accurate calculations of child maintenance due	High	High	High
To make consistently accurate and correct decisions on child maintenance claims	High	High	High
To collect child maintenance and arrears of non-resident parents with liability due to be paid through the Agency's collection service	High	High	High
To assist clients as they go through this activity	High	High	High
To deliver an efficient disagreement, appeals and variation process	High	High	High



Annex 2 – Disability equality action plan

Objective	Action	By	Outcomes	Responsibilities
Review internal equality impact assessment process, products and guidance	<p>Production of revised tools and guidance</p> <p>Promotion of process within Agency</p> <p>Guidance approved by executive team</p> <p>Assessments conducted and published</p>	<p>March 2007</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ensure that new and proposed policies are consulted on and impact assessed for compliance with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)</p> <p>Ensure that policies are non-discriminatory</p> <p>Feedback provided to policy developers</p> <p>Further transparency</p> <p>Publication of assessments</p>	<p>Child Support Agency diversity and equality team</p> <p>Human resources director</p> <p>Client service directorate</p> <p>Communications directorate</p>
Work with the Department to develop and implement a new resource management information tool	<p>Implementation across Agency</p> <p>Raised staff awareness of RM processes</p>	Ongoing	<p>Successful implementation across Agency</p> <p>Provision of improved monitoring information, for example of reasonable adjustments to improve our human resources policies and practices</p> <p>Improved collation of data</p>	<p>Child Support Agency diversity and equality team</p> <p>Departmental corporate centre</p>
Analyse data from RM	Discuss and agree an action plan for implementation	March 2007	Action plan to monitor and evaluate data	Child Support Agency diversity and equality team

Disability equality action plan (*continued*)

Objective	Action	By	Outcomes	Responsibilities
Engage with client relations directorate to review client service process	Agreed action plan in place	Implemented September 2006	Improved client accessibility to our services Improved customer service Action plan in place to improve consultation process	Client relations directorate Child Support Agency diversity and equality team
Update annual disability action plan	Publication of progress report	December 2007	Compliance with DDA Communication of outcomes	Child Support Agency diversity and equality team
Engage quarterly with Agency's disabled staff via internal communications such as <i>One Agency Bulletins</i>	System in place Feedback received	March 2007, June 2007, September 2007, December 2007	Ensure that targeted consultation takes place to inform future disability equality scheme Improved customer service	Child Support Agency diversity and equality team Communications directorate
Produce twice-yearly staff diversity monitoring report	Twice-yearly presentation to Agency to executive team	March 2007, September 2007	Review, identify gaps and look to improve our employment recruitment human resources policies and practices.	Child Support Agency diversity and equality team
Provide improved disability training and support for our staff through development of our diversity website	Increase in communication media Feedback from staff Analysis of staff data Workshops to human resources staff	Ongoing	Raise awareness of responsibilities under DDA Improved knowledge of DDA Promote equality and positive attitudes towards disability Improved customer service Improved staff retention rate	Human resources directorate Child Support Agency diversity and equality team Departmental corporate centre Communications directorate

Disability equality action plan (continued)

Objective	Action	By	Outcomes	Responsibilities
Improve communications with our clients	Act on client feedback – consider needs of diverse customer base when developing strategy Improved Agency performance	Ongoing	Improved customer service Improved accessibility within DDA Improved performance of Agency Improved confidence in Agency	Communications directorate Client service directorate Child Support Agency diversity and equality team
Work with Department to develop a new effective appraisal system	Consultations with staff, stakeholders and Departmental leads Implementation of system	Ongoing	Ensure that all staff are developed, motivated and rewarded equally	Human resources directorate Child Support Agency diversity and equality team Departmental corporate centre
Continue to make improvements to our diversity and equality internal website	Staff feedback Number of visitors to the site Disabled staff contributions	Ongoing	Promote disability issues to staff Encourage disabled staff involvement	Child Support Agency diversity and equality team Communications team
Promote Agency disability budget	Increase managers' awareness of its availability, educate them and support their use of it	Ongoing	Improved provision of adjustments	Child Support Agency diversity and equality team Communications team
Work with HMRC to promote disability awareness	Staff attendance at 'Lunch and Learn' sessions Staff feedback for suggested themes	Ongoing	Improved staff awareness of disability issues in the workplace Share good practice with other government agencies	Child Support Agency diversity and equality team HMRC diversity team

Annex 3 – Gender equality action plan

Objective	Action	By	Outcomes	Responsibilities
Review internal equality impact assessment process, products and guidance	<p>Production of revised tools and guidance</p> <p>Promotion of process within Agency</p> <p>Guidance approved by executive team</p> <p>Assessments conducted and published</p>	<p>March 2007</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ensure that new and proposed policies are consulted on and impact assessed for gender equality</p> <p>Feedback provided to policy developers</p> <p>Further transparency</p> <p>Publication of assessments</p>	<p>Child Support Agency diversity and equality team</p> <p>Human resources directorate</p> <p>Client service directorate</p> <p>Communications directorate</p>
Work with Department to develop and implement a new resource management information too	<p>Implementation across Agency</p> <p>Raised staff awareness of RM processes</p>	Ongoing	<p>Successful implementation across Agency</p> <p>Provision of improved monitoring information, for example of reasonable adjustments to improve our human resources policies and practices</p> <p>Improved collation of data</p>	<p>Child Support Agency diversity and equality team</p> <p>Departmental corporate centre</p>
Analyse data from RM	Discuss and agree an action plan for implementation	March 2007	Action plan to monitor and evaluate data	Child Support Agency diversity and equality team

Gender equality action plan (*continued*)

Objective	Action	By	Outcomes	Responsibilities
Engage with client relations directorate to review client service process	Educate staff and support preparation of agreed action plans	Ongoing	Improved customer service action plan in place to improve consultation process	Client relations directorate Child Support Agency diversity and equality team
Update annual gender action plan	Publication of progress report	December 2007	Compliance with gender legislation Communication of outcomes	Child Support Agency diversity and equality team
Engage quarterly with Agency staff	System in place Feedback received	March 2007, June 2007, September 2007, December 2007	Improved staff knowledge of gender issues to improve customer service Promote equality Improved staff retention rate	Human resources directorate Child Support Agency diversity and equality team Departmental corporate centre Communications directorate
Produce twice-yearly staff diversity monitoring report	Twice-yearly presentation to Agency executive team	March 2007, September 2007	Review, identify gaps and look to improve our employment recruitment, human resources policies and practices.	Child Support Agency diversity and equality team
Provide improved training and support for our staff	Increase in communication media Feedback from staff Analysis of human resources data Workshops to human resources staff	Ongoing	Improved knowledge of gender issues to improve customer service Promote equality Improved staff retention rate	Human resources directorate Child Support Agency diversity and equality team Departmental corporate centre Communications directorate

Gender equality action plan (*continued*)

Objective	Action	By	Outcomes	Responsibilities
Improve communications with our clients	Clients' feedback Improved Agency performance	Ongoing	Improved customer service towards making our service more accessible Improved performance of Agency Improved confidence in Agency	Communications directorate Client service directorate Child Support Agency diversity and equality team
Work with Department to develop a new, effective appraisal system	Consultations with staff and stakeholders Implementation of system	March 2007	Ensure that all staff are developed, motivated and rewarded equally for equal work	Human resources directorate Child Support Agency diversity and equality team Departmental corporate centre
Continue to make improvements to our diversity and equality internal website	Staff feedback Number of visitors to the site Staff contributions Showing of civil partnership video Increased awareness	Ongoing	Promote gender issues to staff Encourage staff involvement	Child Support Agency diversity and equality team Communications team
Continue to work with colleagues in HMRC to promote gender awareness	Staff attendance at 'Lunch and Learn' sessions Staff feedback for suggested themes	Ongoing	Promote gender awareness in the workplace Improve staff awareness of gender issues in the workplace Share good practice with other government agencies	Child Support Agency diversity and equality team HMRC diversity team

Annex 4 – Race equality action plan

Objective	Action	By	Outcomes	Responsibilities
Governance of the diversity equality scheme	Implementation of the diversity equality scheme	May 2005 – May 2008	That all objectives are taken forward and actioned	Agency diversity manager
Reassessment of all functions and policies that may have a diversity impact on staff or clients	Evaluate strategy for assessment of policies and functions and rate the potential adverse diversity impact	Review annually	That all policies and functions comply with the requirements of the Act	Agency diversity manager Executive team
Arrangements in place to review relevant functions and policies	Revised scheme published	December 2005		
To ensure that the Child Support Agency includes processes to enable diversity monitoring of our policies and functions	When developing policies and products, our business will consider the need to capture customer information Ensure we adhere to the relevant legislation and service standards	Ongoing	That sufficient data is available to measure indicators of equality, to report on progress and identify areas for improvement	Agency diversity manager

Race equality action plan (*continued*)

Objective	Action	By	Outcomes	Responsibilities
To ensure that our policies and functions have no adverse impact on diversity	Engage with staff and clients Train relevant staff to perform impact assessments Agree an approach to impact assessments Where appropriate, publish the results of consultation and monitoring	Review annually May 2006, May 2007	Greater public confidence in our services. Products and decisions are transparent and accessible to the communities we serve and to our own people	Agency diversity manager Training solutions team

Race equality action plan (*continued*)

Objective	Action	By	Outcomes	Responsibilities
<p>To make our products available to our partners and have consultation arrangements in place</p>	<p>Engage with staff and clients on impact</p> <p>Consult through Agency Consultation Forum and DWP Ethnic Minority Forum as well as with other stakeholders to provide stakeholders with an early insight into our products and provide an opportunity to influence and give feedback</p> <p>Through increased interaction within the community by our ethnic liaison officers, we can develop and improve our service delivery for ethnic minority clients</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Greater public confidence in our services and improved partnership working, resulting in improved staff and client satisfaction</p>	<p>Agency diversity manager</p> <p>Client relations manager</p>

Race equality action plan (*continued*)

Objective	Action	By	Outcomes	Responsibilities
To communicate effectively with our clients	Engage with staff and clients Promote the use of language allowance to staff Support staff increasing their knowledge and raising awareness Raise awareness of our services and how to contact us Improve the range and availability of translated material	Ongoing	Break down barriers for vulnerable groups, thus increasing staff and client satisfaction	Agency diversity manager Communications manager Human resources business partner teams

Race equality action plan (*continued*)

Objective	Action	By	Outcomes	Responsibilities
<p>To ensure that all our staff are treated fairly and in line with existing and developing human resources policies</p>	<p>Use findings from staff surveys and monitoring to identify strengths and areas for improvement</p> <p>Consider analysis of grievances, bullying and harassment data</p> <p>Apply the impact assessment process to reduce inequalities for staff and clients</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>That all policies and functions are adhered to</p>	<p>Agency diversity manager</p> <p>Human resources</p> <p>business partner teams</p>

Race equality action plan (*continued*)

Objective	Action	By	Outcomes	Responsibilities
To ensure that all aspects of diversity are embedded in the organisation	Commitment from diversity champion and executive team Deployment and evaluation of diversity toolkit Articles in staff magazines/intranet	Ongoing	An organisation that enables its people to give their best to deliver the exemplary service all our clients deserve	Agency diversity manager

Race equality action plan (*continued*)

Objective	Action	By	Outcomes	Responsibilities
Workshops for staff on race awareness, as part of implementation of the Departmental diversity toolkit	Mandatory for all staff	Ongoing	That we will facilitate greater awareness of race equality issues across the Agency, making staff better equipped to deal with ethnic minority clients and colleagues	Agency diversity manager

Race equality action plan – progress to date

We have reviewed our governance arrangements to support our improvement plan, providing swift senior management support and guidance on a monthly basis.

We will continue to monitor our policies and functions to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation.

We reviewed our policies and functions in December 2005 and will continue to work with Departmental and Agency strands to ensure that there is no negative impact on diversity.

We have benchmarked our stakeholder strategy and will continue to develop a pragmatic approach to involving our clients in supporting our improvement plan.

We will also look to develop over the next 12 months a strategy for improving our communications with our clients, including a review of our leaflets, new advice and guidance, and a corporate identity.

In 2006 we implemented a capability review for all our managers. For the future, we will be mainstreaming diversity in operational activity. All employees will receive training, taking into account race and wider diversity considerations and new legislation.

We continue to collect feedback on services from customers and their representative groups through consultation activity.

We have appointed a director diversity champion who will facilitate through our improvement plan the embedding of diversity into the business.

In March 2006 we completed diversity training for the majority of staff within the Agency (80 per cent). We provided further mandatory training in October and November 2006, on new equality legislation.

Further copies of this publication in either English or Welsh and in other formats, including Braille, audio and Easy Read, can be obtained by:

Telephone Orderline: 0800 132 660

Textphone: 0800 032 8018

Fax: 0800 328 8988

Email: orders@dwpequalityschemes.co.uk

All DWP Equality Schemes are available at:
www.dwp.gov.uk/aboutus/equalityschemes

ISBN: 1-84695-669-2 978-1-84695-669-0

child support agency