

Equity, diversity and inclusion strategy

September
2022 - 2026



Anna Freud
building the mental
wellbeing of the
next generation

Contents

- 3 Foreword and welcome
- 4 About Anna Freud
- 6 Why we need this strategy
- 8 Notes on the language we use
- 10 What we've done so far
- 11 Improving representation
- 15 What we're doing next
 - 16 Representation
 - 18 Inclusion and belonging
 - 20 Continuous learning
 - 22 Community wellbeing
- 24 Accountability
- 26 References

Foreword and welcome

From our CEO, Professor Peter Fonagy OBE

This is our first equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) strategy. It aims to be ambitious in changing ourselves, supporting change in those we work with, improving our reach and improving the experience of those we support.

EDI is one of six enabling conditions for achieving our mission to close the gap in children and young people's wellbeing and mental health. We believe prioritising it will improve the quality of service and care we provide to children, young people and families.

As CEO, I am committed to building on the progress we've made since reassessing our approach to EDI in 2020. I am honoured to lead Anna Freud through this period of transformation and to advance our objectives in representation, inclusion and belonging, continuous learning and community wellbeing.

Our Board of Trustees will ensure we stay on track with this strategy. They support us as part of our EDI governance structure through a trustee-led EDI subcommittee.

We commit to publishing our progress against our 2022-2026 strategy which has equity, diversity and inclusion at its core.

Everyone at Anna Freud contributes to our progress against this strategy and I encourage everyone to take action.



About us

Our vision

Our vision is a world where all children and young people are able to achieve their full potential. A world in which they and their families get support that is designed with their input, available at the right time and meets their needs, so that they can develop their emotional and mental health.

Our mission

Our mission is to close the gap in wellbeing and mental health by advancing, translating, delivering and sharing the best science and practice with everyone who impacts the lives of children and families.

Our values

Collaboration

We maximise our impact by working in partnership with others, learning from them and sharing our knowledge, expertise and experience.

Equity

We strive for fairness and adjust our approach to help towards addressing the inequalities that exist in society today, recognising that not everyone starts in the same place.

Integrity

We act with honesty and integrity, guided by evidence, while keeping in mind what science cannot tell us.

Compassion

We strive to empathise with the experiences and feelings of others, reflecting constantly and with humility to honour the trust we are given.

Inclusivity

Children, young people, and their families are at the heart of everything we do. We listen and learn from them, and from those who support them in education, social care and health, and across statutory, voluntary and community services.

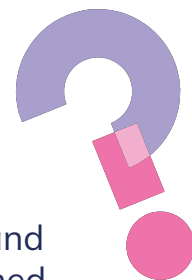
Creativity

We are imaginative in how we build new understanding, strengthen relationships and develop our skills as the foundation of excellent practice.

Courage

We experiment and pioneer, accepting that we will sometimes get things wrong and that is part of how we learn.

Why we need this strategy



The murder of George Floyd in May 2020 and the Black Lives Matter movement forced us to reflect on our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion. This highlighted that the values we aspire to were not matched by our actions – particularly when it comes to anti-racism.

We knew we had to do better. This strategy affirms our dedication to being not just an anti-racist organisation but an organisation that actively supports all communities who have experienced discrimination, exclusion and violence.

How our EDI strategy enables us to ‘close the gap’

EDI is one of the enabling conditions behind our five-year strategy, *Closing the Gap*.

Local authorities and charities are experiencing financial pressures while demand for services increases. Many of the deepest cuts have been made in the poorest areas,¹ putting vulnerable young people at greater risk of exploitation, violence and abuse.²

At the same time, the wellbeing of professionals supporting children and young people has been tested. Practitioners from minoritised ethnic backgrounds have left the charity sector workforce at disproportionate rates.³ This leaves families from marginalised groups less able to access support from practitioners who truly understand the barriers they face.

Prioritising EDI ensures everyone in our organisation feels valued, improving staff wellbeing and supporting them to do their best work.⁴

We also recognise that equity, diversity and inclusion are key to the efficacy of our services – to serve a community, we need to understand its needs. Organisations that reflect the diversity of those they serve are better placed to do this.⁵

Everyone has a role to play in creating a more equitable society. Our commitment to EDI will help us become an organisation enriched by diversity, enabling us to better understand and meet the needs of all children, young people and families.



Notes on the language we use

This section will help you understand the language we use in this strategy and why we've chosen certain terms over others.

Language has a significant role in disrupting or upholding the status quo. But we are mindful not to allow a disproportionate focus on language to disempower or distract us from our work to progress social justice and create inclusive services by design. We will review our guidelines annually to reflect the way language continually evolves.

Anti-racist organisation

Racism is deeply ingrained in the UK's cultural and social systems. We recognise the impact it has on children and young people's lives and mental health, and we commit to challenging it in all its forms.

We take an active role in disrupting structural and systemic racism, which impacts our ability to experience a sense of inclusion and belonging, and take action where inequality and bias exists in our work. That means reviewing our policy and practice through an anti-racist lens, listening to and learning from those with lived experience, and committing to ongoing reflection.

Diversity

Diversity is all around us. It is the difference that exists in our unique combination of shared identities and experiences.

Cultural humility

Cultural humility (instead of competence, sensitivity or fluency) emphasises self-reflexivity, appreciation of others' lay expertise, openness to sharing power with others and continual learning. Adopting this concept helps us embed self-reflection and grace into our culture and the way we interact with external stakeholders. We hope it will enable a sense of belonging in the spaces we hold for children, young people, families and the professionals that support them.

Equity

Equity means striving for fairness and adjusting our approach to address the inequalities in society. We prefer equity over equality because we recognise that not everyone starts in the same place. Everyone has different needs and we believe it's better to offer support that meets their individual needs.

Feeling safe

Feeling safe means being able to acknowledge mistakes, learn from failure and share views and experiences openly, even when they might differ from others' views. This is also referred to as 'organisational psychological safety'.⁶

Inclusion

Inclusion is creating an environment where everyone feels respected and valued and feels both able and encouraged to contribute.

Solidarity

Solidarity aims to acknowledge our interconnectedness and recognises that our actions of allyship are continuous, building up day by day, often with small choices and actions.

We feel that acting in solidarity reflects our value of 'equity' and our aspiration to shift power dynamics as we close the gap for children, young people and families.



What we've done so far

In September 2020, we began working with [Laurelle Brown Training and Consultancy](#) (LBTC) to evaluate our EDI approach. We have been supported on a two-year programme to comprehensively and sustainably embed EDI into all of our policies and practice.

Increasing knowledge



- We have developed new staff training: EDI Induction Train the Trainer, Inclusive Recruitment Line Manager Training, context or division-specific training and EDI awareness training.
- EDI training is part of the mandatory training process for all new starters.
- We have developed external-facing resources and toolkits on anti-racism and supporting LGBTQIA+ children and young people.

EDI networks



- We have established staff networks for anti-racism, LGBTQIA+, anti-classism, neurodiversity and mental health, disability and accessibility, and faith.
- EDI networks speak at staff meetings and organise events to engage employees and bring any issues to light.

Inclusive ways of working



- We have reviewed and enhanced our family friendly leave policy.
- We are a signatory of the Halo Code, supporting elimination of hair discrimination in schools and workplaces.
- We have significantly reduced the number of fixed-term contracts across our organisation.
- We are a Living Wage employer.
- We have launched a bursary scheme to broaden access to our training courses.
- We have established research and clinical internships for those underrepresented in these fields.
- We have developed a pulse survey to monitor staff satisfaction and our progress against our EDI objectives.

Improving representation

Representation of disabled people and ethnic diversity has improved since our first EDI report in 2021, but we still have work to do to meet national statistics of the working age population.



Since 2021, more employees feel comfortable sharing their ethnicity information with us.

Just 1% of staff answered 'prefer not to say' in our 2022 survey. This is a **9.4%** reduction since 2021.



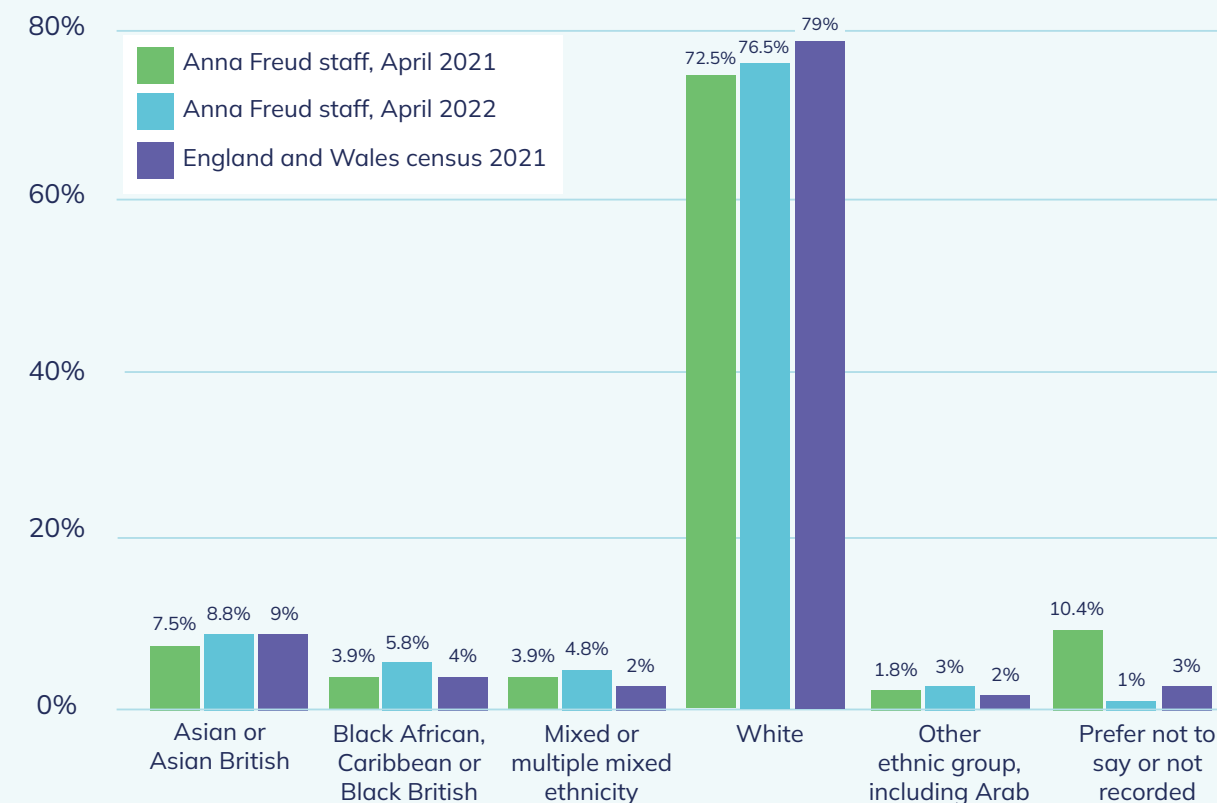
Gay, lesbian and bisexual people, and those who self-identify their sexual orientation make up **13.1%** of our workforce.

9.96% higher than the national population.⁷

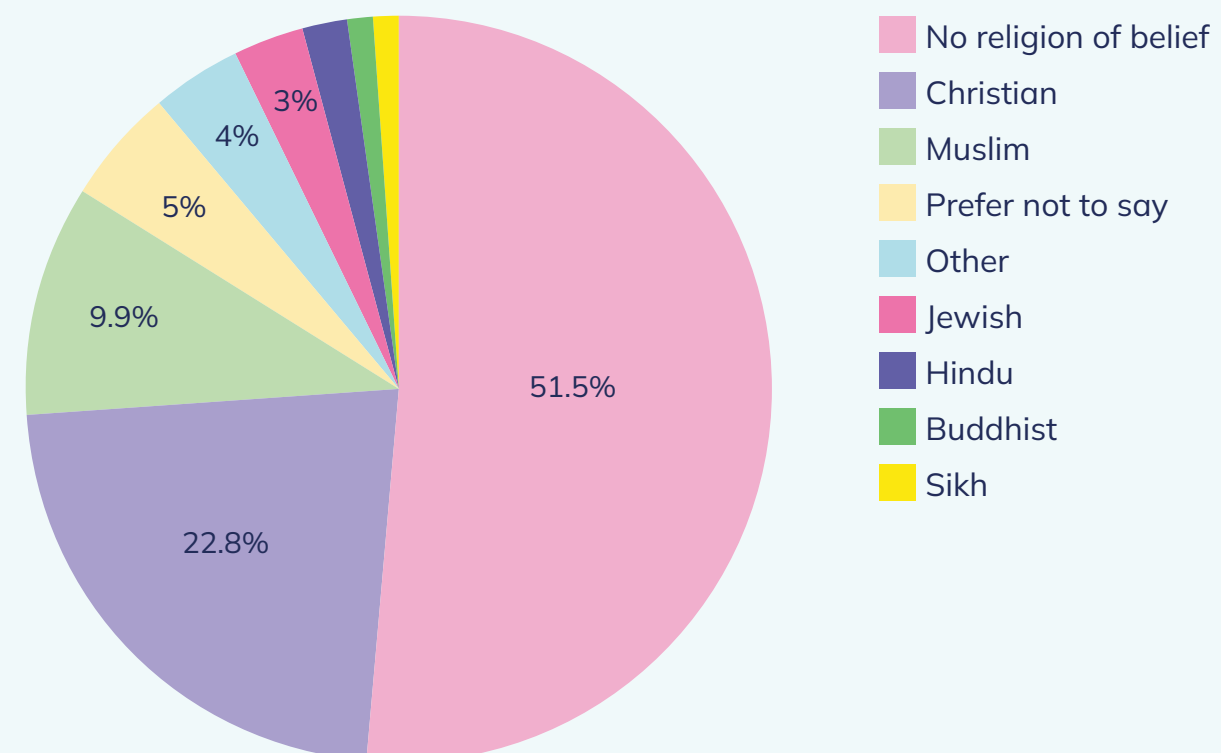
Disabled people make up **8.7% of our staff** (4.2% more than in 2021) but 23% of working age adults.⁸

85% of our employees are female, yet we still have a gender pay gap. In 2021, women earned on average 80p for every £1 earned by men.

Ethnicity representation is broadly in line with national demographics, but Black people make up just 2.2% of our most senior roles.



In the following chart you see that more than half of our staff identify as having no religion or belief compared to 37.2% of the national population.⁹ As such we recognise the need to increase understanding of the role religion and belief plays in the communities we serve to better inform our practice.





What we're doing next

This, our first EDI strategy (2022–2026), details how we plan to sustain momentum and make progress across all that we do. It's a continuation of our EDI journey, helping us to align our own values and culture with our five-year strategic vision to close the gap in mental health support for children, young people and families.

Our four objectives

The strategy has four objectives which reflect the range of work we do and the communities we serve. Each objective also has specific actions we will take over the next five years.

Our objectives will stay the same over this time but we'll review the actions we take to achieve them and share our progress every two years. We'll pivot focus if needed as the organisation and the wider context of society and EDI evolves.

1

Representation

Ambition: to be representative of the society we serve, those we partner with and the professionals we work with.

2

Inclusion and belonging

Ambition: for everyone in our organisation to feel a sense of inclusion and belonging through our services, training, resources and ways of working.

3

Continuous learning

Ambition: for our people to develop cultural humility, learning from and supporting each other to gain clarity, cultural context and a deeper understanding and appreciation of new perspectives.

4

Community wellbeing

Ambition: to embed the wellbeing of our people and the wider community of professionals that support children, young people and families as a priority.

Objective one: representation

Our ambition

To be representative of the society we serve, those we partner with and the professionals we work with.

Why it's important

When designing and delivering services, training and resources, we need to represent and amplify overlooked or underrepresented voices.

At the beginning of this journey, there were a number of groups underrepresented in our organisation. This includes Disabled people, those who identify with a religion or belief, Black representation in leadership positions and men – though this reflects the current gender representation within the charity and voluntary sectors.¹⁰

Across our services and training, we also need to improve the quality and breadth of the data we hold to better understand who we are currently underserving.

Mental health inequalities persist at the intersections of ethnicity, class and gender. As such, we will ensure an anti-racist and intersectional approach is embedded in all we do.

What actions we're taking

- ✓ We're developing in-house inclusive recruitment training for hiring managers.
- ✓ We're improving how we collect and use data and how we support the experiences of those who face additional barriers to access, such as having caring responsibilities, being care experienced, or being from lower income backgrounds.
- ✓ We're implementing equitable development opportunities for underrepresented groups.
- ✓ We're developing a recruitment strategy and employer brand that feels inclusive and relevant to all candidates.
- ✓ We're putting in place a practical step-by-step guide to help staff develop resources for internal and external audiences.

We'll monitor progress by:

- reviewing our data throughout employees' time with us, from application and interview to appointment and development opportunities
- reviewing data about who accesses our services and training
- analysing participant demographic data to spot patterns in feedback measures about our training and services
- analysing the information our staff provide through internal surveys.

Our longer term ambition:

To improve representation in the sector by:

- ✓ increasing awareness of career pathways
- ✓ operating to ensure underrepresented groups feel confident to engage with us
- ✓ improving attraction into the sector through education settings and in early-stage careers.



Objective two: inclusion and belonging

Our ambition

For everyone in our organisation to feel a sense of inclusion and belonging through our services, training, resources and ways of working.

Why it's important

Our external EDI audit by LBTC found that staff noted a lack of internal focus and embedded organisational values. This didn't support a felt sense of inclusion and belonging for everyone.

Feeling excluded at work discourages staff to stay at an organisation, reduces motivation – and on a human level, exclusion feels like physical pain.¹¹ Employees feeling included is vital – not just for the work we do, but for our people's wellbeing.

What actions we're taking

- ✓ We're introducing accountability for organisational values and behaviours.
- ✓ We're supporting and developing inclusive leadership for line managers.
- ✓ We're reviewing and enhancing our baseline standards in policy and process to mainstream inclusion.
- ✓ We're increasing opportunities for peer-to-peer support and connection, to include buddy systems, mentoring, coaching and the introduction of staff networks.
- ✓ We're developing our approach to role modelling and storytelling through a new internal communications strategy.

We'll monitor progress by:

- carrying out diversity monitoring for staff retention – tracking who leaves us, after how long and why
- monitoring probation reviews for themes of inclusion or exclusion
- monitoring engagement and feedback from our new community and belonging structures – such as networking events and peer-to-peer learning support
- monitoring themes of inclusion and belonging and demographics in our redeveloped staff survey
- monitoring and promoting outcomes from culture-enhancing objectives for employees, such as coaching, organising a staff event promoting equity, diversity, inclusion, wellbeing, mentoring or creating content for internal communications
- monitoring the number of employees engaging in our EDI networks and tracking feedback.

Our longer term ambition:

To improve awareness and understanding of our offer, ensuring that external stakeholders with close links to communities we currently underserve can feel confident to engage with our resources and services – particularly in our schools and clinical work.



Objective three: continuous learning

Our ambition

For our people to develop cultural humility, learning from and supporting each other to gain clarity, cultural context and a deeper understanding and appreciation of new perspectives.

Why it's important

Staff focus groups reported a lack of learning and development opportunities. Survey and support requests indicated managers did not feel equipped with the knowledge, skills or support needed to create a safe space for challenging conversations.

We commit to seeking knowledge from new sources and from a broad range of people with diverse experiences.

What actions we're taking

- ✓ We're developing thematic training and responding to new and emerging training and awareness needs.
- ✓ We're co-developing a programme of in-person and recorded learning with staff, external partners, young people, parents and carers.
- ✓ We're developing an EDI log with support from external 'critical friends' and diverse partnerships.
- ✓ We're committing to and learning from external best practice frameworks.
- ✓ We're identifying and adopting best practice procurement and contract management procedures.

We'll monitor progress by:

- analysing staff feedback on EDI induction training and bitesize learning
- assessing progress towards external best practice accreditations and standards around disability, race, mental health and other protected characteristics
- analysing survey feedback from those we work with, including parents and carers, young people, partner organisations and professionals
- analysing feedback from Care Quality Commission inspections and assessments
- analysing feedback from students and short course attendees.

Our longer term ambition:

To develop a critical friend network, collaborating with organisations with whom we have a shared mission or purpose to tackle systemic EDI challenges together.



Objective four: community wellbeing

Our ambition

To embed the wellbeing of our people and the wider community of professionals that support children, young people and families as a priority.

Why it's important

Organisations that prioritise wellbeing are more inclusive.¹² Likewise, being included and valued as we are, in our difference, contributes to positive wellbeing.¹³

There are currently few structures in place to build employee community within and between teams, or to support staff to share common challenges. This has been exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic's impact on the way we work. The 2021 EDI report also states that staff members' strong 'commitment to the cause' can result in a tendency to overwork.

We know that all professionals working with children, young people and families want to prioritise wellbeing support. This is especially true among those supporting groups who experience persistent inequalities. Providing this support can have knock-on effects on staff. We offer support for schools and other organisations to help prevent secondary traumatic stress and burnout among staff members.¹⁴

What actions we're taking

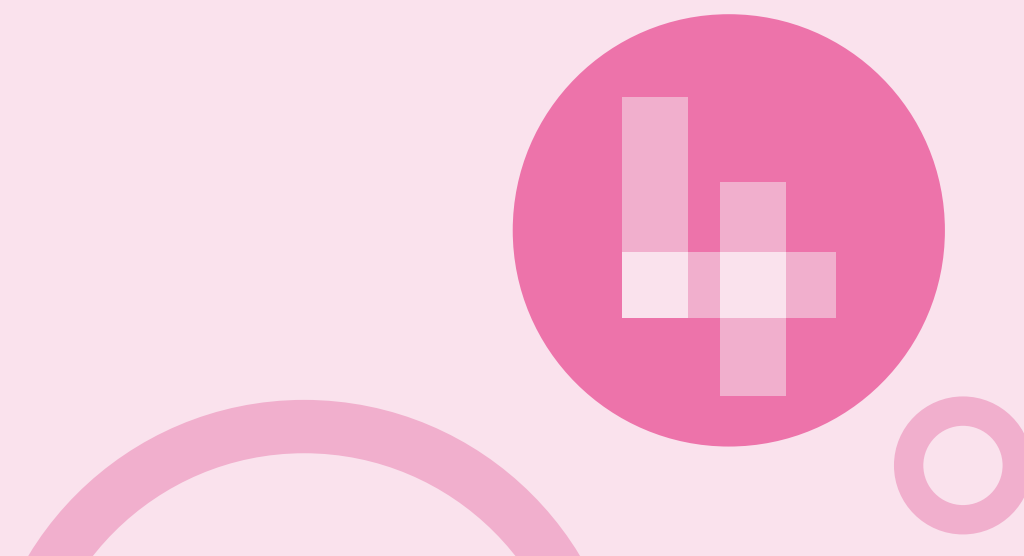
- ✓ We're establishing a holistic preventative approach to workplace wellbeing through wellbeing champions.
- ✓ We're creating a suite of tools, training and escalation processes for managers to support positive wellbeing of their teams.
- ✓ We're increasing safe spaces for sharing common challenges in all we do.
- ✓ We're increasing visibility and engagement for employee-led community initiatives.
- ✓ We're improving reporting visibility and feedback culture to drive shared ownership of work to create a positive team culture.

We'll monitor progress by:

- identifying themes in HR complaints, employee voice surveys or anonymous staff suggestions and report quarterly to the Board EDI Committee and People and Culture Subcommittee
- reporting themes raised by wellbeing champions or the Mental Health First Aid scheme to HR, the Senior Management Team and the People and Culture Subcommittee
- collecting feedback from sensitive sessions, such as our crisis response teams
- monitoring use of volunteer days and collate storytelling pieces from leadership and volunteers to share through internal communications
- tracking engagement with our wellbeing champions and themes raised in our peer support offer
- analysing staff feedback on EDI induction training and bitesize learning.

Our longer term ambition:

To break down stigma around mental health for professionals, supporting others and improve wellbeing in our organisation and in the wider sector. We aim to improve preventative support to manage secondary stress and burnout for our people and for the professionals we work with.



Accountability

All Anna Freud colleagues are responsible for driving change and delivering the key actions of this EDI strategy.

We need to build on existing structures to ensure consistent progress in our work to advance EDI. To help to mobilise this strategy, we will support accountability by introducing:

A new governance structure: this will outline clear accountability structures for the EDI strategy and its operational plan. The EDI Committee will take overarching responsibility for the strategy, chaired by the trustee lead for EDI.

Executive sponsors for each network: to facilitate further cross-organisational and systemic thinking around EDI.

EDI panel meetings: meetings will involve divisional directors, the EDI Board Champion, Head of EDI, the COO and CEO. Operational plans will be presented to the panel, indicating how the plans support the aims of the EDI strategy and outlining progress made.

EDI reporting dashboard for divisional directors: this will provide accountability for monitoring, recommending and implementing actions around recruitment, development and staff retention. Reporting will review divisional demographic data and employee sentiment from our staff survey.

How we're taking responsibility

Every employee has responsibilities to their colleagues – to treat each other with humility and respect, and challenge exclusionary behaviour if it occurs. This collective responsibility forms the basis for our broader strategy and is supported by a structure of dedicated roles and responsibilities.

▶ **Our Board of Trustees** including our Board Champion for EDI ensure EDI issues are on the agenda at the highest levels of the charity.

▶ **Our Head of EDI** is an expert on all issues around EDI in our role as an employer and our work as an organisation.

▶ **Our EDI Acceleration Group** provides oversight of internal work to make sure we're achieving our goals.

▶ **Our Parent and Young Champions** and **staff diversity networks** facilitate collective engagement with EDI, amplify diverse voices and provide a critical lens to our work.

▶ **Our Executive Team** provide leadership and organisational oversight for EDI.

▶ **The Senior Management Team and line managers** set expectations for those they work with and help to build an inclusive team culture.



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Anna Freud
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