

Item: 12

Policy and Resources Committee: 26 November 2024.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Priorities Progress Report.

Report by Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions.

1. Overview

- 1.1. The Council's Equality Outcomes Plan 2023 -2027, which was recommended for approval by this Committee on 19 September 2023 insofar as it related to the Council, sets out priority areas to address inequalities identified from a national and local context, covering issues relating to employment, educational attainment, community empowerment and accessibility in licensing processes and transport.
- 1.2. Delivery Plans have been developed to detail actions required to support the achievement of the Equality Outcomes over the four-year duration of the plan.
- 1.3. This report provides the first update on progress of the Equality Outcomes and their related actions.
- 1.4. The report also sets out how Orkney Islands Council fulfils its mainstreaming duty and provides details relating to the gender pay gap and occupational segregation, ethnicity pay gap and disability pay gap as at 31 March 2024.
- 1.5. Annex 1 of the report also provides a summary of employee information to comply with the duty to gather and use employee information as at 31 December 2023 as required by the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
 - i. Approve for publishing the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Priorities Progress Report 2023/2024, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, insofar as it applies to the Council.

For Further Information please contact:

Emma Chattington, Service Manager (Organisational Development), extension 2155, email emma.chattington@orkney.gov.uk

Implications of Report

1. **Financial:** There are no financial implications for the Council arising directly from this report.
2. **Legal:** There are no legal implications for the Council arising directly from this progress report.
3. **Corporate Governance:** Not applicable.
4. **Human Resources:** There are no human resources implications for the Council arising directly from this report.
5. **Equalities:** An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for performance reporting.
6. **Island Communities Impact:** An Island Communities Impact Assessment is not required for performance reporting.
7. **Links to Council Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to the improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:
 - ☐ Growing our Economy.
 - ☒ Strengthening our Communities.
 - ☐ Developing our infrastructure.
 - ☒ Transforming our Council.
8. **Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
 - ☐ Cost of Living.
 - ☐ Sustainable Development.
 - ☒ Local Equality.
9. **Environmental and Climate Risk:** There are no environmental or climate risks associated with this progress report.
10. **Risk:** There are no risk implications for the Council contained in this report.
11. **Procurement:** Not applicable.
12. **Health and Safety:** There are no health and safety implications for the Council contained in this report.
13. **Property and Assets:** Not applicable.
14. **Information Technology:** Not applicable.
15. **Cost of Living:** Not applicable.

List of Background Papers

[Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report 2023 - 2027](#)

Appendix

Appendix 1: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Priorities Progress Report 2023/2024.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Priorities Progress Report 2023/2024

Orkney Islands Council

Orkney Islands Council Education Authority

Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board

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Orkney Islands Council Equality Statement

We are committed to fulfilling the three key elements of the general equality duty as outlined in the Equality Act 2010:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This means removing barriers, meeting different needs and encouraging participation.
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, improving integration, building understanding, and reducing bullying and harassment.

The protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race, this includes ethnicity, colour, and national origin
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or civil partnership

Everyone has protected characteristics, but it is the treatment individuals and groups experience, the level of autonomy they have, and the positive or negative outcome for them, that are its focus. As a Council we will seek to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
- Be transparent, accessible and accountable.

Mainstreaming Equality

Mainstreaming is an approach to delivering equality within an organisation and it contributes to continuous improvement, better performance and better value. It is primarily a long-term strategy aimed at ensuring that equality principles and practices are integrated into every aspect of an organisation from the outset. The focus should not only be internal (mainstreaming equality principles into procedures and systems) but also external (mainstreaming equality principles into policies and customer service delivery). Mainstreaming provides a framework that facilitates and complements equalities legislation and other equality measures.

This simply means integrating equality into our day-to-day work. We take equality and fairness into account in the way we go about our business when acting as an employer, when planning and providing services and when making decisions.

Mainstreaming ensures that equality becomes part of our culture. This benefits both employees and service users who know that they will be treated fairly and contributes to continuous improvement and better performance.

We are committed to promoting equality, which means recognising that everyone has different needs and taking action to ensure that we are all able to participate in society. Our aim is that Orkney is a community where we all have the opportunity to fulfil our potential.

Orkney Islands Council is the public body responsible for all local government services in Orkney. We have an impact on many aspects of everyday life and our activities touch the lives of everyone living in our island community, from schools to the care of older people. Our councillors meet regularly to make decisions about local services and about various aspects of life. These decisions are then implemented by our workforce. With equality at the heart of everything we do, we never forget that we are here to serve the public and have a big role to play in improving the quality of life enjoyed by people throughout the islands.

Leadership

Our Elected Members have responsibility for promoting equality and diversity within the Council and externally. They engage and listen to the views of our local communities through a range of methods enabling them to take a more collaborative approach to addressing inequalities within Orkney.

Policies and practices

Policies and practices internal to our organisation should not be discriminatory. Equality, diversity and inclusion issues are fully considered when developing new policies and processes and when they are reviewed periodically.

Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR and OD) delivers a programme of workshops and training events for staff to ensure that our human resources policies and procedures are understood. This includes training on Recruitment and Selection, Grievance, Managing Sickness Absence, Dignity at Work and Learning and Development policies. Mental Health and Wellbeing remain a priority for the Council and HR and OD have launched a new Employee Assistance Programme this year. More details can be found under the Human Resources and Organisational Development section.

Assessing impact

The Council has systematic arrangements in place to ensure equalities issues are part of decision-making processes. The Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we consider the impact that various policies, strategies, activities and approaches have on different groups, both within our organisation and for the wider public. Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) aim to help ensure our services are fair. They provide an opportunity to stop or revise a policy or function which is potentially unfair or unlawful. They identify mitigating actions wherever possible to minimise any adverse impacts. They also identify opportunities for positive impacts such as advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. We use internal and external data to provide evidence for the assessments and consult directly with equalities groups as required. Impact assessments are organic documents and are developed and added to as a project or plan progresses.

The impact assessment takes an integrated approach to include assessment of impacts relating to socio-economic disadvantage as required by the Fairer Scotland Duty along with care-experienced people. We will continue to utilise feedback and best practice when reviewing the impact assessment process and will also consider best practice approaches to incorporating Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments.

The Internal Audit team have recently undertaken a review of the Equality Impact Assessment process and determined that the framework of governance, risk management and control is comprehensive and effective. The review identified a number of areas of good practice as well as a number of recommendations for further development. These developments include making additional training available on our iLearn platform, adding the EqIA training to the mandatory training programme for key officers, adjusting the committee report template and the complaints process monitoring. An action plan has been developed to deliver these improvements and the internal audit report is available [here](#).

Raising and maintaining awareness

It is important in mainstreaming equality that the Council builds and maintains awareness of our duties as an employer and service provider.

As part of induction to Orkney Islands Council, all new employees are required to complete an e-learning course which aims to raise awareness about the importance of equality and diversity. The course covers equality legislation and is designed to encourage employees to think about and challenge their own perceptions. Equality and diversity awareness is also one of the core mandatory courses and is completed periodically by all employees. Equality and diversity awareness forms part of the induction programme for Elected Members, as well as ongoing briefings relating to the general equality duty, updates on changes to equality legislation and other equality related topics.

Increasing awareness of the value of diversity can help further mainstream equality within the Council. Regular organisation-wide communication is utilised to raise awareness of

equality, diversity and inclusion related topics throughout the year including, Pride month, International Women's Day, Menopause Awareness day and Carers Week.

Human Resources and Organisational Development

As part of our commitment to employee wellbeing, the Council has recently launched an OIC Wellbeing Hub which provides access to our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and a range of benefits and discounts. The EAP gives colleagues access to free, confidential and independent support to help with personal, work and family-related issues and includes:

- 24/7 telephone counselling advice and information service.
- Dedicated support and information service for managers.
- Online, mobile enabled EAP and wellbeing resources.

The OIC Wellbeing Hub offers support across a range of topics including work-life balance, health and wellbeing, childcare and other caring responsibilities, financial advice and disability and illness. It provides access to dedicated Menopause Matters support services and professionally qualified counsellors.

A variety of communication methods were utilised to launch the OIC Wellbeing Hub including organisation-wide emails, manager specific communications, poster campaign and EAP business cards provided to all employees to help ensure everyone has access to these services. Next steps include a roadshow in November 2024 to showcase some of the benefits available to colleagues as well as introducing the new Cycle to Work scheme and Smart Pay options to further support colleague financial wellbeing.

As part of the recruitment and selection review, work is underway to improve the experience of candidates, in particular those facing barriers to employment. The new [Join our Team](#) website was launched at the recent Careers Fair hosted by the Developing the Young Workforce team. The site aims to simplify the information available to candidates, adopting Plain English and aims to provide inclusive support to help prospective candidates navigate the recruitment process. Work on this initiative is ongoing.

Housing

The resettlement scheme project team established an Orkney-Ukraine Language Café to help Ukrainians improve their English skills. The first meeting took place in May 2023, and sessions have been held weekly since then.

Attendance is generally good, although it can vary due to work and personal commitments. Out of the 20 Ukrainian adults living in Orkney, more than 50% regularly attend the language Café, with 18 Ukrainians benefiting from the Language Café since it started. The project team appreciate the ongoing support of the volunteers running the Café on a weekly basis.



Inclusive services

Orkney and Shetland Libraries have engaged in a joint project to boost services for the visually impaired.

'Make a Noise in the North' highlights what libraries and their partners can offer people with sight problems. This project is supported by the Public Library Improvement Fund via the Scottish Library and Information Council.

The libraries have already developed a good range of services such as large print, audiobooks and support with technology. This project will provide extra equipment including lighted magnifiers and text-to-voice pens, and popular materials such as board games and jigsaws.

It will also allow some of the library team members to visit each other's libraries later this year to gain experience of another service, something isles colleagues rarely do because of travel costs. The Libraries will promote services and events through their busy social media channels.

The project was launched during 'Hi Vis' fortnight in June 2024, with Orkney Library colleagues experiencing some visual impairments by being blind-folded and challenging any friendly on-comers to a tactile game of Connect 4, using an RNIB approved version of the game. Sessions took place in Orkney Library and Archive and Stromness Warehouse Buildings throughout June along with a display of accessible equipment and electronic services and information from Orkney Talking Newspaper, Access Orkney, and the RNIB.

Vikki Kerr, Orkney's Team Manager (Libraries and Archives) said: 'This joint project is a fantastic opportunity for both library services to further improve access to the world of books and reading opportunities for our visually impaired and dyslexic communities.

'By highlighting the brilliant services and resources available, our libraries can be seen as places where all are welcome, and able to enjoy the social aspects of visiting the library too.'

The original news story can be found [here](#).

Education

Mainstreaming equalities is integral to the delivery of education services and are embedded through supporting strategies, plans and activities including Orkney Children's Services Plan, Good Parenting Plan, Community Learning and Development Partners Plan, Local Employability Plan and within work relating to the Scottish Attainment Challenge.

Work continues with the KGS Anti-Racism Group with plans to publish challenging racism vocabulary conversation cards focused on conversations about race. The cards are designed to explain what racism is, how it happens, why it should never be acceptable and what people can do to eradicate it.

Plans are to distribute the cards in Orkney, including libraries and those business who ally with the group to help make a difference.

Transport and travel

We are committed to continuing the programme to improve accessibility to all transport services, taking advantage of contract, vehicle, infrastructure and vessel replacement and renewal opportunities where possible.

The number of people using public buses in Orkney continues to grow with figures increasing by 18% in May 2024 in comparison to May 2023.

Bus passenger figures are not just positive on Mainland Orkney but there has also been growth in our island public bus services operated in Westray, Sanday and Hoy.

Passenger growth equates to additional ticket sales income on public bus services subsidised by the Council which are kept by the Council and invested back into the Sustainable and Green Transport Fund. This fund has helped to establish community transport in a number of island communities as well as improvements and enhancements to existing bus services.



Sport and Leisure

Organised by our Sports and Leisure team, along with the support of local sporting clubs, Scottish Disability Sport, Picky Centre team members and sports leaders from Stromness Academy, we hosted our third annual Parasport festival for children with physical disabilities, vision impairments, hearing loss, or Down syndrome. The festival offers a variety of sports and activities tailored to individual needs and includes opportunities to try out rugby, athletics, climbing, kayaking and swimming.

This year, sports leaders from Stromness Academy played a key role in planning the event as part of the Events and Inclusivity elements of their Level 6 Sports Leaders award, providing a great opportunity to support the integration of equality, diversity and inclusion into sports.

Feedback was really positive and folk were pleased to see teachers thinking about how to support young people with additional support needs to join sports clubs.

Licensing

Although the Licensing Board has a separate legal status from Orkney Islands Council it is resourced entirely by the Council.

The close connection between the Board and the Council enables the Board to benefit directly from the Council's awareness building, training and actions relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. This means taking into account the way in which the Board achieve their day-to-day business and integrating equalities into everything they do such as regularly equality impact assessing licensing related policies.

British Sign Language Local Plan 2024 - 2030

As required by the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015, Orkney Islands Council launched our BSL Plan earlier this year and set out actions which will improve the way BSL users find out about our services and have access to them. A BSL version of the plan is available [here](#). We have strong links with NHS Orkney and UHI Orkney and whilst we will publish separate plans, we will continue to take a partnership approach in the delivery of the outcomes of these plans.

A BSL Progress Group was set up and met regularly to review actions and feedback and work has been developed to integrate the actions relating to the BSL Local Plan into the wider Equalities mainstreaming and outcomes priorities.

Key actions delivered through the Council's first BSL Local Plan included:

- BSL pendrive training resource provided to all schools.
- BSL and hearing support resources regularly provided to Nurseries.
- Delivery of short online BSL courses at Stromness Academy and Kirkwall Grammar School.
- Let's Sign established as the resource to be used in Orkney Schools and resources regularly updated and shared.
- Class signing projects with signed stories and signed songs.
- S3 Wider Achievement BSL class delivered at Kirkwall Grammar School.
- 6 people including one student at KGS have completed the Level One BSL course.

Jack was in S2 at Kirkwall Grammar School and there had been no Teacher of the Deaf for almost two years. The Hearing Support and Support Teacher spent sessions at school with Jack, getting to know him and learning about how his use of hearing aids and a radio aid in the school setting helped him to access learning. Jack found some aspects of school challenging and he was supported in class by the Hearing Support and Support Teacher, with assignments and with assessments.

Jack was always happy to speak about his deafness and visited both mainland and isles schools, delivering deaf awareness and some signing. Young people and staff had many questions for Jack; his responses were very honest and gave a real picture of how deafness impacts upon daily life.

Towards the end of S3, Jack began an extensive programme of work experience, travelling on the bus independently and building up his skills in communication, gaining experience in the world of work. Jack became a valued member of staff teams and contributed to the workplace in a very positive way. Jack made an impression during these placements: at The Burray Shop, Cats Protection in Stromness, the Balfour Hospital and CLD.

Jack progressed to college after S6. By this time, he had gained SQA qualifications and spent four years at college. He delivered deaf awareness to peers and staff at college. Jack left college with several qualifications.

Equality Outcomes 2023 – 2027 progress update

We are committed to pursuing objectives that make real improvements for people by reducing inequalities and increasing inclusion, whilst fostering good relations and building connections between communities.

These equality outcomes set last year are designed to focus on the areas that we consider most important, and that we have the scope to realistically influence in the next four years as an employer, service provider, and as a partner with communities and other organisations within Orkney.

Delivery plans have been developed for each outcome and progress has been reported below on the first year of related actions.

Outcome	Progress
The Council will aim to attract more diverse talent by reviewing policies and practices to ensure that there are no barriers to entering and sustaining employment for under-represented groups.	<p>Attract candidates from a wider range of backgrounds</p> <p>To support the delivery of some of the actions in this area a working group has been brought together to develop the way in which Orkney Islands Council promotes employment opportunities with prospective candidates.</p> <p>The new Join our Team website has been launched to coincide with the recent Careers Fair and work will continue to further develop content for this.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that the recruitment landscape is changing internally with increasing budget pressures which may impact on how some vacancies are managed. This has a potential to impact this work in the short term.</p> <p>Review supported recruitment and employment process.</p> <p>Work is underway between the HR and OD team and the Community Learning, Development and Employability team to further develop opportunities for routes into supported employment for some under-represented groups. You can see an example of this here:</p> <p>Jack's employment journey</p> <p>This work will be integrated into the review of the recruitment and selection policy.</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>Implement workplace adjustment guidance.</p> <p>A Workplace Adjustments guide has been drafted as part of our Disability Confident action plan and is due for review and feedback before being launched.</p> <p>Increase number of employees declaring diversity data.</p> <p>Communications plan launched to provide regular prompts to colleagues to update diversity data via MyView. Monitoring has evidenced an increase in declaration rates and additional areas of action have been identified to specifically target new starts.</p>
<p>The Council will aim to reduce the gender pay gap.</p>	<p>Launch of Equally Safe at Work action plan for Bronze award accreditation.</p> <p>Orkney Islands Council has signed up to the Bronze accreditation for the Equally Safe at Work programme with this 18 month journey starting in October 2024. Initial actions include an employee survey, focus groups and a working group to oversee the action plan and to better help us understand the barriers to progression in the workplace and to identify further actions to help continue to reduce the gender pay gap. More details on the Equally Safe at Work accreditation can be found here.</p>
<p>People have increased confidence and opportunities to express their views and influence decision making and service design.</p>	<p>Review and improve our approach to consultation and engagement, including a focus on engaging with young people and lesser heard voices.</p> <p>Orkney Matters 2, which is a series of engagement events including engaging young people and lesser heard voices is underway and a findings report is due to be completed in 2024/2025.</p> <p>Improve the accessibility of Orkney Islands Council website.</p> <p>The new communications and engagement strategy is at an advanced state and is due to be presented at committee this year. The strategy includes website improvements</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>delivered through the 'making the most of our digital platforms' as a strategic priority.</p> <p>Promote resources that provide support for BSL users and inclusive communication to improve participation in democratic life.</p> <p>Elected Office Fund was promoted in the most recent election to support people with disabilities wishing to stand for election.</p> <p>The BSL YouTube playlist from the Electoral Commission was embedded on both the main elections page and general election page of the Council website, along with information signposting support for Trans and Non-binary people with the new Voter ID requirement.</p>
<p>People in Orkney have improved accessibility to all transport services.</p>	<p>Extend Under 22 Concessionary Scheme to Inter Island Ferry and Air Service (residents).</p> <p>Proposal to include Under 22 Concessionary Scheme for Inter-Island Ferries and Air services is currently being reviewed by Transport Scotland.</p> <p>Implementation of Thistle Assistance card and App.</p> <p>The Transport team and Organisational Development team are working in partnership to raise awareness of the Thistle Assistance card and App with transport providers. Cards will be distributed early November 2024 along with a press release.</p> <p>Audio at stops to be rolled out across all public bus services on mainland Orkney.</p> <p>The Transport team has worked with Stagecoach to implement the at stop audio for public bus routes across mainland Orkney. Some minor amendments still to be made to this service.</p>
<p>Pupils have a greater sense of belonging and safety in schools.</p>	<p>Increased awareness in schools of LGBTQ+-based bullying and harassment.</p> <p>A revised Anti-bullying policy for our Children and Young People was launched earlier in 2024. This revised policy includes updated</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>guidance to schools on recording incidents of bullying along with specific references to prejudice-based bullying. Feedback sought from young people to inform the update of this policy suggested that education settings should ensure that any programmes and learning have a clear focus on ensuring a greater understanding of equality issues for children and young people and their parents and carers. This would especially include greater awareness of issues relating to LGBTQ+ mental health and hidden disabilities.</p> <p>Continued implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)</p> <p>Orphir Community School has recently been awarded a Silver accreditation as a UNICEF Rights Respecting School. The School set up a steering group that met regularly to plan and deliver school activities with displays supporting all pupils in learning about the rights of a child. Teachers worked through the rights and used rights tiles to link lessons and routines the school already had to the rights. Staff and the Primary 6 steering group delivered assemblies and whole school activities to promote the rights of a child.</p> <p>Other actions include establishing a Rights Respecting School Working Group and to embed the Northern Alliance 'Include: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Guidance for Educational Settings.</p>
<p>Young people facing barriers are supported and leave school with sustained positive destinations.</p>	<p>Increasing the number of pupils entering positive destinations.</p> <p>Work continues to implement the Raising Attainment Strategy including the collection and analysis of data, and monitoring of the Pupil Equity Fund spending and impact.</p> <p>Actions to set new three year core stretch aims following updated guidance from Scottish Government, develop the focus on Free (School) Meals Entitlement and Care Experienced Children and Young People.</p>

Outcome	Progress
<p>People in Orkney will have improved choice and accessibility to licensing application processes.</p>	<p>Provide increased choice for people accessing licensing applications.</p> <p>The Licensing team is currently working in partnership with the Organisational Development team to develop editable PDF forms to increase the availability of submitting these online.</p>

Equal Pay

Orkney Islands Council is required to publish information on the percentage difference among our employees between men's average hourly pay (excluding overtime) and our women's average hourly pay (excluding overtime). This is known as the gender pay gap.

The gender pay gap figures are calculated using the average (mean) as well as the median average which gives a greater indicator of any gender inequalities in pay.

The figures have been calculated based on permanent employees and relief workers have not been included. For the purposes of equal pay calculations, the data relating to sex has been taken from the payroll records of employees. This is a separate record to that of the general diversity data held for each employee which relies on self-declaration.

There are some service areas that are traditionally more male-dominated, such as Marine Services and Towage staff, which are not part of most councils' remit in Scotland. These services are competing for some staff within private industry in the islands such as the oil and renewable energy sectors and therefore the level of pay reflects this.

We are committed to ensuring the process to determine pay and conditions of employment for all our employees should be free from bias and should not discriminate.

Reducing pay gaps at Orkney Islands Council is a long-term goal and we acknowledge that it is affected by societal and educational factors and we employ a complex and diverse workforce across a range of services and professional areas.

The following data are the most recent snapshot figures as at 31 March 2024 relating to pay gaps. These figures are used to inform ongoing actions within the plan.

Gender Pay Gap

Category	2023/2024	2022/2023	2021/2022
Total number of employees in top 5% of earners	96	94	92
Total number of women employees in top 5%	33	36	28
Percentage of women employees in top 5%	34.4%	38.3%	30.4%

The Gender Pay Gap for 2022/2023 was reported at 6.6%. The reduction in the gender pay gap figures for this year, as seen below, are as a result of a small increase in the number of female employees being employed in Head Teacher positions. This increase has not been reflected in the Top 5% figures above as this excludes Teaching employees. If Teachers were included in the Top 5% calculation, then female representation rises to 51.8%.

Sex	Post type	Total %	Average (Mean) Hourly Rate	Median Hourly Rate
Female	All	70.3%	17.52	14.13
	Full-time	30.5%	21.25	14.13
	Part-time	70.3%	15.88	14.13
Male	All	29.7%	18.35	14.13
	Full-time	65%	20.20	14.13
	Part-time	35%	14.92	14.13
Gender Pay Gap %			4.55	

Women in leadership

For the first time in the history of UHI Orkney, there's an all-female leadership team at the helm. New Principal, Professor Seonaidh McDonald and Deputy Principal, Pauline Black, took up their roles in April this year joining Claire Kemp, an established Deputy Principal at the facility since 2021.

The facility is an academic partner within the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), offering an extensive array of educational opportunities tailored to individuals at every stage of their learning journey. It works closely with the schools in Orkney to support the Curriculum for Excellence, providing a range of Skills for Work courses that allow young people to explore and work towards vocational qualifications.

The team has a strong focus on employee wellbeing and have made an early start building key relationships across the organisation.

James Wylie, Corporate Director of Education, Leisure and Housing at Orkney Islands Council said: 'An exciting new period lies ahead and we look forward to working together with Seonaidh, Pauline, Claire and the rest of the team to continue to go from strength to strength and further build and shape a college suited to the sustainability of Orkney, playing a major role in the Orkney Offer for our learners and continuing to lead very high calibre research.'

You can read the full news article [here](#).

Ethnicity Pay Gap

Our pay gap information for black and minority ethnic employee groups is based on a calculation for minority ethnic combined employees in comparison to white combined employees and does not include data for employees not stating their ethnicity.

No pay gap has been identified based on ethnicity however we acknowledge that we report low figures for ethnic diversity within our workforce. Work continues to address the gaps in employee diversity data.

Disability Pay Gap

Identified pay gaps are based on a calculation for disabled employee groups in comparison against employees with no disability. These calculations do not include the data for employees not providing information in this area, however this information is provided in the table below for transparency in terms of declaration rates.

Work continues to address the gaps in employee diversity data.

Disability	Post Type	Total %	Average (Mean) Hourly Rate	Median Hourly Rate
Yes Disability	All	4.8%	17.68	14.13
	Full-time	40.5%	21.88	19.66
	Part-time	59.5%	14.83	13.30
No Disability	All	65.7%	17.85	14.13
	Full-time	39.9%	20.99	17.83
	Part-time	60.1%	15.77	13.80
Prefer not to say	All	2.6%	17.45	15.67
	Full-time	43.1%	19.29	17.58
	Part-time	60.3%	16.24	13.69
No data	All	26.9%	17.61	14.13
	Full-time	43.1%	20.17	17.36
	Part-time	56.9%	15.67	13.30
Disability Pay Gap (%)			0.91	

Occupational Segregation

Occupational segregation is the concentration in particular grades and occupations of certain groups of employees.

Horizontal segregation is when women and men are concentrated into different types of work.

Vertical segregation is when women and men are concentrated into different levels of work

For example, women tend to be found in lower paid jobs such as in care, cleaning or admin roles and these jobs are also lower paid. It is one of the major causes of the gender pay gap.

From the figures below there is evidence of vertical segregation based on gender. There are high concentrations of women within the lower grade posts. These grades contain the traditionally female dominated roles such as Social Care Assistants, Care at Home, Cleaning and Administrative colleagues. Unlike some councils, OIC continues to directly employ people in lower-paid roles such as cleaning, which has an impact on gender pay gap figures particularly when making comparisons with benchmark data.

Figures show that more women are in lower graded posts across the Council and more men are holding higher grade posts. This changing point is around grade K and is influenced by the significant horizontal and vertical segregation within the Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure directorate.

The figures also show there are more women than men in part-time roles, and it is noted that part-time work is often lower paid with fewer opportunities for progression. This means the gender pay gap is more apparent when comparing women's average hourly part-time wage versus men's average hourly full-time wage.

Work will be undertaken to analyse this further and be integrated into the Equally Safe at Work accreditation action plan. This will include assessing the data by grade to identify where part-time posts are concentrated and opportunities for part-time staff to progress into other roles, for example through flexible working and better training opportunities.

The following Occupational Segregation report is reported by directorate:

- ELH – Education, Leisure and Housing.
- ESR – Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.
- NSI – Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
- OHAC – Orkney Health and Care.
- SPBS – Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions.

Occupational Segregation by Service and Gender 31/03/2024

[illegible]

	ELH		ESR		NSI		OHAC		SPBS		All Services	
Grade	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Teachers	78.69%	21.31%									78.69%	21.31%
(Depute) Head Teachers	70.83%	29.17%									70.83%	29.17%
Others	100%		2.04%	97.96%							5.88%	94.12%

Annex 1 - Equalities monitoring data

Employee diversity and monitoring

The Council undertakes its equality duty to monitor and report on specific information about employees to help identify any trends and to address any identified inequalities. We collect, publish and monitor information about the diversity of our employees to help us check that we are supporting a culture of diversity and inclusion and identify areas for improvement. Whilst employees are asked to keep their diversity information up to date, the Council recognises that this is voluntary and not everyone chooses to disclose all information. Increasing disclosure rates on the diversity of our workforce is ongoing work.

When colleagues across Orkney Islands Council feel safe, supported and confident in being themselves at work, we gain the benefit of diversity across our organisation. Diversity of thought, expression and belief impacts how we deliver our services and increases the resilience of our organisation, increasing our ability to respond to the diverse needs of our community.

Employees are asked to update their own personal information held on the electronic HR system MyView. This includes the ability to update details relating to the protected characteristics which can be updated at any time through the self-service system.

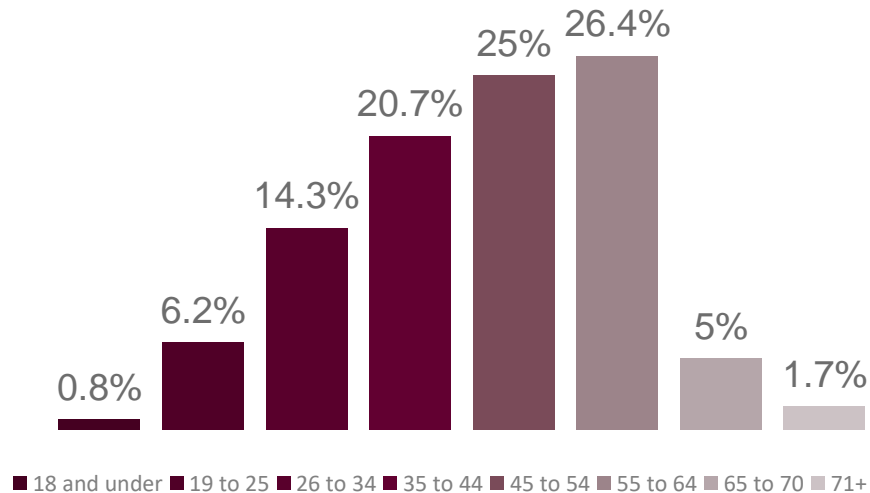
As highlighted in last year's report, work was undertaken to ensure our reporting categories matched the revisions of the Census 2022 to enable more effective benchmarking. These changes prevented us from transferring previously provided data in some of the categories but have also enabled us to include additional information such as caring responsibilities and long-term health conditions.

Actions have been taken over the past year to increase the disclosure rates of employee diversity data. Planned communications have included organisation-wide emails and poster campaigns. This approach has seen some positive results with an additional 120 people updating their diversity details following organisation-wide communications in August. A further 190 employees updated their details after a follow-up email was sent to People Managers asking them to remind their team members to update their details. An ongoing communication plan is in place to further increase declaration rates.

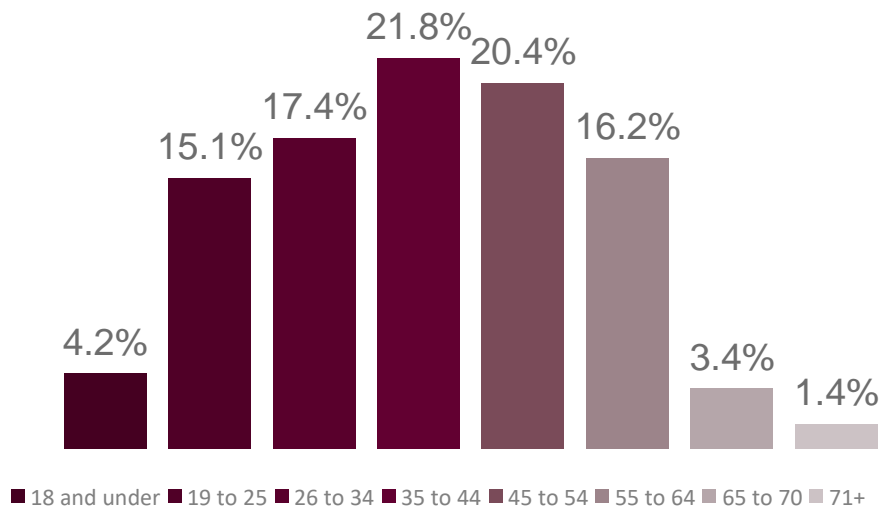
This reporting period highlights the significantly low numbers of new starters completing their diversity details on MyView. The online Induction programme and accompanying Manager toolkit highlights the requirement to complete the diversity data section on MyView for all new employees and further opportunities have been identified to reinforce this message including a short video on how to enter diversity details on MyView to be added to the online induction course and a reminder to update diversity data and emergency contact details as part of the invitation to the Welcome to the Council event. Work is also underway with HR colleagues to identify further opportunities to increase the messaging around this important initiative.

About our workforce

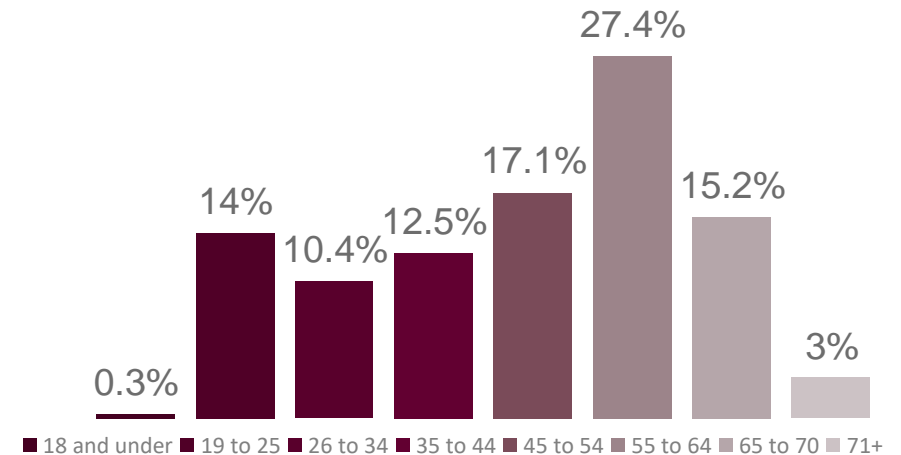
Age - all employees



Age - new starts



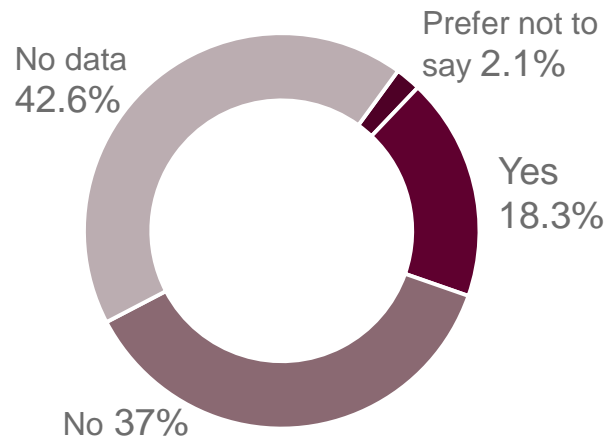
Age - leavers



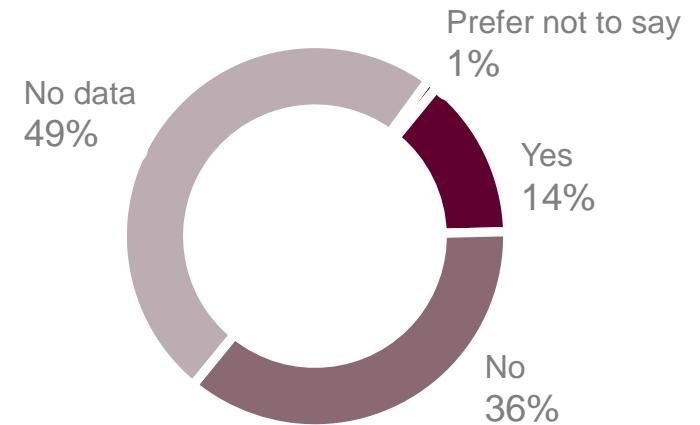
The age profile of the workforce hasn't changed significantly from previous reporting figures with the largest proportion of our employees between the ages of 35 and 64. Figures show a higher proportion of younger employees joining the organisation (15.1%) and slightly higher proportion of new starts between the ages of 25 and 44.

Performance management statistics show of the employees involved in either a grievance, disciplinary or dignity at work process, the majority are between the ages of 45 and 64. These figures are reflective of the age profile of our employees and do not significantly differ from previous years' figures.

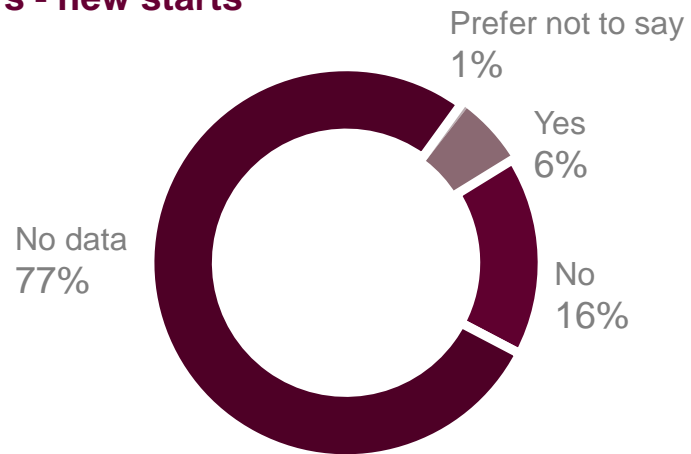
Carers - all employees



Carers - leavers



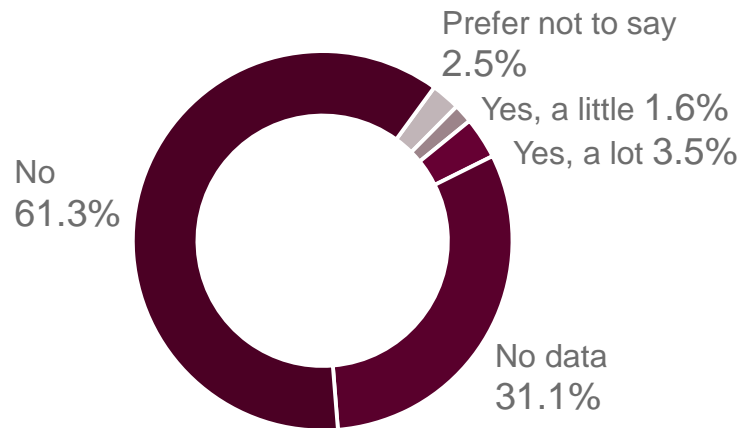
Carers - new starts



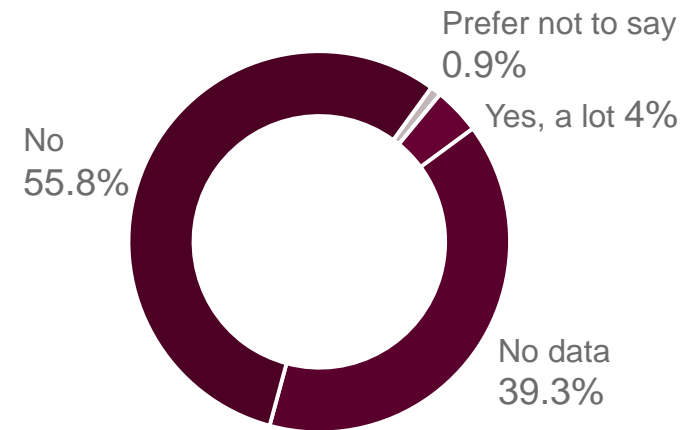
There has been a very slight decrease (1%) in the number of employees stating that they have caring responsibilities since our last report.

Figures for new starts remain consistent from last years' figures and we have seen a slight increase (around 3%) of leavers who have caring responsibilities.

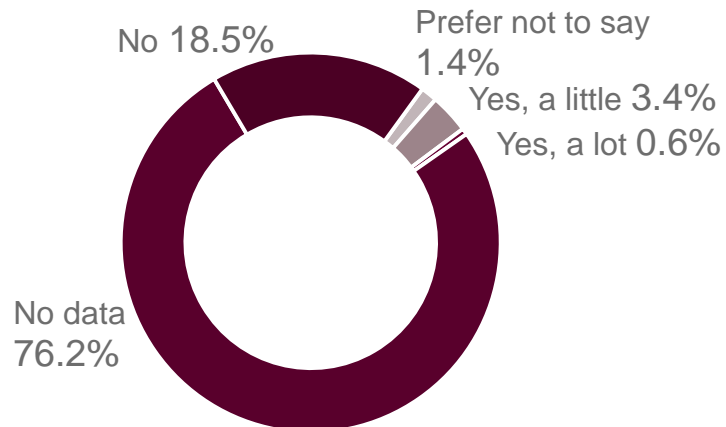
Disability - all employees



Disability - leavers



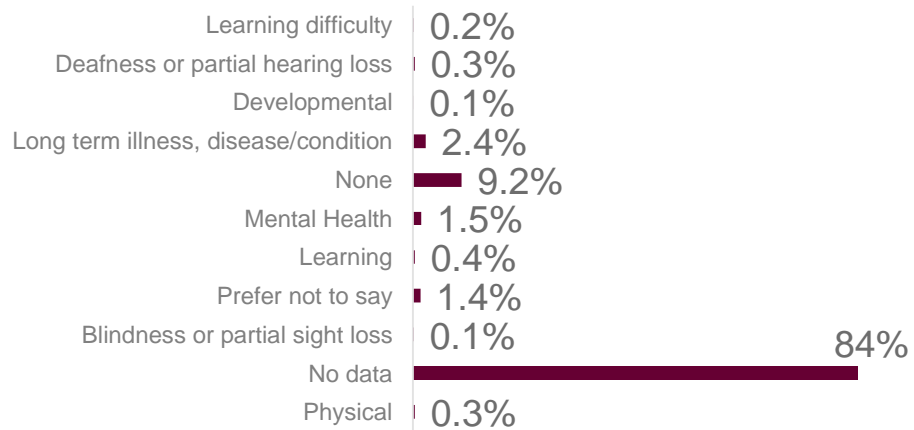
Disability - new starts



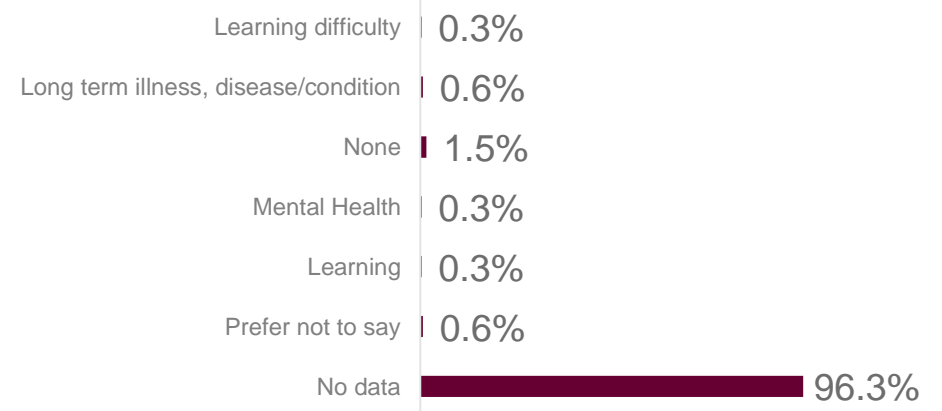
Disability figures have largely remained the same since the previous reporting period for all employees.

New start declaration rates have dipped by around 12% from previous reporting and the New Employee Induction process and Manager toolkit is currently being reviewed to strengthen the opportunities for signposting the requirement to complete emergency contact details and diversity data as part of the onboarding process. This will include links with the HR recruitment process and Welcome to the Council event.

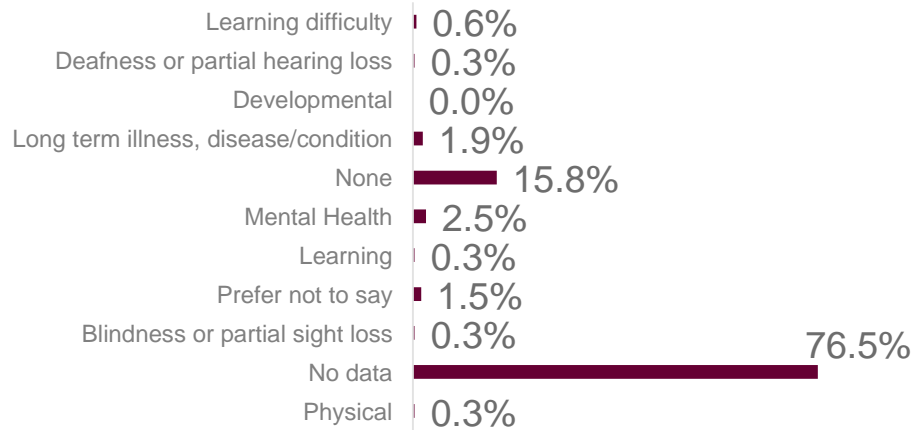
Health condition - all employees



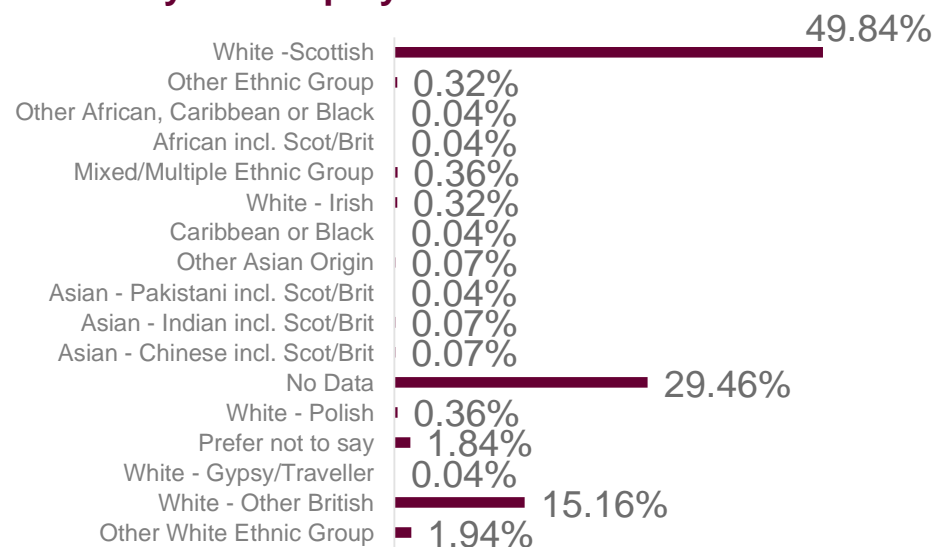
Health condition - leavers



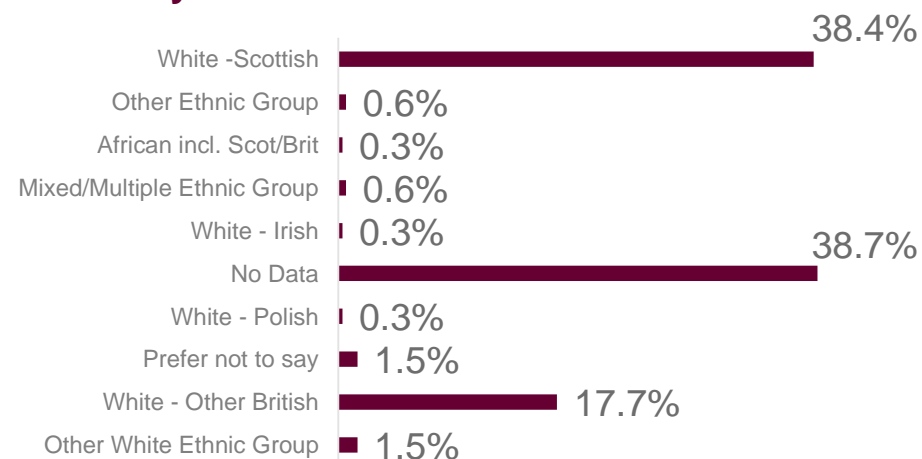
Health condition - new starts



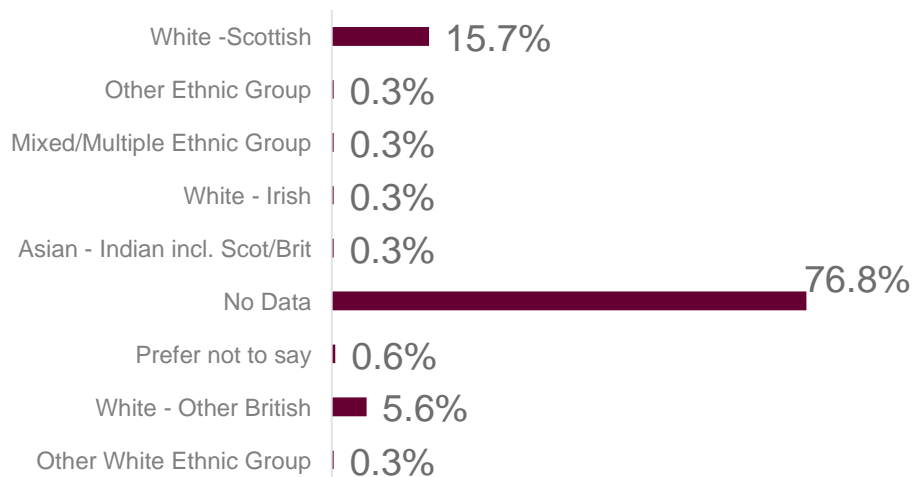
Ethnicity - all employees



Ethnicity - leavers



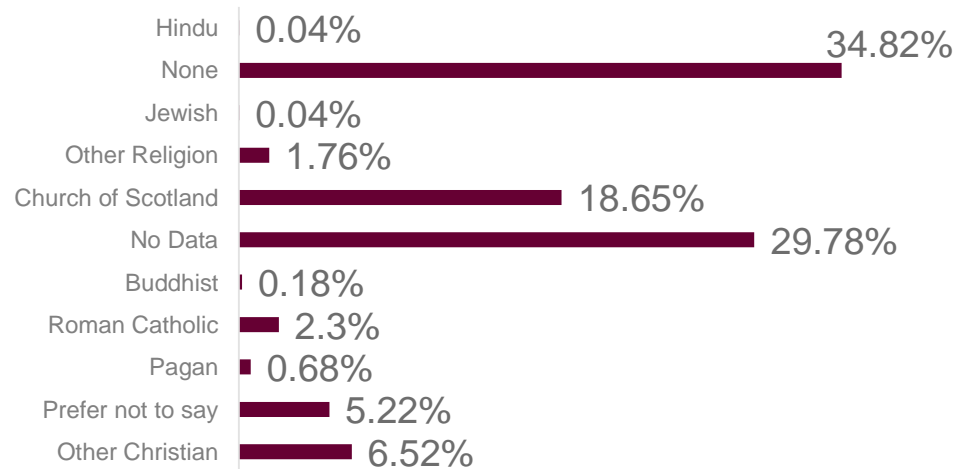
Ethnicity - new starts



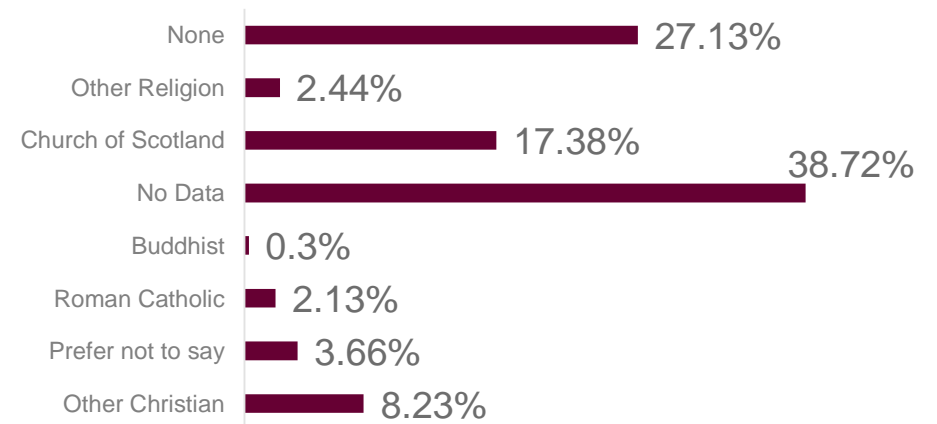
Figures relating to employee ethnicity are similar to those at the end of 2022. For new starts there has been a slight decrease in those identifying as White – Scottish which may be accounted for by the increase in new starter records with no data.

There has been around a 10% decrease in the number of leavers identifying as White – Scottish and an increase of approximately 2% of leavers identifying as White – Other British.

Religion or Belief - all employees



Religion or Belief - leavers

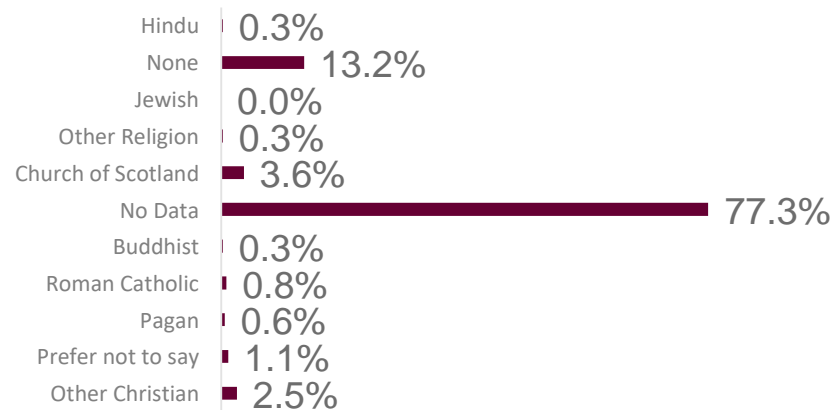


Data comparisons show a very slight drop in employees recording Church of Scotland, Other Christian and Other Religion and a small increase in those recording No Religion, but no significant changes.

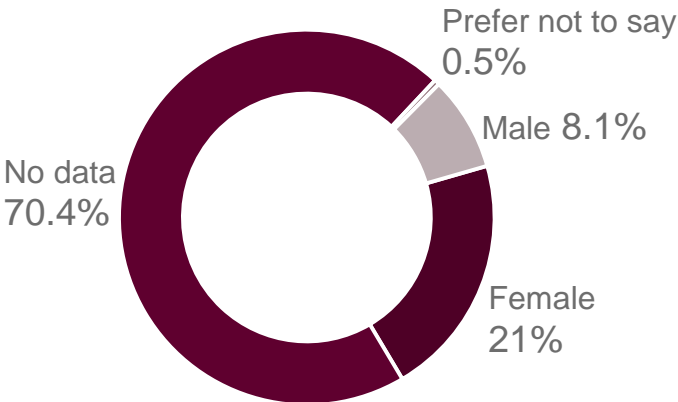
For new starts there has been decrease in those recording religion as Church of Scotland (just under 3%), Other Christian (approximately 2%) and No Religion (approximately 13%) however, a significant increase in new starts not providing data (around 20%).

There has been around a 4% reduction in Leavers recording Church of Scotland, but other figures remain largely consistent with previous years.

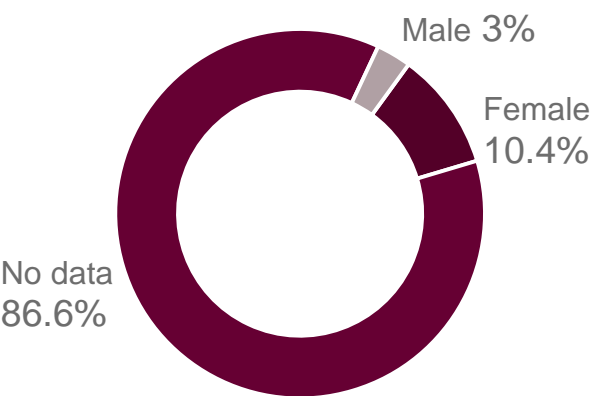
Religion or Belief - new starts



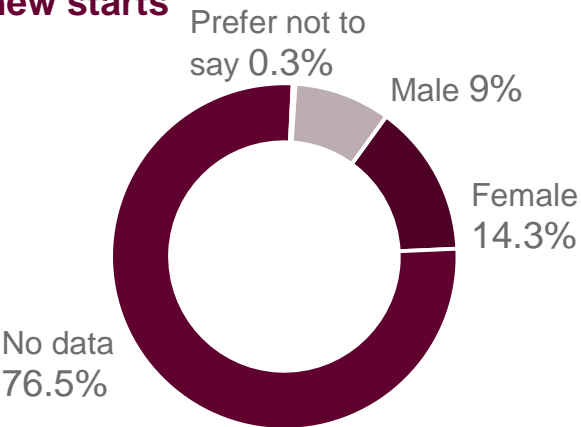
Sex - all employees



Sex - leavers



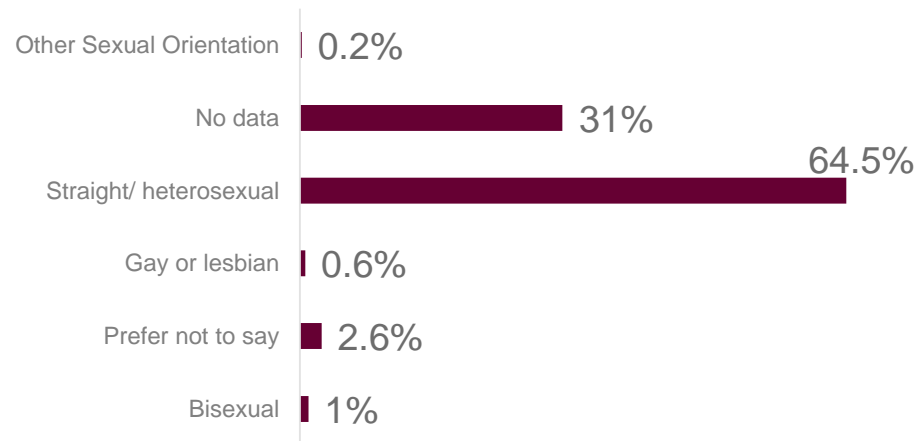
Sex - new starts



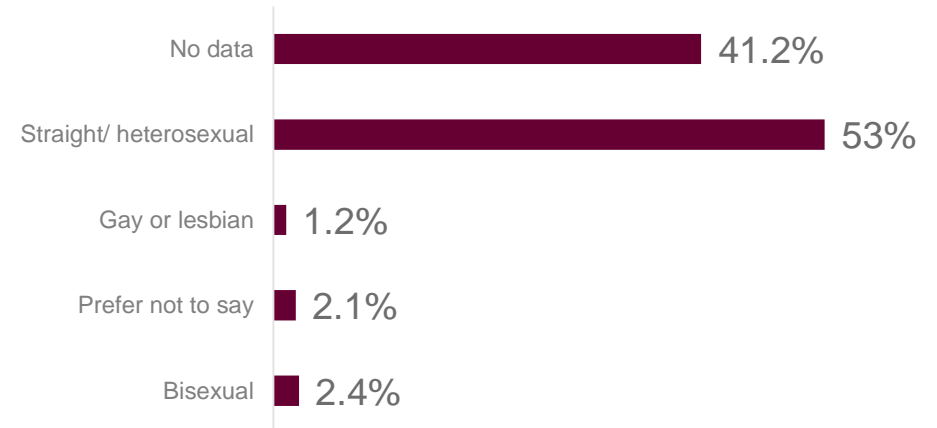
Declaration rates for Sex have increased by around 10% for all employees since the previous reporting period although these still remain low.

Performance management statistics show of the employees involved in either a grievance, disciplinary or dignity at work process, 58% are women and 42% are men. Male representation in this area is slightly higher than the male representation of the overall workforce but is not significantly different from previous years' figures.

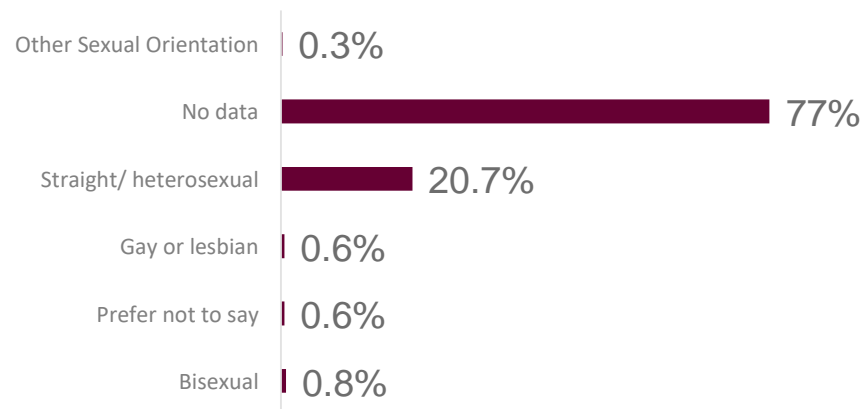
Sexual orientation - all employees



Sexual orientation - leavers



Sexual Orientation - new starts



Overall figures and Leaver figures for Sexual Orientation remain consistent with the previous reporting period.

New start declaration rates are low and is reflective of other protected characteristic disclosure rates.

Transgender employees

Figures are collected for Transgender employees, new starts and leavers and these remain low (less than 1%) but analysis shows that these are consistent with previous years' data.