

Item: 21

Policy and Resources Committee – 19 September 2023.

Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes.

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

1. Purpose of Report

To present the Council's Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report for 2023-2027.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That, in 2018, the Council published its Equality Outcomes and related action plan for the period 2018 to 2022.

2.2.

The proposed Equality Outcomes for the period 2023 to 2027, as set out on page 12 of the Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report attached as Annex 1 to this report.

The Committee is invited to scrutinise:

2.3.

The final progress report in respect of the Equalities Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes 2018-2022, as detailed in Appendix 1 of Annex 1 to this report, in order to obtain assurance that the Council made progress against the Equality Outcomes.

It is recommended:

2.4.

That the Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report, incorporating revised Equality Outcomes for the period 2023 to 2027, attached as Annex 1 to this report, be approved in so far as it relates to the remit of the Council.

3. Equalities Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes 2018-2022 progress

3.1.

In 2018 the Council published its Equality Outcomes and related action plan. The outcomes set out how equality and diversity are essential to how the Council operates both as an employer and as a service provider. The related action plan set out how the Council will deliver its Equality Outcomes 2018 to 2022 which are to ensure that:

- People in Orkney have the opportunity to fulfil their potential throughout life.
- Orkney Islands Council is an inclusive employer.
- People in Orkney have an equal opportunity to access and shape public services.

3.2.

The Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report attached at Annex 1 sets out to describe how Orkney Islands Council's fulfils its mainstreaming duty, provides information regarding diversity data of the workforce as at 31 December 2022 and details relating to the gender pay gap, ethnicity pay gap and disability pay gap as at 31 March 2023. It also provides details on activity in relation to delivering the Equality Outcomes 2018-2022, demonstrating progress against the action plan. Information relating to equalities mainstreaming and outcomes progress for Orkney Health and Care is reported in the Integration Joint Board's Equality Outcomes Report published earlier in 2023.

3.3.

During the first two years of the plan, positive progress was made across all areas. Progress across 2019-2021 was mixed largely because of the impacts of COVID-19. The outcomes were extended for a further one year to improve the delivery outcomes across all areas.

3.4.

Good progress has been made against all Equality Outcomes 2018-2022 despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the full review of the operating model for Orkney Islands Council and the resulting large-scale restructure which have impacted on the capacity to deliver planned progress in some areas.

3.5.

It is widely recognised that inequalities are often deeply embedded in society and so require sustained efforts to reduce the impact of these. As work to deliver the Equality Outcomes 2018-2022 has progressed, much of the work has been integrated into every-day activities to ensure ongoing positive impact to address the identified inequalities.

4. Equality Outcomes 2023-2027

4.1.

Since 2013 the Scottish Government has required public bodies to develop and publish a set of Equality Outcomes which support the delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. The law requires that all public bodies under this duty publish a set of Equality Outcomes at least every four years.

4.2.

The revised set of Equality Outcomes for 2023-2027 set out on page 12 of Annex 1, seek to address key inequalities identified from a national and local context and cover issues relating to employment, educational attainment, community empowerment and accessibility in licensing processes and transportation.

4.3.

Following approval of the equality outcomes, a delivery plan will be developed aligning actions with the outcomes and their associated indicators, as far as appropriate, with those of the Directorate Delivery Plans and Council Plan.

4.4.

The delivery plan will be presented and agreed at the Corporate Leadership Team. Progress with the actions contained in the delivery plan will be reported annually and will be reviewed to ensure that it remains relevant and responsive to any changes to needs and to address any emerging priority inequalities.

4.5.

The Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report, incorporating revised Equality Outcomes for the period 2023 to 2027, attached as Annex 1 to this report, is submitted for approval in so far as it relates to the remit of the Council.

5. Corporate Governance

This report relates to governance and procedural issues and therefore does not directly support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

6. Financial Implications

There are no significant financial implications arising from this report. Any actions arising from the Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report 2023 – 2027 should be met from within existing service budgets, or additional funding awards.

7. Legal Aspects

7.1.

The Equality Act 2010 imposes a general equality duty on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

7.2.

The general equality duty is supported by specific duties which are imposed by the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (the Regulations). The key duties are:

- Report progress on mainstreaming the equality duty.
- Publish equality outcomes and report on progress.
- Assess and review policies and practices.
- Gather and use employee information.
- Publish gender pay gap information.
- Publish statements on equal pay.
- Consider award criteria and conditions in relation to public procurement.
- Publish in a manner that is accessible.

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9. Appendix

Appendix 1: Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report 2023-2027.



Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report 2023 - 2027

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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.

Equality Challenges in Scotland and Orkney

The total population of Orkney in 2020 was approximately 22,400, this has now increased by 0.6% to 22,540, which is higher than the national increase of 0.3%. In Orkney, life expectancy is higher than across Scotland, but the demographic profile has aged significantly in recent years, with 54% of the Orkney population over 45 years old, compared to the national figure of 47%. There is a trend of depopulation from the outer isles into the mainland of Orkney and we continue to see migration of young people away from Orkney.

The rurality of Orkney can pose many challenges for people to participate in activities or access services required, and for providers in planning and delivering services. Within the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, 14 of Orkney's 29 data zones are among the most deprived 10% in Scotland for access to services.

Orkney does not have any data zones in the most socio-economically deprived 20% in Scotland but due to the scattered pattern of poverty in Orkney, there are individuals and families in all areas experiencing multiple deprivation. Rural and island poverty has its own set of characteristics and presents its own set of unique challenges that may not be the uniform experience of poverty across Scotland. Rural households face an increased cost of living between 10% to 30% more than children and families living in urban Scotland, and for those living on islands the premium can exceed 40%. Children in low-income families has risen to 16% in 2022, the Scottish average is 15.9%. In 2021-22, 20.1% of children in Orkney are in Child poverty.

More than 50% of households in Orkney live in fuel poverty. The number of residents stating they have access to good public transport facilities is approximately 55% compared with 91% in the rest of Scotland. Many specialist health / support services are distant from rural communities, creating social inequalities for those without private transport.

The annual participation measure (16–19-year-olds in positive destinations) increased to 93.9% in 2022.

Prior to the pandemic, Orkney had a strong economy with very high employment levels however it had a relatively low wage economy with underemployment rather than unemployment tending to be a factor. Orkney has one of the highest rates of self-employment in Scotland.

The 75-and-over age group is projected to see the largest percentage increase between 2018 and 2028 at 37%, a trend similar to other rural and island areas, and significantly higher than at the Scotland level (22%). This will have implications in the provision of housing, and all support and care services.

Poverty is the single largest determinant of health, and ill-health is an obstacle to social and economic development. Unemployment in Orkney has historically been, and remains, much lower than the Scottish and UK figure, with employment rates consistently close to 90%. However, some residents remain out of work for a variety of reasons, and there continues to be poverty-based challenges for those in low-income employment. Part-time work is much more prevalent in Orkney than it is in other parts of the country.

The public sector is a major employer in Orkney accounting for 31% of all employment – compared to a Scottish average of 26%. Much of this employment continues to be concentrated in Kirkwall, although COVID-19 has seen the establishment of working from

home practices; public sector employment, particularly in schools, is important in more rural and island communities across Orkney, although in a much lower concentration than the number of jobs based in Kirkwall.

The issues to be addressed include an ageing population, under-employment, low wages and a seasonal economy, high costs of living, fuel poverty, limited affordable housing, limited transport and digital connectivity and constrained access to essential services.

Many of these issues may be felt by some groups more than others and can require targeted measures in order to redress the inequality experienced.

It is envisaged that the 2022 Census will better show the population picture compared to these projections, although it may be some time until results from the Census are available.

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 a 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.

HR 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 revised Mental Health and Wellbeing policy along with employee and manager guides, and continue to promote a variety of support services and resources that are available for employees and managers.

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 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 impact 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 practices approaches to incorporating Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments.

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.

To raise awareness and demonstrate commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in the community, the Council flew the Progress flag for the Pride weekend in June. The press release accompanying the flying of the flag acknowledged our LGBTQ+ communities in particular have endured prejudice and inequalities historically and unfortunately, continue to do so in some quarters. We highlighted our commitment to ensuring a compassionate approach to serving all and by flying the Progress flag, as well as spotlighting the importance of building an inclusive culture for OIC colleagues.

We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive workplace, our people policies and employee benefits are an important part of working at the Council and we want to ensure that these are inclusive to all.

Human Resources and Organisational Development



Orkney Island Council has successfully achieved level two of the Disability Confident Scheme and is a Disability Confident Employer. Under the framework we are committed to actively attracting, recruiting a retaining

disabled people by providing an inclusive recruitment process. As part of this, Orkney Islands Council guarantees disabled candidates an interview if they meet the minimum criteria. This guaranteed interview scheme is also offered to Veterans who meet the minimum criteria as part of the Armed Forces Covenant.

HR and OD are reviewing the recruitment and selection processes and policy and are considering a variety of ways to improve the experience of candidates, in particular those facing barriers to employment.



Employer
Recognition
Scheme

SILVER AWARD

In collaboration with Orkney College, a six-week taster course, Introduction to a Career in Social Care, is running aimed at people aged 16 and over who are interested in working in social care, including senior phase pupils, people who are unemployed, under threat of unemployment or considering a change in career. The part-time course is free and students work through materials at their own pace and no prior qualifications or experience are required.

Students gain an SCQF Level 5 certificate and all students who complete the course are guaranteed interviews for roles within social care. A number of students from previous cohorts have successfully secured employment with the Council and Third Sector organisations on the islands.

Housing

The Housing team hosted tenant participation pop-up events in partnership with Orkney Housing Association Ltd to promote tenant participation and engagement. The sessions were an opportunity to listen to feedback and to engage with tenants and participation events offer the benefit of increased sense of community. Tenant participation is a tenant-centred approach that includes informing, engaging and consulting with tenants. It involves the collaboration between both landlord and tenants with the aim of working together to continuously improve housing services.

Customer satisfaction is at the forefront of tenant participation and it provides tenants with a means of sharing their thoughts and opinions with their landlord. Feedback from the event is used to inform changes to the services and is given due consideration in any decision-making process.

In 2023 the Housing service launched a Domestic Abuse Policy which commits to:

- Provide a sensitive, supportive, non-judgemental and confidential service, and, by creating a safe environment victim-survivors, children and young people feel able to approach the Council and that they are listened to.
- Work in partnership with other internal and external services and agencies to best meet the needs of victim-survivors and any children and young people, and, to take steps to try and prevent future domestic abuse.
- Assist victim-survivors to access information, advice and support on the range of housing options available to enable them to make informed choices, including the possibility of sustaining their current accommodation safely and to prevent homelessness where possible.
- Continue to assess the need for, and where appropriate, develop, or support the development of, further services.
- Hold the perpetrators of domestic abuse to account.

The Housing service support the delivery of actions identified in Orkney's Violence Against Women Partnership Action Plan and will continue to participate in awareness raising activities and in challenging attitudes and behaviours in relation to domestic abuse and violence against women.

Inclusive services

The Sensory Exploration Project builds on the digital offerings already in place in the library, such as virtual reality headsets and interactive smartboards. Orkney Library and Archive have utilised the Scottish Government's Public Library Improvement Fund to purchase a mobile digital interactive floor projector. The floor projector offers over 5000 built in media assets, offering access to stimulating content that is suitable for multi-sensory exploration, play, learning, therapy and relaxation.

More than one person can use it at a time so there's an interaction and inclusivity element to the experience. The sessions can be tailored to suit those using the equipment, for example, stimulate movement, light and sound, as well as reminiscence and memory functionality for people with dementia.

The purpose is to remove barriers for those what may be vulnerable and missing out due to a range of circumstances, helping to achieve the wider Council objective of promoting and enhancing community health and wellbeing.

Transport and travel

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

In 2022 Orkney welcomed a fleet of 34 brand new fully accessible and low carbon emission buses for the public and school bus services. The new fleet feature contactless payments and live bus tracking on board public bus services that bus users can access by downloading the free Stagecoach mobile app.



Passenger figures in for January to May 2023 on public bus services subsidised by the Council were over 7% higher than pre-pandemic 2019 levels. Increased tourism, the cost-of-living crisis, in-migration to the county and the introduction of the Scottish Government's Under 22 Free Bus Scheme have all contributed to the increased passenger numbers as well as the new, fully accessible fleet.

Earlier this year an Orkney Travel Matters survey was launched in partnership with Sustrans, a charity that aims to make walking and cycling easier for people. This survey follows up on the Orkney Matters consultations the previous year which highlighted the importance of transportation across the county and indicated that many people aspired to walk and cycle more.

The results of the Orkney Travel Matters survey helps to understand travel behaviour in more detail including how, why and where local people travel and the barriers to active travel which is using walking, wheeling and cycling to make everyday journeys. The results from the survey are being used to inform policy decisions and guide investments.

Education

The main goals of the education service centre around raising the bar and closing the gap; achieving excellence through raising attainment and ensuring ever child has the same opportunity to succeed. The refreshed local plan set out in 2022 outlines the steps to delivering three main themes of inclusion and wellbeing, learning and achievement and systems and processes.

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.

The Anti-Racism Group – under the guidance of Theo Ogbhemhe, Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies teacher at Kirkwall Grammar School – have received funding of just over £4,000 from the Scottish Government to drive forward the anti-racism events. The students will also be fundraising for a further £2,500 to enable them to carry out all that they have planned through non-uniform days, bake sales and a raffle.

The activities include a free musical festival, a new anti-racism story book for children telling the story of Beuy the black Orkney vole, the purchase of anti-racism books for the school library and community libraries in Orkney, a talk by an anti-racism speaker and anti-racism hoodies as school uniform.

The Anti-Racism Group at KGS is made up of 25 pupils who are continuing this great work and are making arrangements for a number of important events to raise

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.

Equality Outcomes 2023 – 2027

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 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, services provider, and as a partner with communities and other organisations within Orkney.

We have reviewed national evidence and local information to inform these outcomes; this has included looking at information from recent consultations that are relevant to equalities such as those for the creation of our Council Plan, and other community consultations.

We note that the following outcomes do not cover all protected groups and that is because we have assessed the most pressing inequalities in Orkney and have focused on them.

We will continue to advance the public sector equality duty, using Equality Impact Assessment to inform policy design, implementation and monitoring and through our ongoing mainstreaming activities.

Outcome	Measures
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.	Aim to increase the diversity of employees throughout the organisation. Number of people who declare protected characteristics accessing employment, in particular disability.
The Council will aim to reduce the gender pay gap.	Aim for a sustained reduction in the gap between women and men’s rate of pay.
People have increased confidence and opportunities to express their views and influence decision making and service design.	Improved engagement with consultation on services across a range of community groups.
People in Orkney have improved accessibility to all transport services.	As identified in Local Transport Strategy.
Pupils have a greater sense of belonging and safety in schools.	Increased awareness in schools of gender-based bullying and harassment. Increased awareness in schools of LGBTQ+-based bullying and harassment.

Outcome	Measures
	Continued implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
Young people facing barriers are supported and leave school with sustained positive destinations.	Percentage of pupils entering positive destinations.
People in Orkney will have improved choice and accessibility to licencing application processes.	Number of online licencing applications received via the Customer Services Platform.

Following agreement of the Equality Outcomes a detailed delivery plan will be developed containing agreed actions and measures to support these. The measures listed alongside the outcomes above are indicative.

Informing our Equality Outcomes

There have been extensive and recent consultation and engagement through a number of other plans and policies and groups, with content substantively relevant also to the development of the Equalities Outcomes for Orkney Islands Council, Education Services and Licensing Board.

Orkney Matters, an initiative set up by the LEADER Local Action Group, OIC and Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO) undertook an Orkney-wide community survey to find out what is important to the people of Orkney within their own communities – whether that be development, the countryside, play areas, sports and leisure, shops and services, activities, connectivity, etc.

An Orkney Matters survey ran from October 2021 to February 2022 – with more than 1,000 responses to the survey obtained, representing around 12% of Orkney's households. Orkney Matters recorded the views of all of Orkney's communities, including residents of the ferry-linked isles, young people, and lesser heard voices.

Some of the issues highlighted through consultation require action to be taken by agencies working together, and the Orkney Partnership have chosen them to be strategic priorities.

The partnership's plans to address these priorities are set out in the new Community Plan (also called the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan) for 2023-2030. Other issues are matters primarily for the Council to address, and these are included in our council plan.

The Council Plan pledges to maintain existing high standards of service wherever possible, improve services and outcomes for the people of Orkney where needed, and to develop and deliver projects for the benefit of our communities. This plan sets the framework for achieving a number of aims and outcomes for the next five years and are underpinned but core principles to guide future decision-making. These core principles include key equalities themes of:

- Equality, fairness and inclusion, in particular for vulnerable and remote communities like the ferry-linked isles.
- Sustainable and accessible services for all.
- Community wellbeing and mental health.

Orkney families with experience of poverty and hardship contributed a wealth of information in response to the Partnership's 'Making Ends Meet' survey, conducted in autumn 2021 to inform the Child Poverty Strategy 2022-26.

Following COVID-19, a Positive Destinations Group was established in Orkney to ensure that young people leaving school are appropriately supported into a positive postschool destination. As part of the work they were undertaking, the group developed a Youth Employment Survey to better understand how COVID-19 has impacted young people and their options regarding education, training and employment, as well as better understand young people's knowledge of the support services that currently exist in Orkney. When asked if they had any barriers to engaging with support services, 23 people (48%) indicated they did, or sometimes did. The biggest barrier was suffering from anxiety (13 people = 68%) followed by limited or no access to transport (nine people = 47%).

National consultation also played a part in the development of these outcomes. A total of 790 Orkney residents participated in the first National Islands Plan survey, conducted in

October 2020, answering questions on their experience of employment and business opportunities, transport, housing, fuel poverty, digital connectivity, health, social care, the environment, climate change, culture, and education. The survey is due to be repeated in 2023 and every two years thereafter for the lifetime of the National Islands Plan. Results are published online with responses from Orkney Mainland and Isles respondents split out, making this a useful resource for measuring future progress.

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 employee’s and relief workers have not been included.

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 with 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 2023 relating to pay gaps. These figures are used to inform ongoing actions within the plan.

Gender Pay Gap

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

Category	Post type	Count	Average (Mean) Hourly Rate	Median Hourly Rate
Female	All	1,791	16.24	13.13
	Full-time	592	19.16	13.13
	Part-time	1,199	14.79	13.13
Male	All	700	17.39	13.83
	Full-time	475	18.95	13.83
	Part-time	225	14.08	13.83
Gender Pay Gap %			6.62	

The Gender Pay Gap for 2021/2022 was reported at 11.6% Action was taken in 2022/23 to restructure the lower end of the pay and grading structure within the Council which has had a positive impact on pay rates and has reduced the gender pay gap.

Ethnicity Pay Gap

Our pay gap information for black and minority ethnic employee groups are 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.

Work continues to address the gaps in employee diversity data.

Category	Post Type	Count	Average (Mean) Hourly Rate	Median Hourly Rate
Yes Disability	All	106	16.02	12.91
	Full-time	48	18.64	16.28
	Part-time	58	13.85	12.14
No Disability	All	1,777	16.56	13.13
	Full-time	731	19.29	16.49
	Part-time	1,046	14.65	12.79
Prefer not to say	All	45	15.46	13.13
	Full-time	18	17.73	16.39
	Part-time	27	13.94	12.29
No data	All	563	16.75	13.65
	Full-time	270	18.62	16.28
	Part-time	293	15.02	12.29
Disability Pay Gap (%)			3.26	

Appendix 1 - Overview of progress

In 2018 Orkney Islands Council set out it's equality outcomes to help us to deliver on our duties under equality legislation.

Significant progress has been made against these outcomes and has previously been reported in the Equality Outcome progress updates. The COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 impacted the way in which many of our services have been delivered through the duration of this plan and large-scale changes were introduced in many areas of the organisation to meet these challenges.

Many of the outcomes and actions identified in this set of equality outcomes continue to be priorities and work has been undertaken to ensure that these are now mainstreamed into the delivery of our everyday services.

This is the final progress report of the Equality Outcomes 2022-2023.

Equality Outcomes 2022 – 2023 Final progress report

Outcome	Progress
<p>People in Orkney have the opportunity to fulfil their potential throughout life.</p>	<p>Pathways from education into positive destination and employment.</p> <p>The Local Employability Partnership (LEP) has taken a lead to develop a local data dashboard to monitor and analyse sustainable destinations for young people and this work is ongoing.</p> <p>The LEP has produced an overview guide of the employability provisions to simplify the routes into employment available for people in Orkney. This is published on the Council website and widely promoted by a range of partners.</p> <p>To view the resources, visit: https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/C/employability.htm</p> <p>The Pathway Planning meetings implemented in 2020/21 continue with the aim to identify those most at risk of not entering a positive destination and to ensure that they have the support to make the right decisions for themselves. In 2021/22 figures show that 96.7% of pupils have sustained a positive destination – an increase of 1.9% on the previous year, and 3.3% above the Scottish figure of 93.5%.</p> <p>A School Leavers Programme has been developed and is delivered in partnership by Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Orkney and Skills Development Scotland (SDS). The programme is aimed at pupils who are leaving school at the end of the academic year and need support to take their next steps. Held in February each year, it is delivered as a two-day intensive programme helping young</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>people to plan what they want to do when they leave school and to develop the skills to write a CV, apply for a job, complete an application form, and prepare for a job or college interview.</p> <p>27 pupils attended the 2023 programme. 12 were offered employment, eight entered further education, three were offered Modern Apprenticeships, three were in education S5 and one is seeking employment.</p> <p>The Young Persons Guarantee (YPG) transition programme was identified in early 2023 and is designed to provide additional support to young people who may struggle to achieve a positive post 16 transition. The eight-week youth intervention programme is delivered in partnership between schools, SDS, DWY Orkney and the Community Learning, Development and Employability team.</p> <p>The programme includes various activities and opportunities for young people to help develop skills such as teamwork, reliability, timekeeping, effective communication, budgeting, problem solving and other transferable employability skills.</p> <p>All young people who have attended the programme have identified they have gained confidence, skills, certificates and networks that can support them in their future transitions.</p> <p>Feedback from the transition programme has identified further work to develop a Planning for the Future programme to support similar young people both in and outwith compulsory education.</p> <p>During 2021/22, eight Kickstart placements were established across a variety of teams within Orkney Islands Council. In March 2022 seven young people had been offered a six-month, 25 hours per week Kickstart placement. Of the initial seven participants, 71% completed the six months and 57% progressed into sustainable employment. In June 2022, Orkney Islands Council funded additional Kickstart placements for a broader group of candidates. Two placements have been established and will be delivered during 2023/24.</p> <p>Work has also been undertaken to establish three permanent posts within the Council and Orkney College, offered through a supported employment arrangement. These carved roles offer work opportunities to candidates identified under No One Left Behind scheme (NOLB) and are designed to meet the needs of the individual whilst also meeting service demands and requirements.</p>

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	<p>Modern apprenticeship scheme by gender. Figures for the 2022/2023 highlight that there were 81 Modern Apprentice (MA) starts in Orkney.</p> <p>Current data shows that there has been an overall decrease in MA starts over the past four years.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="576 477 1433 555"> <thead> <tr> <th>2019/20</th> <th>2020/21</th> <th>2021/22</th> <th>2022/23</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>142</td> <td>99</td> <td>83</td> <td>81</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Of the MA starts in 2022/23, 37% were female, an increase on the final 2021/22 figure of 30.1%.</p> <p>The age profile of MA starts shows a decline in 16-24 year olds' over the past four years:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="576 734 1433 813"> <thead> <tr> <th>2019/20</th> <th>2020/21</th> <th>2021/22</th> <th>2022/23</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>76</td> <td>56</td> <td>53</td> <td>52</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The MA figures for 2022/23 to date show that again Orkney Islands have one of the highest achievement rates (number of certificated leavers) in comparison to other local authorities at 81%.⁹ This is the fourth consecutive year that Orkney has had one of the highest achievement rates.</p> <p>Work continues to support the collection and sharing of data relating to protected characteristics and remains a priority action in the LEP Partners Plan 2021-2024 (2023 Update).</p> <p>In its People Plan 2022-2026 the Council has committed to a programme of increased numbers of trainees and apprenticeships over the duration of the plan.</p> <p>Challenge gender stereotypes that influence education, training and career choices. Activities in this area have included the regular No Wrong Path campaign highlighting that many people don't necessarily take a straight, obvious, or traditional path into their jobs.</p> <p>Careers Week activities have increased exposure to a variety of different jobs, including many that pupils may not have initially considered. One talk was delivered by a former pupil Corrine Sinclair who works with EMEC and described her own career journey, encouraging pupils to explore all options available to them.</p> <p>The Education Support Officer for STEM and Orkney Builders worked together to deliver practical, hands-on workshops for Glaitness Primary School to bring building and engineering to life for some of the young students. They used KAPLA wooden blocks for building and MakeDo cardboard toolkits to explore through play building towers,</p>	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	142	99	83	81	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	76	56	53	52
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	<p>copying and creating designs and undertaking other small-scale challenges.</p> <p>The promotion of cross-circular links through STEM has continued with activities such as Christmas enterprise projects and site visits with Orkney Builders. The sessions are increasing motivation and engagement in all aspects and hope to inspire an interest in industries such as construction and engineering.</p> <p>Deliver actions relating to closing the attainment gap. COVID has increased these challenges, however, there is evidence of systematic change in terms of culture with a focus on equity becoming more embedded and sustained in schools. A greater awareness and understanding of the barriers facing children and young people adversely affected by socio-economic disadvantage is apparent and interventions are being implemented to meet the needs of children and young people.</p> <p>The Orkney's Childrens Services Plan 2021-23 contained a range of performance indicators which sought to enable partner agencies to better measure the collective progress towards the eight target outcomes of Getting it Right for Every Child framework.</p> <p>In March 2021, the Good Parenting Plan 2020-2025 for the Education Service was updated and included the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile an accurate and up to date list of care experienced children and young people (CECYP) • Complete a tracker for school-attending CECYP across Orkney in relation to attainment and progress. • Ensure CECYP transition into positive destinations when they leave school. <p>Significant progress has been made in relation to developing tracking and monitoring structures for the Broad General Education (BGE) for Care Experienced Young People.</p> <p>The Raising Attainment Strategy 2023-2026 sets out clear actions to continue to address the poverty related attainment gap. Planning and implementation of the use of the Pupil Equity Fund will support the six priority family characteristics as identified by the Scottish Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lone parent families • Minority ethnic families • Families with a disabled adult or child • Families with a young mother (under 25) • Families with a child under one

Outcome	Progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger families (3+ children) <p>There is a greater focus on the attainment of children and young people in receipt of free school meals and those who have been care experienced. Work continues in further developing the use of the BGE tracking toolkit to monitor and track attainment.</p> <p>Implementation of Anti-bullying policy for our Children and Young people.</p> <p>The Anti-Bullying Policy for our Children and Young People was launched in August 2018 and set out a strategic approach to addressing bullying and provides clear definitions and guidance for schools and settings to review or develop local anti-bullying policies to address and monitor any incidences of bullying.</p> <p>The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic added to the pressure that children and young people were already feeling in relation to mental health and wellbeing. Shared resources, expertise and plans were implemented for pupils, staff and communities during the reopening of schools.</p> <p>Particular needs have been identified around more resources for managing stress and mental health, knowing where to go for help, being able to self-refer to services or getting help to refer if preferred, and education around the LGBT+ community. The Youth Forum have also highlighted a need for better education around LGBT+ identities and issues, in order to eliminate stigma and misunderstanding of LGBT+ people in our community. It is recognised that LGBT+ young people can have a particularly difficult time in Orkney and may experience homophobic, biphobic and / or transphobic bullying, may feel excluded, disrespected and even unsafe. Specific actions to address this are outlined in the Orkney Education Services Report and include the achievement of LGBT Charter Award by Junior High and Secondary Schools.</p>
<p>Orkney Islands Council is an inclusive employer.</p>	<p>Review of flexible working plan and review of sickness-absence process to be more inclusive of age-related conditions and mental health.</p> <p>Work has been delivered to incorporate resources and services supporting mental health into the Sickness Absence Management process and training. This has included the Workplace Mental Health Support Service delivered through Maximus and Able Futures.</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>Policies, along with manager and employee guidance has been developed for supporting people with the menopause and with mental health and wellbeing. A review of support available to employees has been undertaken and work has been undertaken to scope the requirements for the delivery of an employee assistance programme. This will progress in 2023/24.</p> <p>HR System development has included the requirement for the reason for absence as mandatory in the reporting which is enabling greater consistency and accuracy in the statistics available. Improvements have also been made to the reporting functionality of these systems.</p> <p>The People Plan 2022-2026 strengthens emphasis on this action and sets out our positive response to the changing needs of our existing and future employees. Recognising the value of flexibility for employees across all generations the People Plan makes commitment to drive forward the work already underway to deliver flexible working opportunities that meet the needs of our employees.</p> <p>The Supporting our people through the menopause policy was launched on 8 March 2023 – International Women’s Day. The promotion communications set out that the menopause is a workplace issue and encouraged people to talk more about the menopause and perimenopause and signposted the policy and manager guide which provide tips on how to create a safe space to hold these conversations.</p> <p>Further HR system development has included the option to record specific menopause related absences to improve the data that is available regarding reason for absence for greater analysis and to identify future actions once baseline data has been captured.</p> <p>Review Employee Survey responses to develop proactive age-inclusive communications, promotion and development opportunities.</p> <p>Any highlighted differences in survey data by age and gender are being fed into the ongoing work to develop the three key thematic areas identified following initial analysis of the overall survey results.</p> <p>Age-inclusive actions have been integrated into the People Plan 2022-2026 and the Pay Gap and Occupational Segregation action plan.</p> <p>Carry out regular employee surveys.</p> <p>Increased staff engagement has been a key focus through the Our people, our Plan initiative and has included new approaches such as the creation of a Leadership Forum</p>

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	<p>and Lunch and Learn sessions which provide routes for sharing of information, and feedback on priorities.</p> <p>Actions relating to employee engagement are being delivered through the People Plan 2022-2026, which in itself involved considerable engagement across Council services to understand better the people challenges we face.</p> <p>The Investors in People survey carried out at the end of 2022 / beginning of 2023 provided feedback to develop recommendations which were used to inform an improvement plan. Orkney Islands Council were awarded the Investors in People Standard in January 2023 and regular employee surveys will provide ongoing engagement with employees to support the delivery of the improvement plan.</p> <p>Delivery of Mentally Healthy Workplace and communication plan to increase awareness relating to mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Work has been delivered to increase awareness of mental good health and wellbeing across the organisation on a regular basis.</p> <p>Significant work was delivered in this area throughout the pandemic. The Council website was initially identified as the best means of sharing information relating to mental health and wellbeing for all employees, specifically in relation to dealing with the associated impact of COVID-19 and the restrictions during lockdown. A section of the COVID-19 information pages was developed to provide information and signposting on a variety of themes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources for a mentally healthy workplace including links to iLearn courses on relaxation, dealing with stress and recognising stress. • Information and resources from the Educational Psychology team ranging from more general guidance on supporting mental health and wellbeing, to comprehensive information for staff supporting vulnerable children, those working in the Hub and for teaching staff and other professionals supporting young people with school closure and the impacts of COVID-19. • Wellbeing advice for working from home. • Coronavirus and your wellbeing advice and guidance from Mind, the mental health charity. • COVID-19 and your mental health resources produced by Caring for People, a task-force made up of public and voluntary organisations in Orkney to

Outcome	Progress
	<p>help people recover and build resilience in challenging times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and links to the Grampian Psychological Resilience Hub which was set up to directly respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a virtual hub providing support by telephone for self-referral regarding mental health and wellbeing. <p>Health and Wellbeing training sessions have been delivered across the organisation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Mental Health First Aid. Mental Health Awareness for Managers. Coping with Change for Managers. Personal Stress Management. Introduction to Coaching. <p>Regular communications have been provided to employees to signpost to resources online and to highlight other sessions and support including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of Mental Health Awareness Week 2022 and 2023 seeking to inspire action to promote the message of good mental health for everyone. Themes have included isolation and loneliness and anxiety. Awareness raising of mental health at work and the promotion of the updated Mental Health and Wellbeing policy. Targeted information and resources around specific days throughout the year including when clocks went back and in preparation for the Christmas period. Make 2023 the year you look after you campaign, promoting the Five Ways to Wellbeing, highlighting the role we all have in stopping the stigma often attached to speaking about mental health, signposting support for those with caring responsibilities as well as the menopause, mental health and wellbeing, leave of absence and flexible working policies. <p>Review of jobs appropriate to undertake remotely. During COVID-19, many office-based jobs were required to be delivered from home and the IT infrastructure, management practices and many work-related processes rapidly developed in order to accommodate this.</p> <p>The People Plan 2022-2026 commits to develop a clear integrated strategy setting out how we will exploit the full benefits of mobile and smart technology for the benefit of</p>

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	<p>our employees which will be key to the delivery of this action.</p> <p>Hybrid working guidance was issued as a pilot at the start of 2023 and set out a broad framework for services to work within. This framework is based on employees spending a minimum of 40% of their time in their place of work. The pilot was launched in March 2023 and is to be reviewed later this year.</p> <p>It is noted that the pandemic has had a profound negative impact on Scotland’s wellbeing, particularly in terms of health, the economy and fair work. This has brought further impacts on already marginalised communities and in many cases exacerbating inequalities such as an increasing reliance on technology, accelerated by the pandemic, can bring new opportunities as well as risks of excluding certain groups where technology is not as accessible.</p>
<p>People in Orkney have an equal opportunity to access and shape public services.</p>	<p>Develop guidance for inclusive engagement and embed within the Council’s Community Consultation and Engagement guide and in-house training.</p> <p>The Council’s Community Consultation and Engagement Policy was launched in 2019, bringing a greater focus on areas such as engaging with seldom heard groups, peripherality and island-proofing and the Fairer Scotland duty to better consider the impact of socio-economic deprivation on groups.</p> <p>Training sessions have been provided by the Consultation and Engagement Officers Group with topics including consultation and engagement with young people, inclusive communications, making meetings accessible guide and mainstreaming participatory budgeting.</p> <p>Review and develop inclusive practices to support participation in the democratic process.</p> <p>A review of resources and communications was undertaken in the lead up to the local elections in May 2022. Content for the OIC website was developed to improve and increase the information available to community members including general information, news posts, videos and signposting to better inform people on what to expect, how to vote and to explain the voting system changes.</p> <p>All households were written to providing information on current registration to vote and information on postal voting and ongoing communications through a variety of channels were aimed at encouraging people to apply for postal voting if this would be the best option for them. Feedback was</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>sought from a number of community groups in terms of increasing the accessibility to polling stations.</p> <p>The overall turnout for the 2022 elections was 48.83%. Nationally, turnout stood at 44.8%, lower than 2017 at 46.9%.</p> <p>Work continues to review resources available nationally to improve the inclusive participation in the democratic process and feedback following the most recent election will also be used to inform any future actions as business as usual.</p> <p>Audit of existing elected office by protected characteristic and prior to an election engage with stakeholders to develop an action plan to promote inclusion.</p> <p>The Council hosted online sessions in early February 2022 aimed at encouraging more women to stand for election to the Council in May 2022. Mind the Gap: Women for Council was delivered in partnership with Elect Her, a non-partisan organisation working to motivate, support and equip women in all their diversity to stand for political office.</p> <p>These sessions, along with additional support information and signposting were promoted through a wider social media campaign aimed at encouraging greater diversity of potential candidates looking to stand for the May 2022 elections.</p> <p>International Women’s Day 2022 saw a further opportunity to showcase some of the work that the Council’s current Elected Members deliver on. Three of our Elected Members who are women gave their views and experiences of life in the Council Chamber, encouraging people from all walks of life to consider standing for election.</p> <p>Local elections in May 2022, saw an increase in the gender diversity of candidates standing for election in comparison to elections in May 2017, with around 13% increase in female candidates. The election results also reflected greater diversity seeing an increase of around 9.5% in the gender split of Elected Members.</p> <p>Orkney Islands Council had the highest response rate with 71.4%.</p> <p>The Local Government Candidates Survey Report published in November 2022 indicates that further consideration is being given to how the project can be built on. Working with partner organisations and stakeholder groups, next steps will be identified to improve the data</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>collection and the representativeness of candidates standing for election in Scotland.</p> <p>Improve accessibility of services provided online through the delivery of the Customer Services Platform and Council Website redesign.</p> <p>The Customer Services Platform (CSP) is providing more accessible information on the Council and its services with the ability to carry out transactions on a 24/7 basis. This provision runs alongside the option for non-digital alternatives to provide choice to customers and greater flexibility of accessibility.</p> <p>COVID-19 had a significant impact on the ability to deliver face-to-face services and drove local authorities to deliver services in very different ways, for most; almost entirely digitally which helped to produce further insight into continuing inequalities in this area.</p> <p>During this time, to mitigate digital exclusion, many mobile devices and digital skills support were provided to communities, however, poor connectivity and poor mobile coverage remained significant challenges for delivery of some services across Orkney.</p> <p>Organisational priorities outlined in Our People, Our Plan and new Council Plan include improvement to connectivity with an emphasis on improving life for everyone in Orkney covering both digital and transport connectivity.</p> <p>The refreshed Digital Strategy focuses on three core strategies with Digital Local Government and Services being one of them. This core area sets out clear aims to ensure that all public service are designed through the lenses of isles proofing and inclusion more broadly which is key to the continuing improvement of accessibility to online services. The Digital Strategy Delivery plan is in development and has been shaped by the commitments outlined in the Council Plan.</p> <p>Improvements have been made to the structure of the Council website following feedback and work in this area is ongoing. The Website User Guide provides information on how to get the best out of the website highlighting the Recite Me Accessibility software, how to download Adobe Acrobat Reader and how to access information in alternative formats. There is a How to use our website video which takes the user through how to navigate the website and how to make use of the accessibility features.</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>The Accessibility section of the Council website provides further information and signposting to services such as AbilityNet and Contact Scotland BSL.</p> <p>A Customer Services public survey was launched and service user satisfaction levels are routinely invited through the use of the Customer Services Platform. The Customer Services survey in 2022 was also used to seek feedback from customers who still come to the Council Offices rather than utilise the 24/7 MyOrkney online services. The results highlighted that an area of improvement is an easier to navigate website and work continues to take this forward.</p> <p>Weekly training sessions for the Customer Services Advisers has been introduced to increase the breadth of service knowledge and to improve the customer experience. Sessions have included team training on the Customer Services Platform – customer accounts, duplicate records, Self/MyOrkney and MyGovScot for customer access.</p> <p>Customer Services Advisers are also able to help customers set up accounts on the MyOrkney online portal and show them how to record and track requests. This support is offered either in-person or by telephone.</p> <p>Audit existing processes for recording personal information to ensure it is inclusive of gender identity requirements.</p> <p>The Council recruitment processes were reviewed following the revised Census 2021 data collection in this area and now mirrors these categories to improve recruitment reporting. This has required work to align categories through My Job Scotland as well as develop the internal systems to reflect these updated data collection categories.</p> <p>The next phase of this work is to further develop the reporting availability for diversity data and to improve the disclosure rates internally.</p> <p>There has been wide-ranging work at a national level in this area of data collection. Research on equality data collection has been published in the Understanding Equality Data Collection in the Scottish Public Sector report, commissioned by the Scottish Government. This report reviews the barriers and challenges in relation to sex and gender. There is ongoing development work through a Scottish Government Working Group looking at the way data on sex and gender is collected and published and guidance has now been published.</p> <p>A review of the collection of equalities data has begun in some areas including HR and Community, Learning,</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>Development and Employability. This review aims to with a model of best practice, provide robust and consistent methods of equality data collection that can be adopted across the organisation, and will enable better benchmarking.</p> <p>Implementation of British Sign Language local plan in partnership with OHAC.</p> <p>The British Sign Language (BSL) local plan was developed in partnership with OHAC and Orkney College UHI and was launched in October 2018.</p> <p>The BSL Progress group meets on a monthly basis to progress the actions within this plan. The primary focus for this group has been centered around actions relating to children and young people and education. Resources have been purchased for each of the schools and training has been delivered around BSL.</p> <p>Some of the key actions delivered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Support Deaf Awareness Week to continue to raise awareness and set challenges on finger spelling. • Class signing projects with signed stories and signed songs. • S3 Wider Achievement BSL class delivered at Kirkwall Grammar School. • A group of S3 KGS students have been awarded National 3 Introduction to BSL. • Lunchtime informal group of signers meet at KGS. • 10 people undertook a six-week introductory BSL course delivered by a Deaf BSL instructor. • 6 people including one student at KGS have completed the Level One BSL course. <p>This ongoing work is creating an impact with one KGS pupil planning to study BSL as a career option. These BSL skills have also been put to the test when a group of six tourists who were all deaf visited the Italian Chapel where one of the Level One BSL course attendees was working. Having the recently acquired BSL skills meant that the group were</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>able to benefit from a far more inclusive experience visiting one of Orkney’s iconic tourist attractions.</p> <p>The BSL Progress group will continue to engage with other areas of the organisation to offer support and guidance to support the delivery of the actions identified within the BSL Local Plan.</p> <p>Consult with taxi and private hire car operators and the public to identify any unmet need in relation to wheelchair accessible vehicles and promote a list of wheelchair accessible vehicles on the Council website. Consultation was undertaken and a list containing details of providers with wheelchair accessible vehicles is available on the Council website.</p> <p>There continue to be three providers of Private Car Hire / taxi wheelchair accessible vehicles on the list.</p>

Appendix 2 - Equalities monitoring data

Employee diversity and monitoring

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

The council undertakes its equality duty to monitor and report on specific information about staff to help identify any trends and to address any identified inequalities. Whilst employees are asked to keep their diversity information up to date, the council recognises that this is voluntary and not all staff choose to disclose all information. Increasing disclosure rates on the diversity of our workforce is ongoing work.

There have been significant changes in the diversity data process over the past year with reporting categories changing to match the revisions for the Census 2022. There have also been extensive developments within the HR System My View, to enable electronic reporting of this data which has previously been a partially manual process. Information can now be recorded on caring responsibilities and additional data is collected on long term health conditions. Disclosure rates for sex are showing as low in this report as the data recording process has changed and there is a gap for many of the long-term workforce with data in this area previously recorded under gender rather than sex. Overall comparisons with previous years' reporting data are difficult due to the changes in category reporting however, these figures have been taken into account in the analysis of any trends in the key messages section of this report. Further analysis will be undertaken as disclosure rates increase with the ability to now access diversity reporting on demand.

Plans are in place to increase disclosure rates for all diversity data through regular communications, starting with key messaging during National Inclusion Week in late September of this year. The newly launched online Induction programme also highlights the requirement to complete the diversity data section on My View, along with the need to keep this up to date.

Our workforce – key messages

In the first year of reporting caring responsibilities, 19.7% of non-teaching employees and 17.1% of teaching employees have indicated yes. It is noted that disclosure rates represent slightly less than half of the workforce in this area.

Our workforce profile relating to sex shows that the largest percentage of employees at Orkney Islands Council is female, reflecting the trends within the wider public sector. We have a very small percentage (0.1%) of employees who identify as transgender although disclosure rates are low in this area.

The ethnicity breakdown of our workforce remains similar to previous years with a slight decrease in the number of non-teaching employees being White Scottish. A slightly higher proportion are from ethnic minority groups in comparison to previous years.

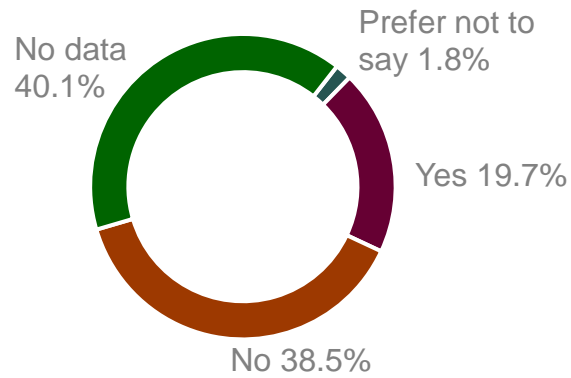
5.4% of general staff at the council have declared a disability along with 4.7% of teaching staff. This is an increase from previous years' figures. The highest figures relating to long-term health conditions are long term illness / disease / condition and mental health conditions. Data relating to new starts are similar in representation, although are slightly higher for leavers.

Among those employees who have declared their religion or belief, the majority have no religion or are Church of Scotland. Declaration rates for this area have increased by 3.4% for non-teaching employees and have remained similar for teaching employees.

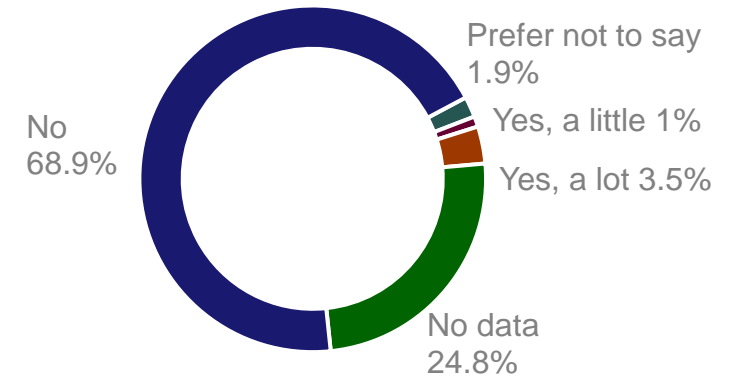
Of those who have shared information relating to their sexual orientation the majority of employees identify as heterosexual although this percentage has dropped slightly from previous years.

About our workforce

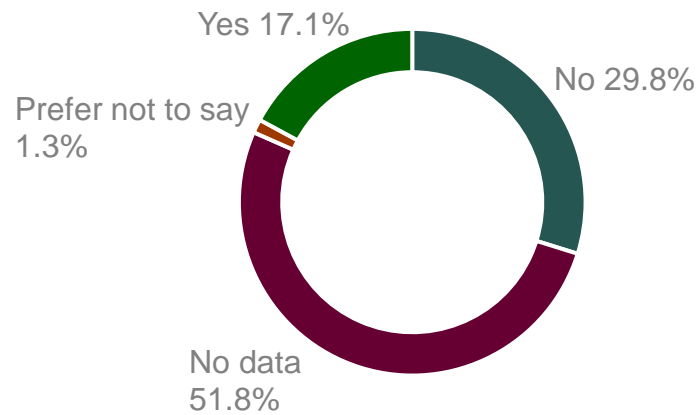
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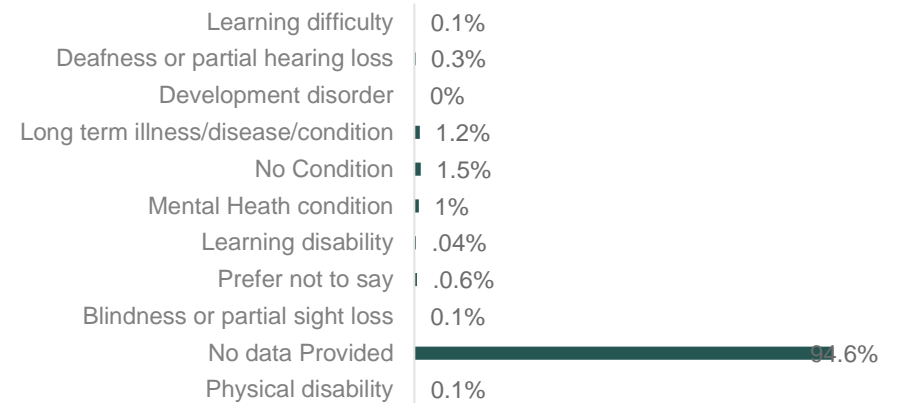
Disability - Non teaching all staff



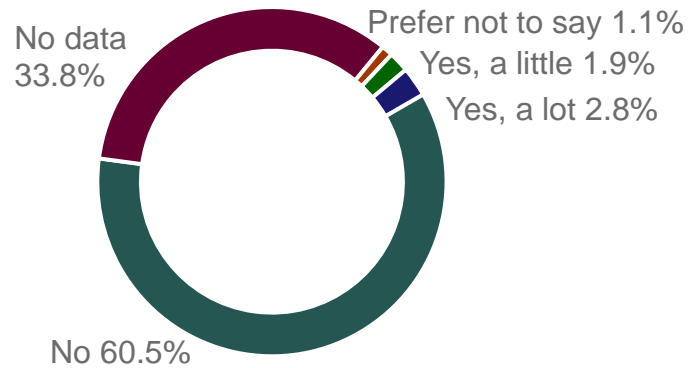
Carers - Teaching all staff



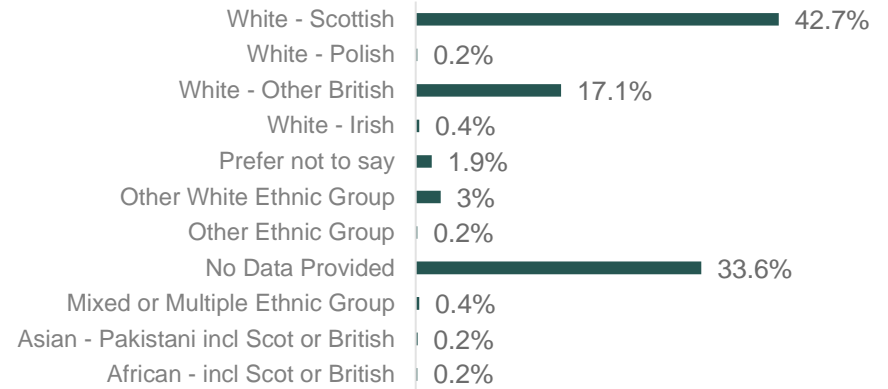
Health condition - Non-Teaching all staff



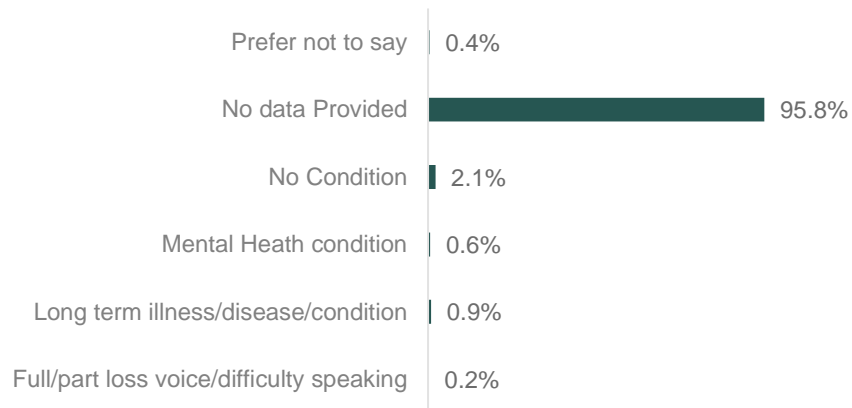
Disability - Teaching all staff



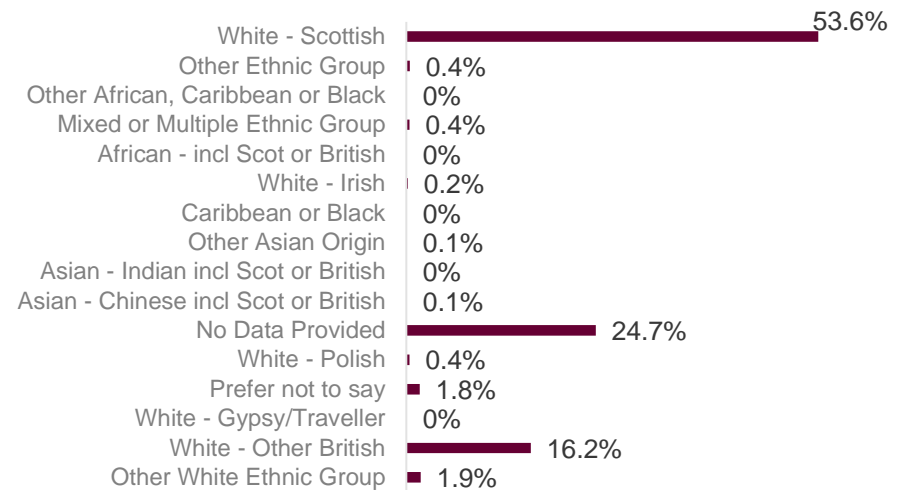
Ethnicity - Non-Teaching all staff



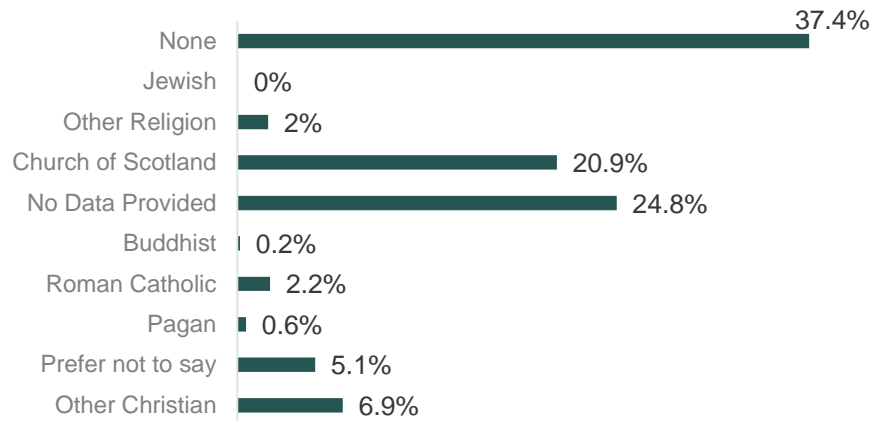
Health condition - Teaching all staff



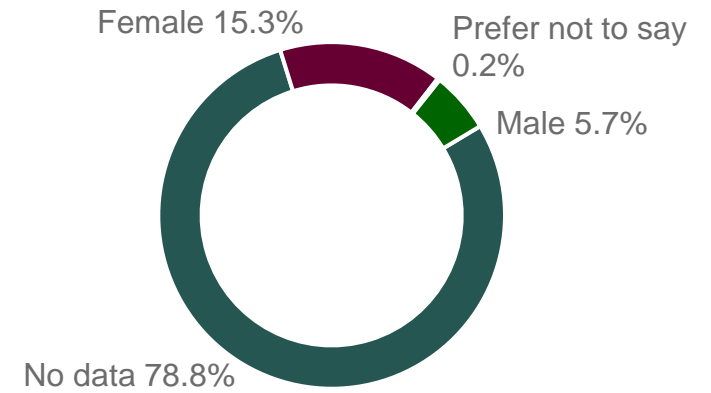
Ethnicity - Non teaching all staff



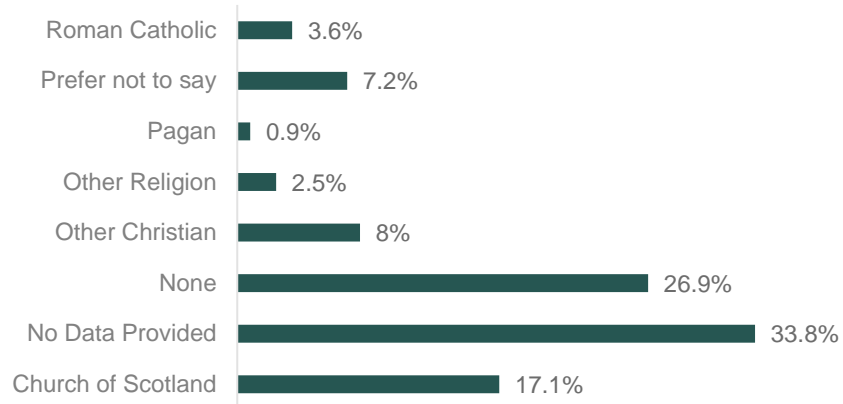
Religion - Non teaching all staff



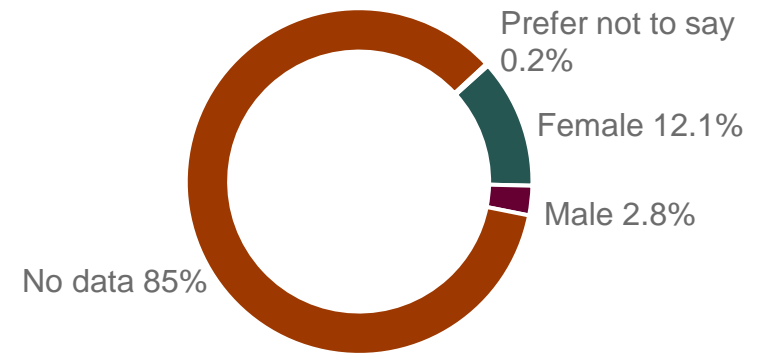
Sex - Non-Teaching all staff



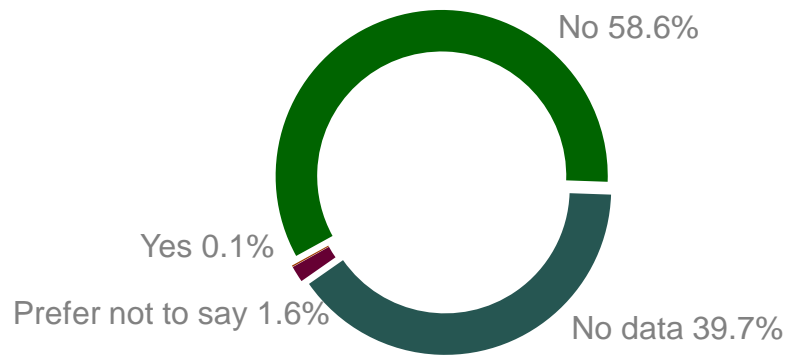
Religion -Teaching all staff



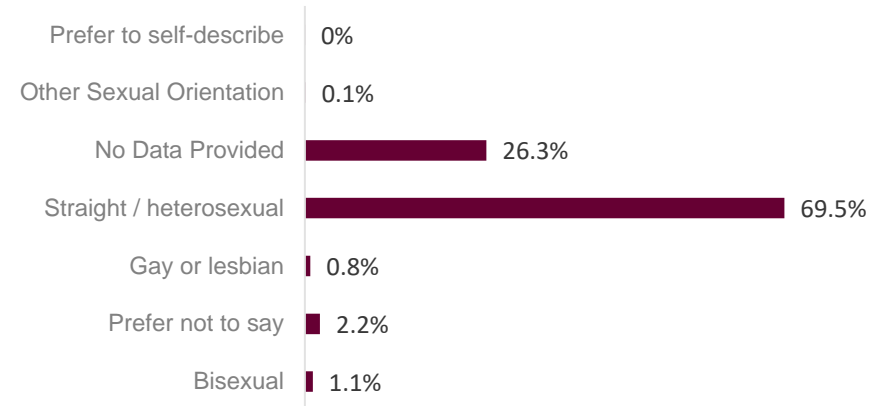
Sex - Teaching all staff



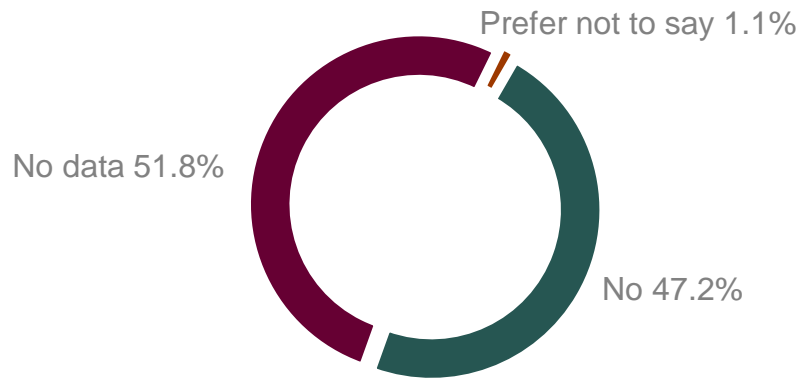
Transgender - Non teaching all staff



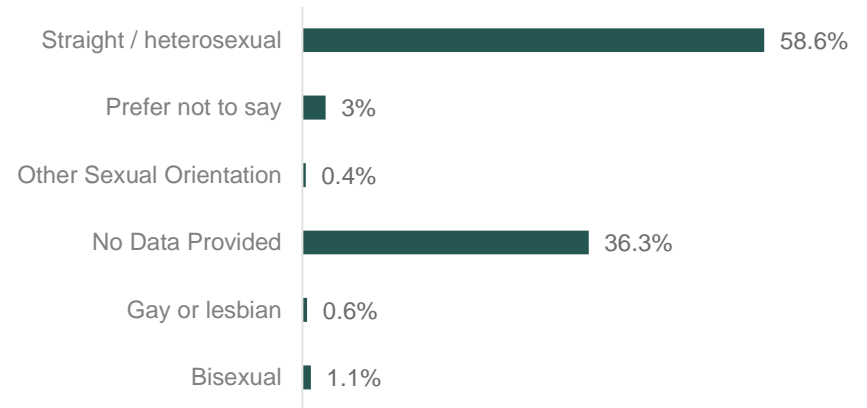
Sexual Orientation - Non teaching all staff



Transgender - Teaching all staff

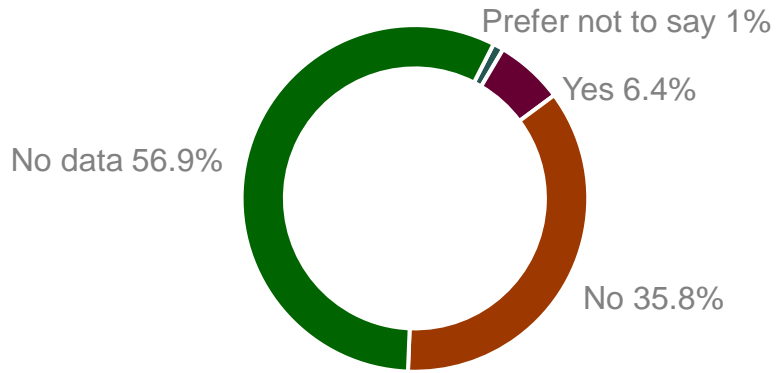


Sexual Orientation - Teaching all staff

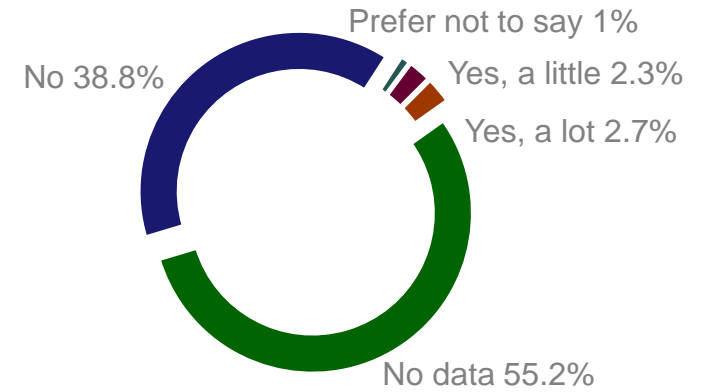


New Starts

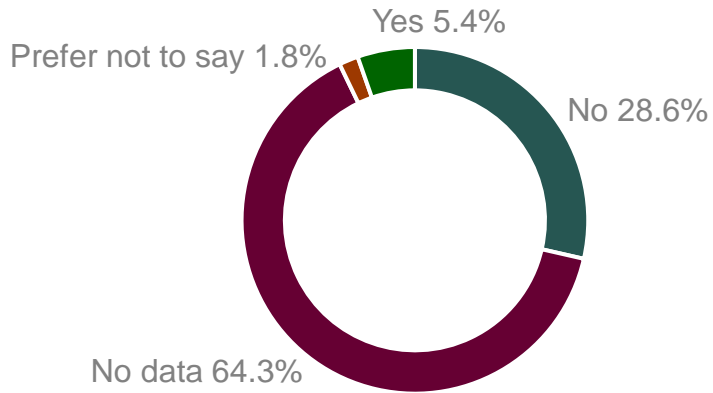
Carers - Non teaching new starts



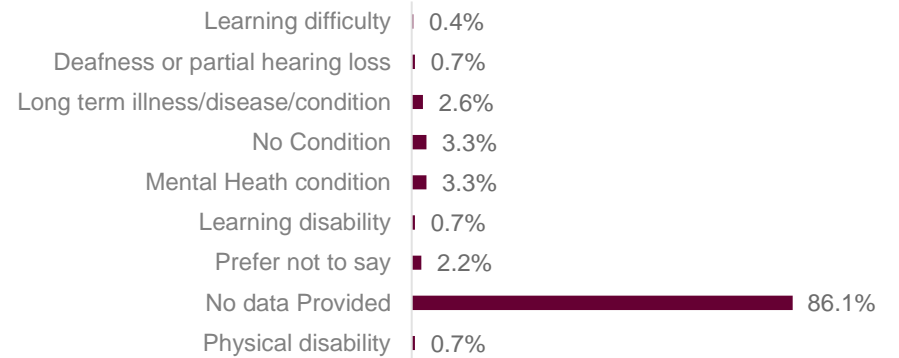
Disability - Non teaching new starts



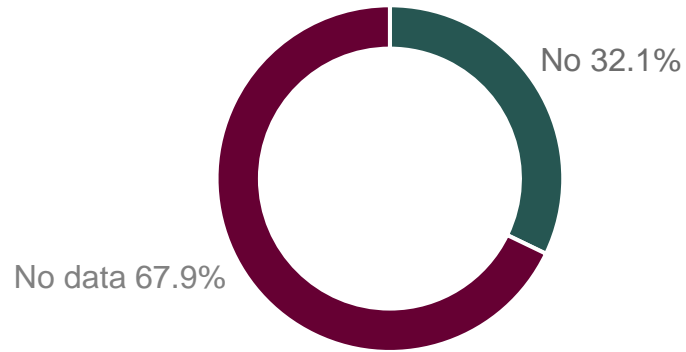
Carers - Teaching new starts



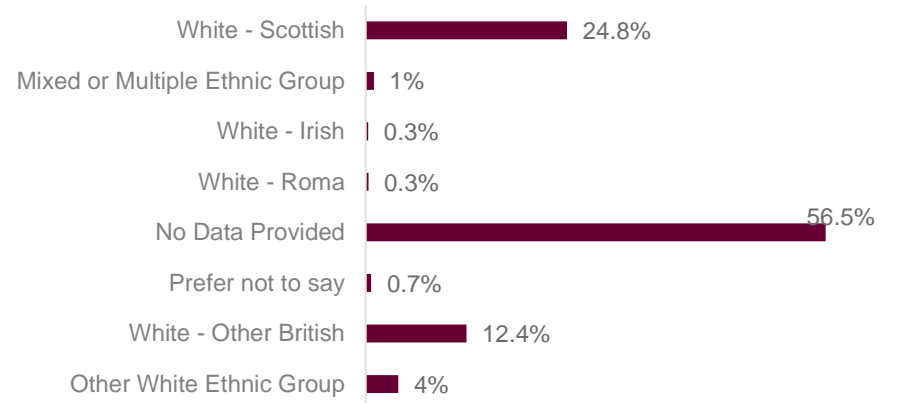
Health condition - Non-Teaching new starts



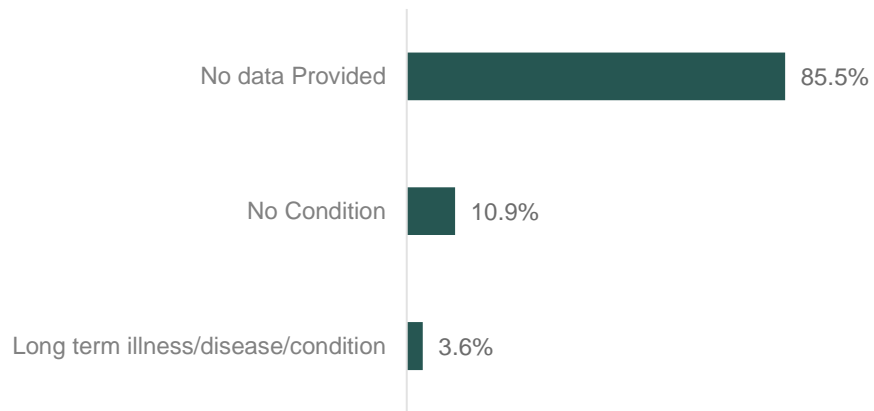
Disability - Teaching new starts



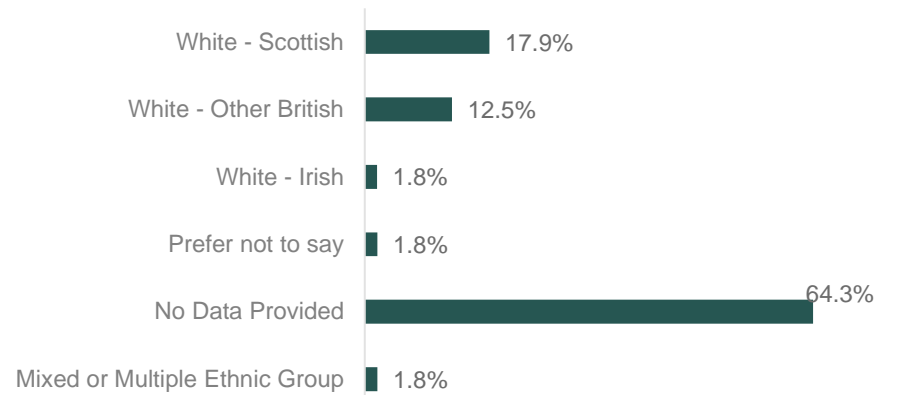
Ethnicity - Non-Teaching new starts



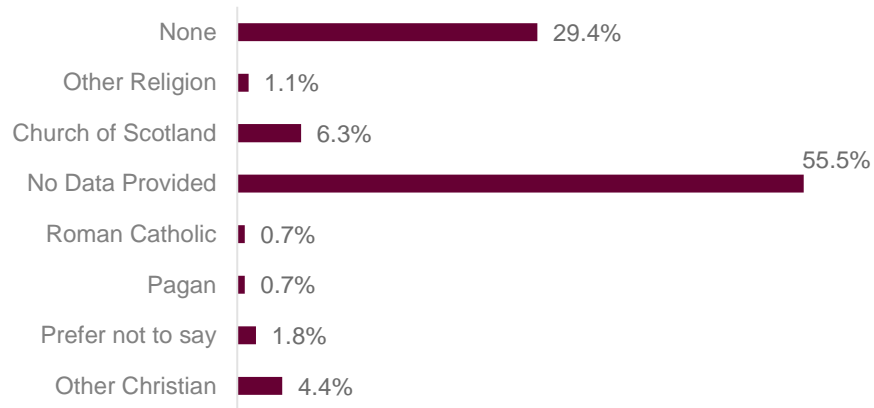
Health condition - Teaching new starts



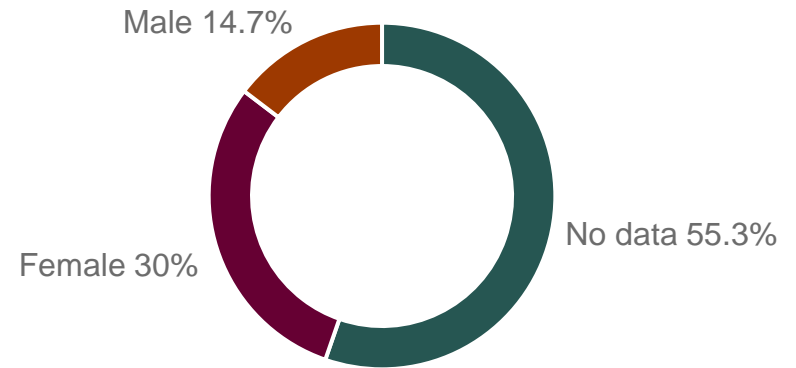
Ethnicity -Teaching new starts



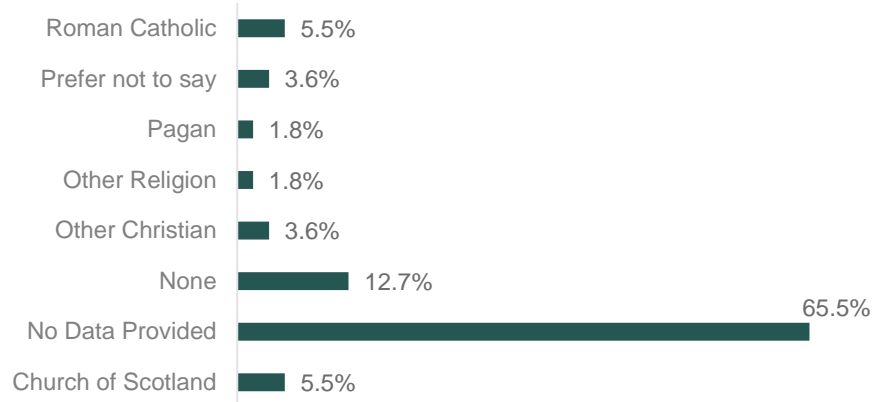
Religion - Non-Teaching new starts



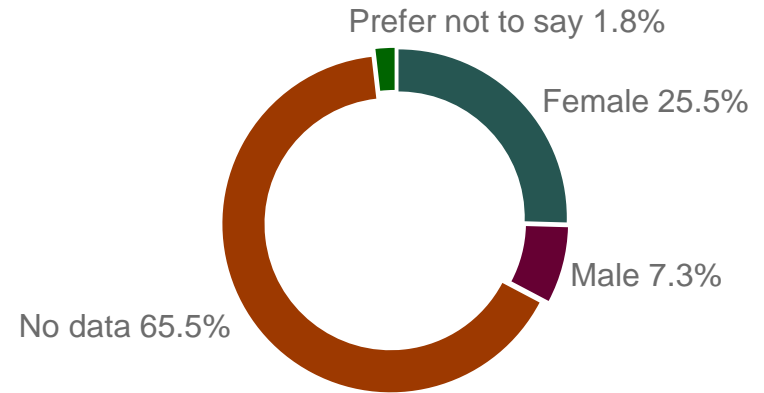
Sex - Non-Teaching new starts



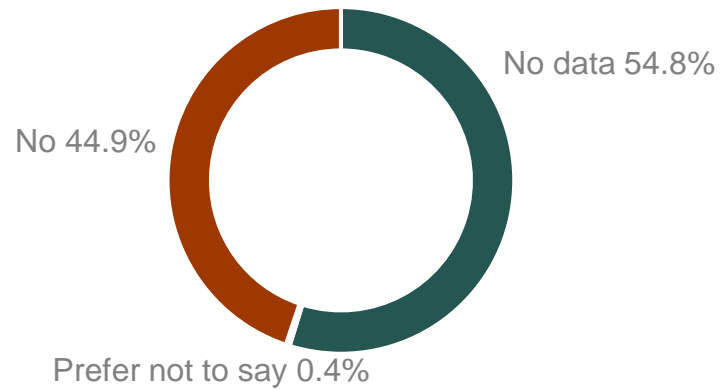
Religion - Teaching new starts



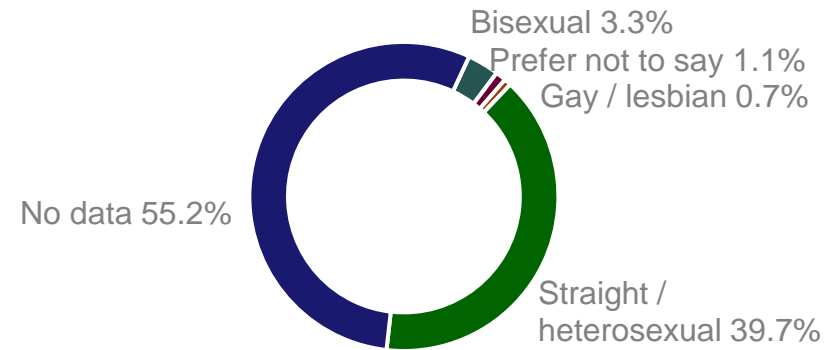
Sex - Teaching new starts



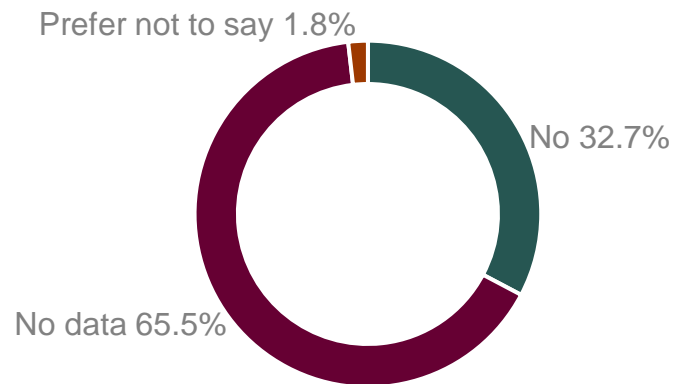
Transgender - Non teaching new starts



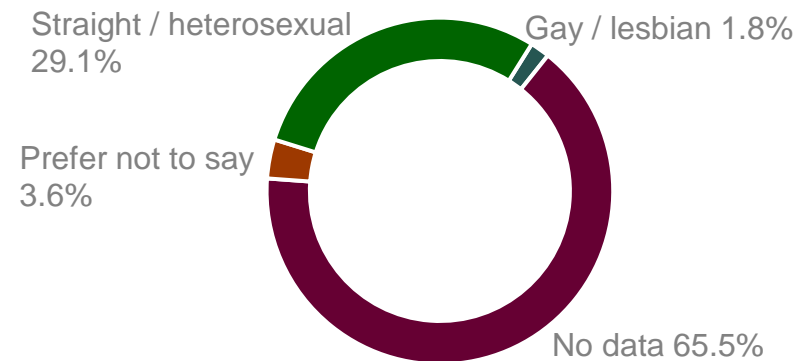
Sexual Orientation - Non teaching new starts



Transgender - Teaching new starts

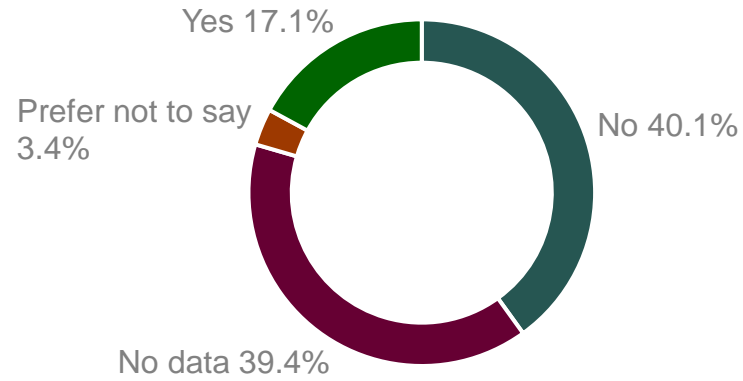


Sexual Orientation - Teaching new starts

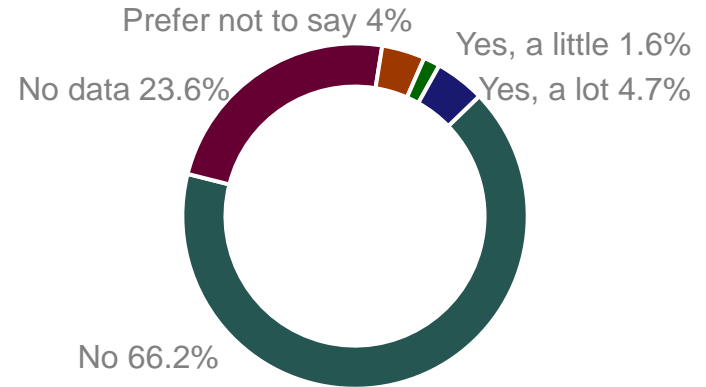


Leavers

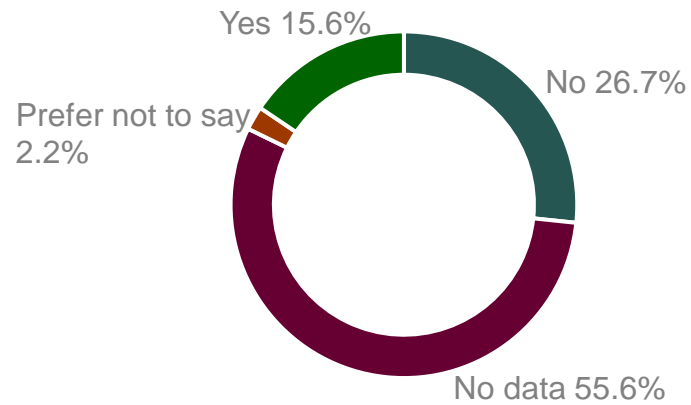
Carers - Non-Teaching leavers



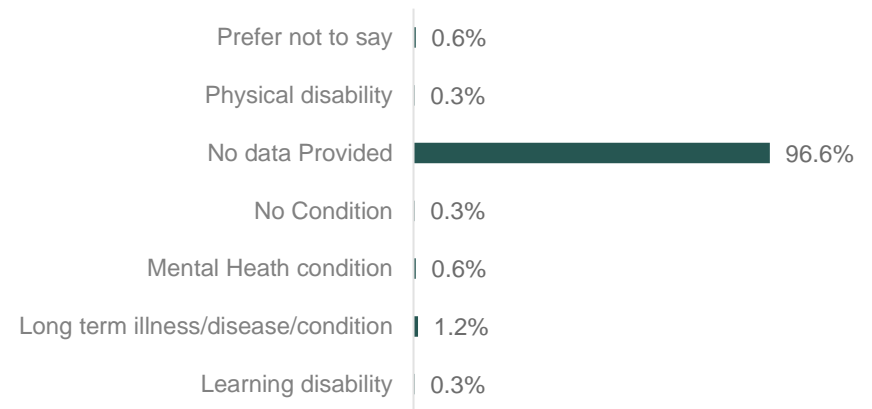
Disability - Non teaching leavers



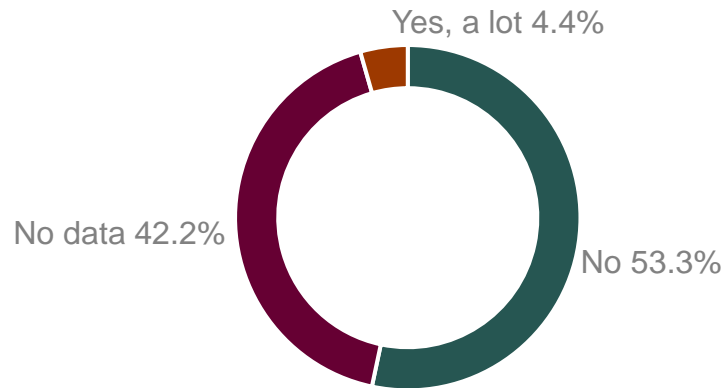
Carers - Teaching leavers



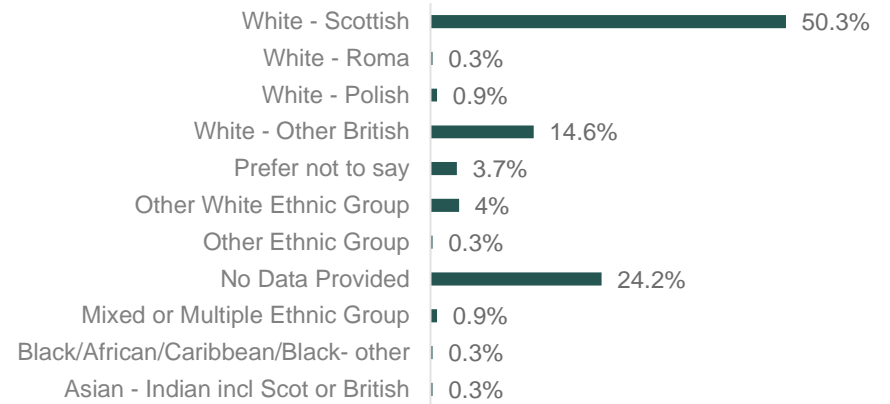
Health condition - Non-Teaching leavers



Disability - Teaching leavers



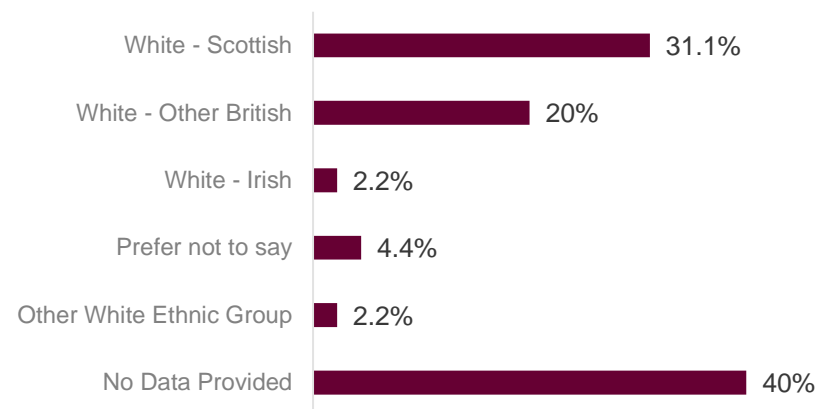
Ethnicity - Non-Teaching leavers



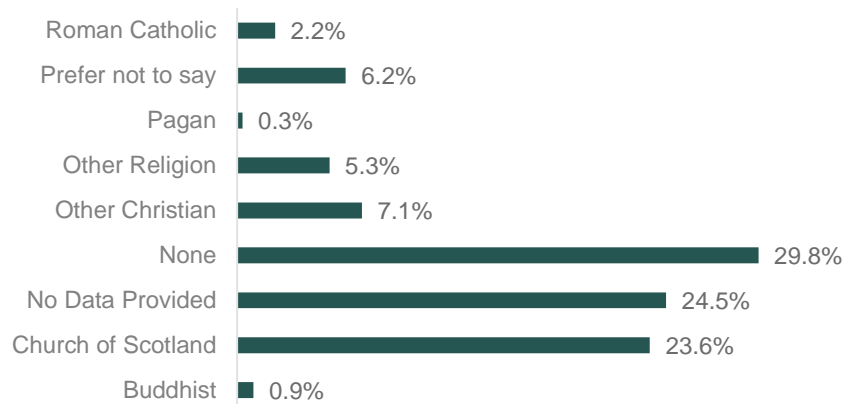
Health condition - Teaching leavers



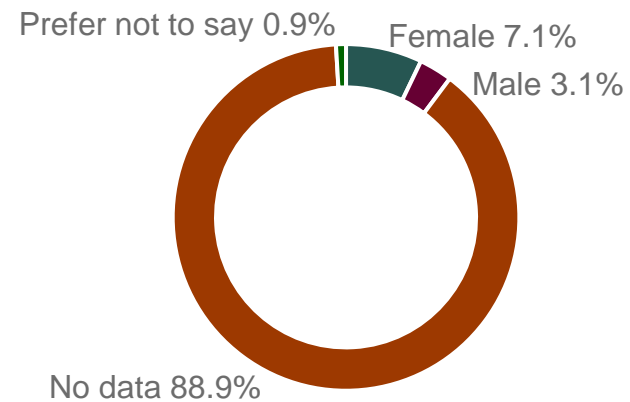
Ethnicity - Teaching leavers



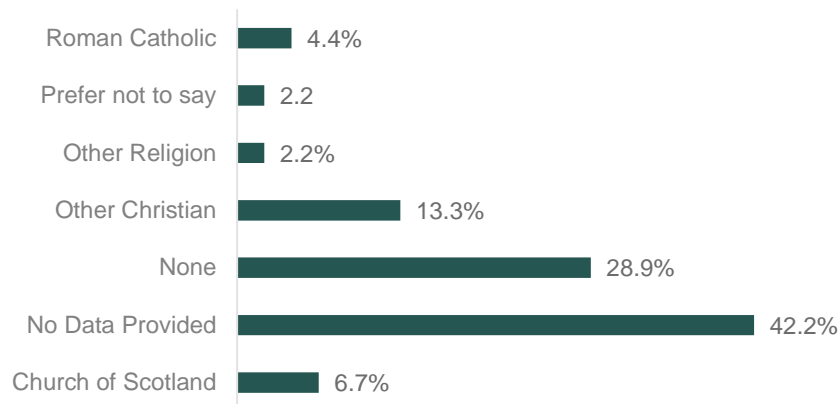
Religion -Non-Teaching leavers



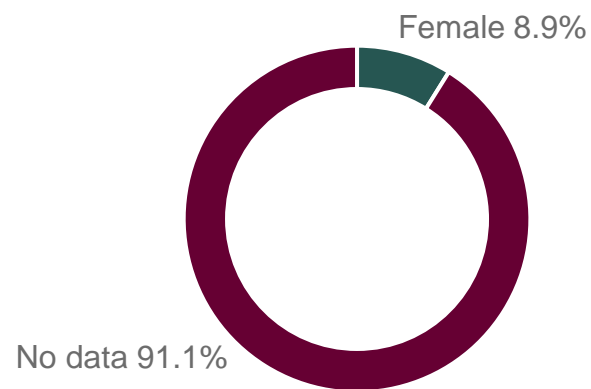
Sex - Non-Teaching leavers



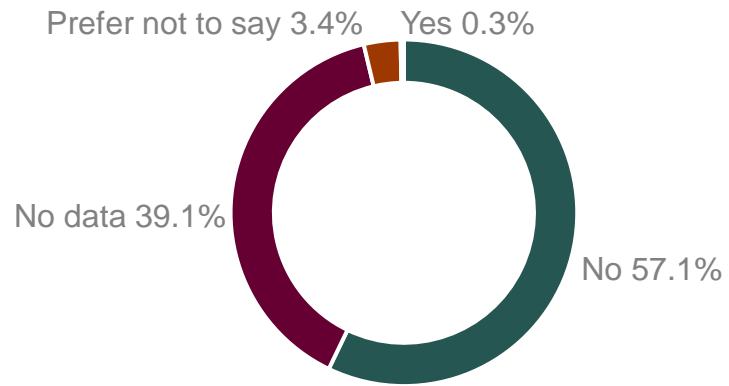
Religion -Teaching leavers



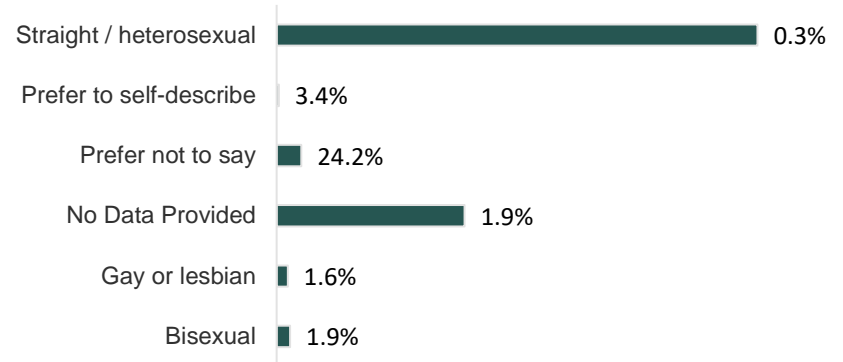
Sex - Teaching leavers



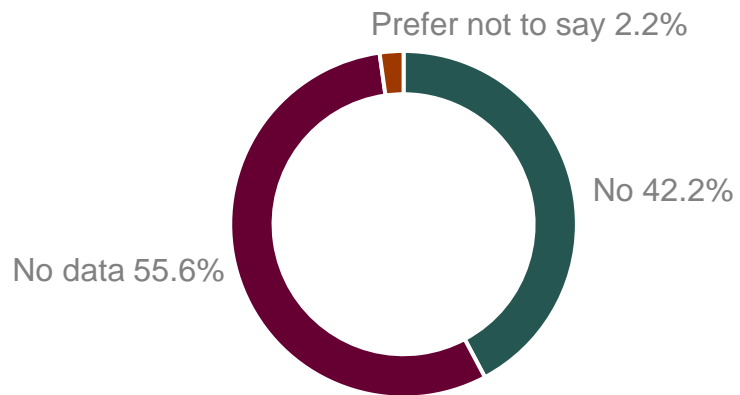
Transgender - Non Teaching leavers



Sexual Orientation - Non Teaching leavers



Transgender - Teaching leavers



Sexual Orientation - Teaching leavers

