

Report for:
ACTION/INFORMATION

Item Number:

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	NO
Title	Report on Care Leavers Equalities Survey 2020
Responsible Officer(s)	Carolyn Fair – Director Children and Families
Author(s)	Carol Yates – HOS Leaving Care and HST
Portfolio(s)	Cllr Yvonne Johnson
For Consideration By	Corporate Parent Committee
Date to be Considered	10 th December 2020
Implementation Date if Not Called In	
Affected Wards	None
Keywords/Index	Care Leavers Equalities Survey

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide the committee with the results and proposed actions resulting from the Care Leavers Equalities Survey Sept/Oct 2020 and to invite any additional views or ideas to improve the Action Planning resulting from the survey.

1. Recommendations

N/A.

2. Reason for Decision and Options Considered

3. Key Implications

Care Leavers Equalities Survey October/Nov 2020

This survey was developed in response to young people sharing concerns and experiences with their workers and the Horizons service, about their experiences of discrimination. Young people wanted a forum to share their views and experiences but wanted a degree of anonymity in doing so.

The survey was answered by 32 young people between the ages of 17–22 years of age. That is 8% of the care leaver population in Ealing. Although a smaller return than previous surveys, the survey captured a broad spectrum of ages, genders, ethnicities and religious beliefs. This level of response is

reflected in a variety of discussions relating to discrimination and racism that young people feel very emotional about sharing their feelings about these issues. For this reason, we arranged for counselling support for anyone who wished to take up the offer at the conclusion of the survey and individuals were able to have immediate contact made with them if they had an immediate concern.

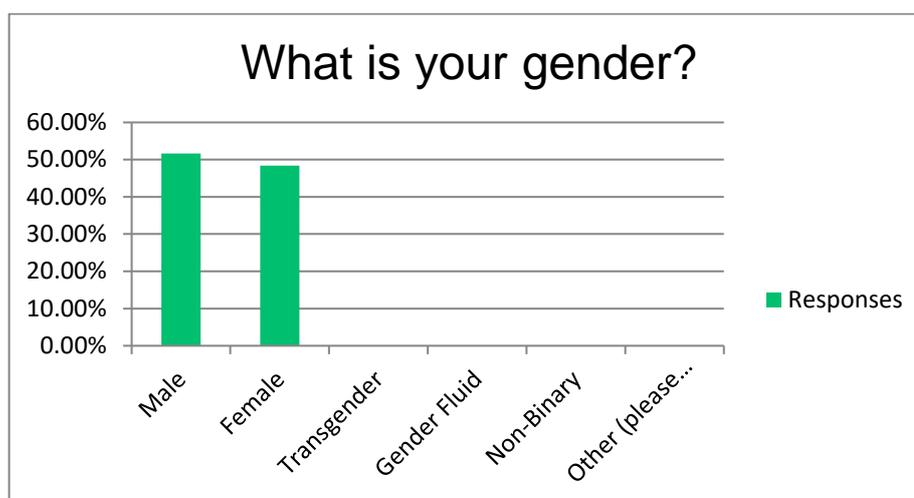
We recognise that it takes a lot for young people to feel safe enough to discuss these delicate issues.

The survey went to young people open to the leaving care service from 16-25 years and there was a good cross section of ages in the respondent cohort.

1. How old are you?

- 3 x 17 years
- 5 x 18 years
- 7 x 19 years
- 11 x 20 years
- 1 x 21 years
- 4 x skipped

2. What is your gender?

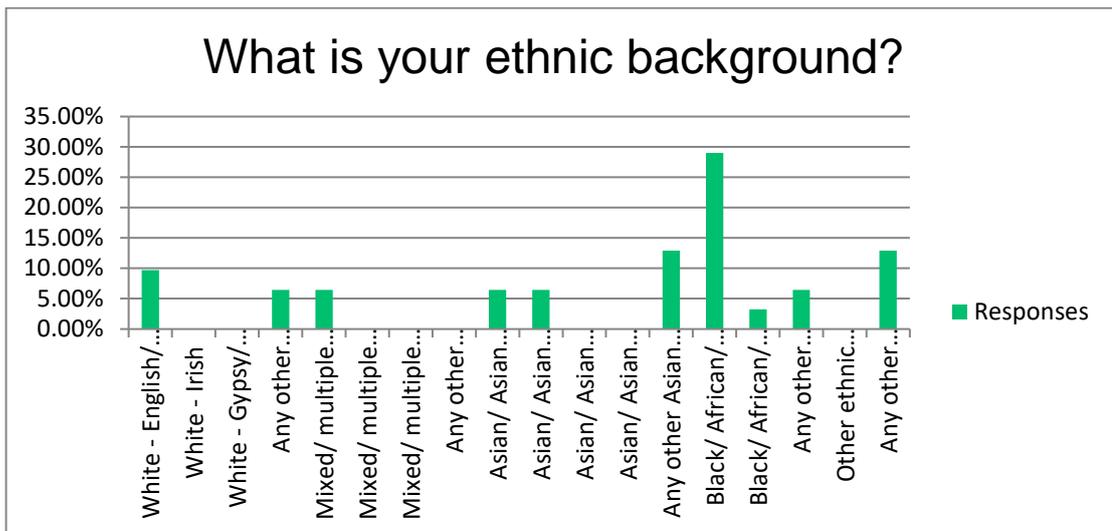


There was a good balance of respondents in relation to gender with 52% of males and 48% females responding.

3. How would you define your sexual identity?

59% respondents defined themselves as Straight or Heterosexual. 9% defined themselves as their gender. 3% defined themselves as Gay and 3% as Bisexual and 25% declined to answer.

4. What is your ethnic background?

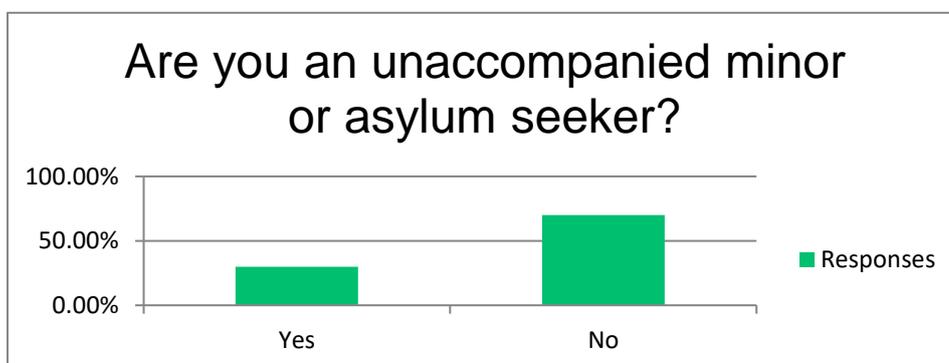


5. How would you describe your ethnic background?

Free Text:

Afghani
 Mixed Asian and White British
 Black African Caribbean x 11 young people
 White British x 3 young people
 Mixed English and Arab
 Mixed- black, white, Native American
 Pakistani x 2
 Persian
 Tajok (Indonesian)
 Vietnamese
 Mixed White/black Caribbean
 Skipped 6

6. Are you an unaccompanied minor or asylum seeker?



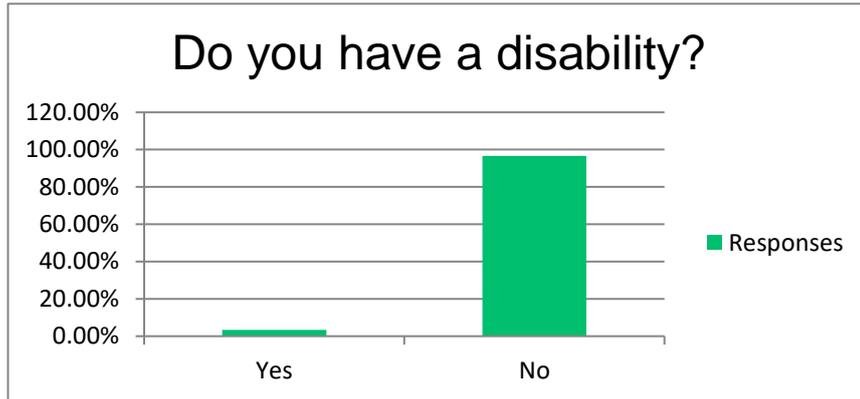
30% of young people identified as being an unaccompanied minor or asylum-seeking young person. This mirrors the overall picture in the Care Leaving population in Ealing.

7. What is your religion (if any)?

39% of respondents described their religion as Islamic and 25% as Christian. 3% were Sikh, 3% Buddhist and 3% did not know. 6% had no religion. 21% did not respond to the question.

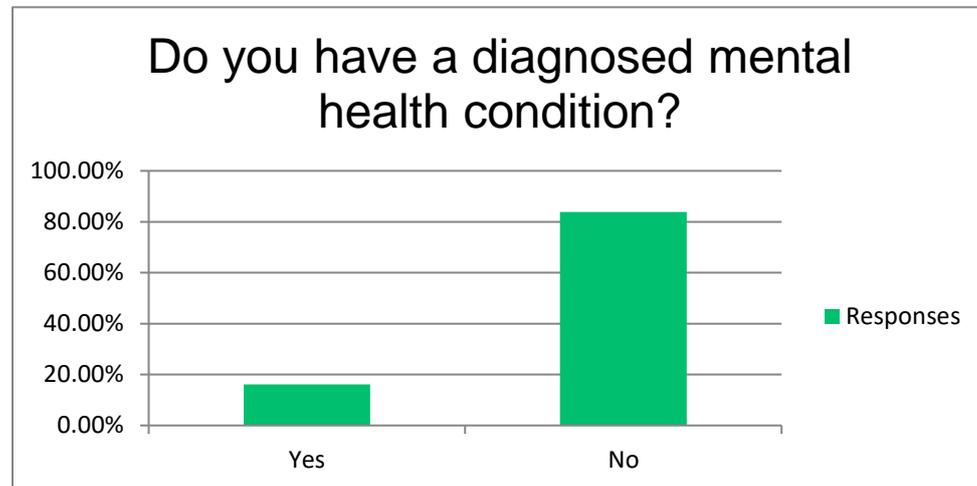
8. Do you have a disability?

Yes	3.33%
No	96.67%



3% of young people identified as having a diagnosed disability.

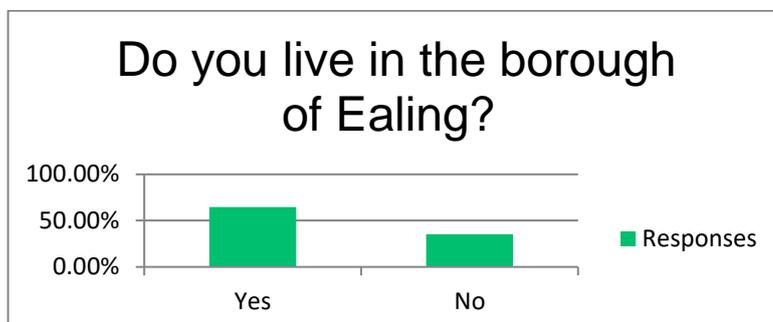
9. Do you have a diagnosed mental health condition?



16% of young people who responded have a diagnosed mental health condition.

10. Do you live in the borough of Ealing?

Yes	64.52%
No	35.48%



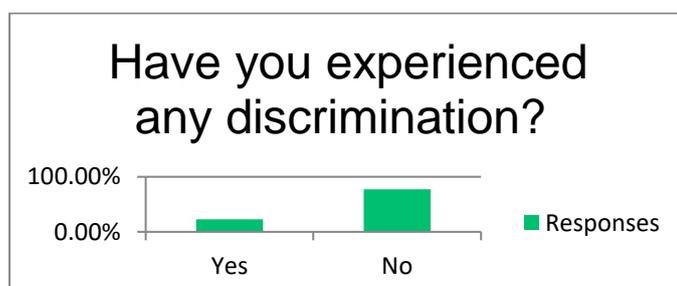
Again, this is a good reflection of the percentages of young people across the whole leaving care population who live within Ealing or Outside of the Ealing borough. Interestingly there was no indication from the returning information that living in Ealing or outside of Ealing was a factor on whether a young person had faced discrimination. There was also no correlation between living out of borough and the level of support young people felt they had to deal with issues of discrimination.

11. What type of accommodation do you live in?

Foster care	3.23%	1
Staying put in foster care post 18th birthday	22.58%	7
Residential children's home- age 16-17	3.23%	1
Semi-independent accommodation	16.13%	5
Living independently (e.g. quota or private rented)	22.58%	7
Other type of accommodation (please explain)	32.26%	10

Having explored the data there is a variation to be made to the above figures when those that ticked other are taken into account. Semi-independent is 22%. Independent living is 26%. In the "other" category 15% were living with family and 3% in temporary accommodation.

12. Have you experienced any discrimination?



Yes	22.73%
No	77.27%

23% of young people have experienced some form of discrimination.

13. If yes, can you tell us more?

Young people's quotes

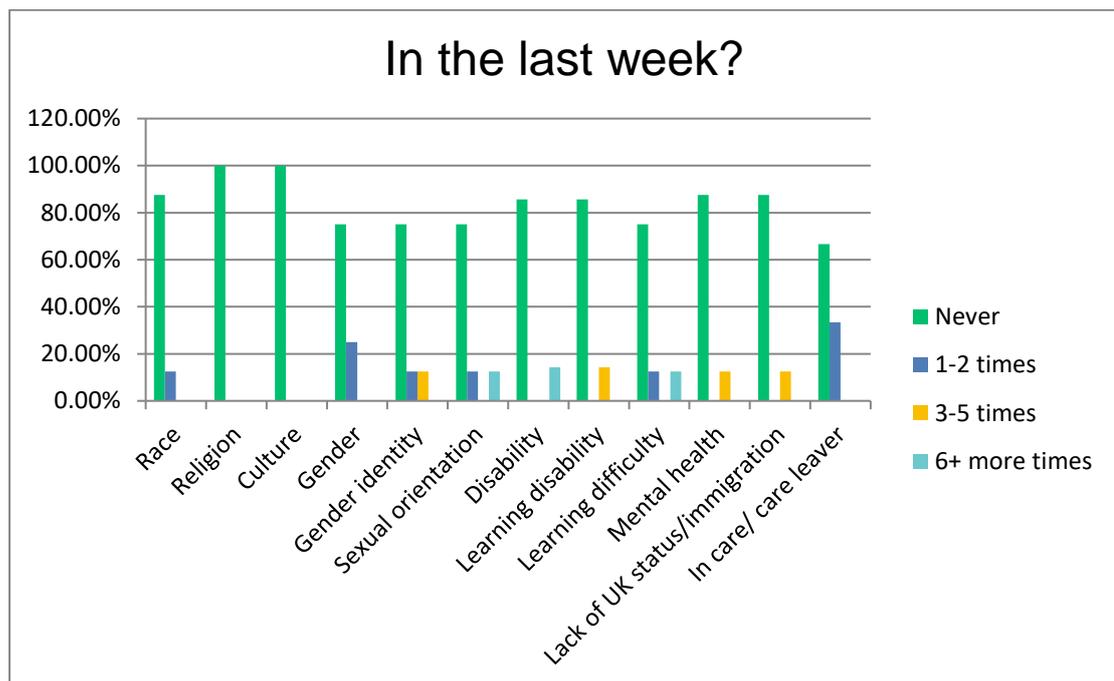
Name calling /Bullying.

I've mostly experienced discrimination in education, where I felt teachers and academics held low expectations of me due to me being black and being someone who was in/previously looked after.

I have applied for accommodation when I was 16 and I was entitled to it, even though I was promised a place and start my life and get on with my studies, I was never informed by any of my social workers about the matter. I have been told my place is secured and I was to receive information about it but every time I have asked my social worker about the matter, they denied the matter and said it was under process and until today I do not have a place to stay and not settled to finish my university.

Race.

14. How many times have you experienced discrimination because of the following factors?

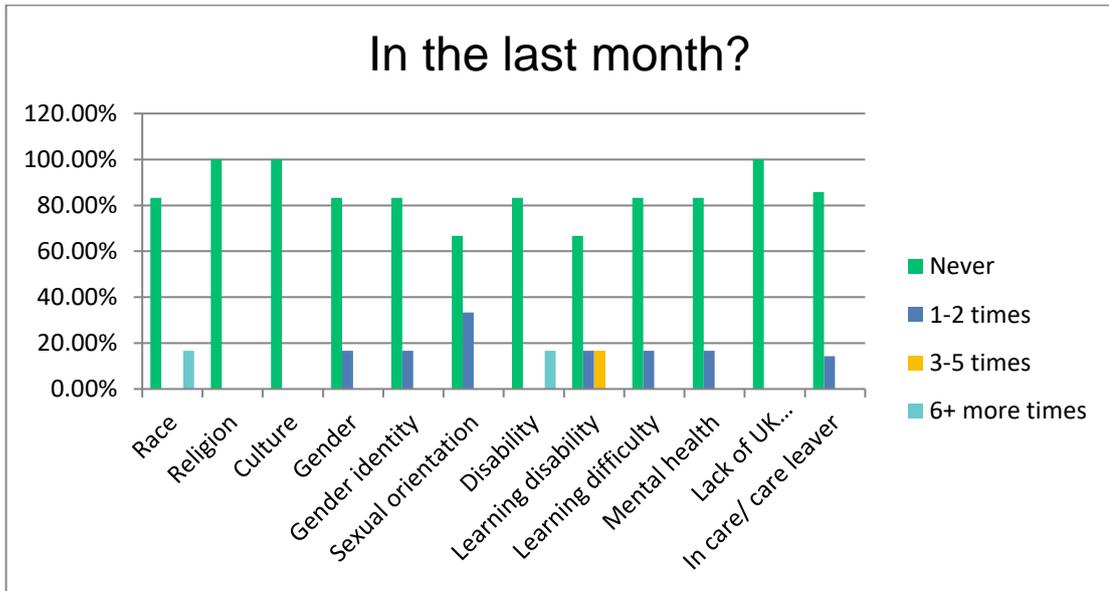


The survey ran from the end of August to mid October 2020. In the last week 12.5% of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their race. 25% had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their gender. 33% of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to being in care or being a care leaver.

In the last week 12.5% had experienced discrimination 3-5 times in relation to their gender identity. 12.5% had experienced discrimination in relation to their learning disability. A further 12.5% had experienced discrimination 3-5 times in relation to their mental health.

12.5% of young people had experienced discrimination 3-5 times in relation to their lack of UK Status/ Immigration.

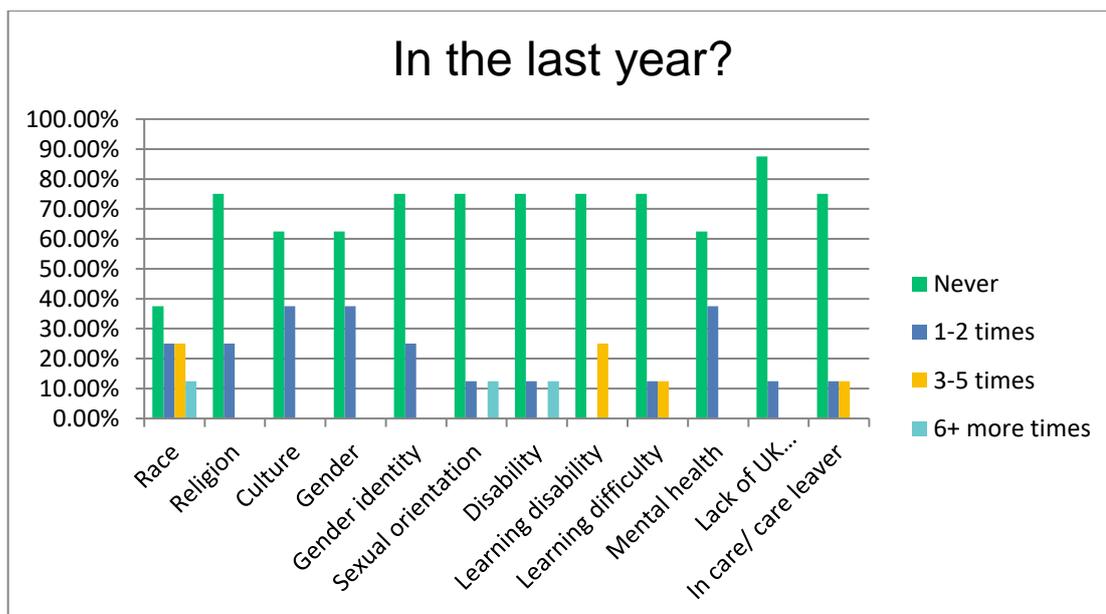
In the last week 12.5% young people had experienced discrimination 6 or more times in relation to their sexual orientation. 14.3% had experienced discrimination 6 or more times in relation to their disability and 12.5% had experienced discrimination 6 or more times in relation to their learning difficulty.



In the last month 17% of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their gender. 17% had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their gender identity and in the last month 33 % of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their sexual orientation.

In the last month 17% of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their learning difficulty and 17% of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their mental health. 14% of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their care/care leaver status.

In the last month 17% of young people had experienced discrimination 3-5 times in relation to their learning disability and 17% of young people had experienced discrimination 6 or more times in relation to their disability.



In the last year 16.5% of young people had experienced discrimination in relation to their race. 25% of those young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times a further 25% had experienced discrimination 3-5 times and 12.5% had experienced racism 6 times or more in the last year.

In the last year 25% of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their religion. 37.5% of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their culture. 37.5% of young people had experienced discrimination in relation to their gender and 25% of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their gender identity.

In the last year 12.5% of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their disability. 37.5% of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their mental health and 12.5% of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their lack of UK status/ immigration status.

In the last year 12.5% of young people had experienced discrimination 1-2 times in relation to their care/ leaving care status.

In the last year 25% of young people had experienced discrimination 3-5 times in relation to their learning disability and 12.5% of young people had experienced discrimination 3-5 times in relation to their learning difficulty.

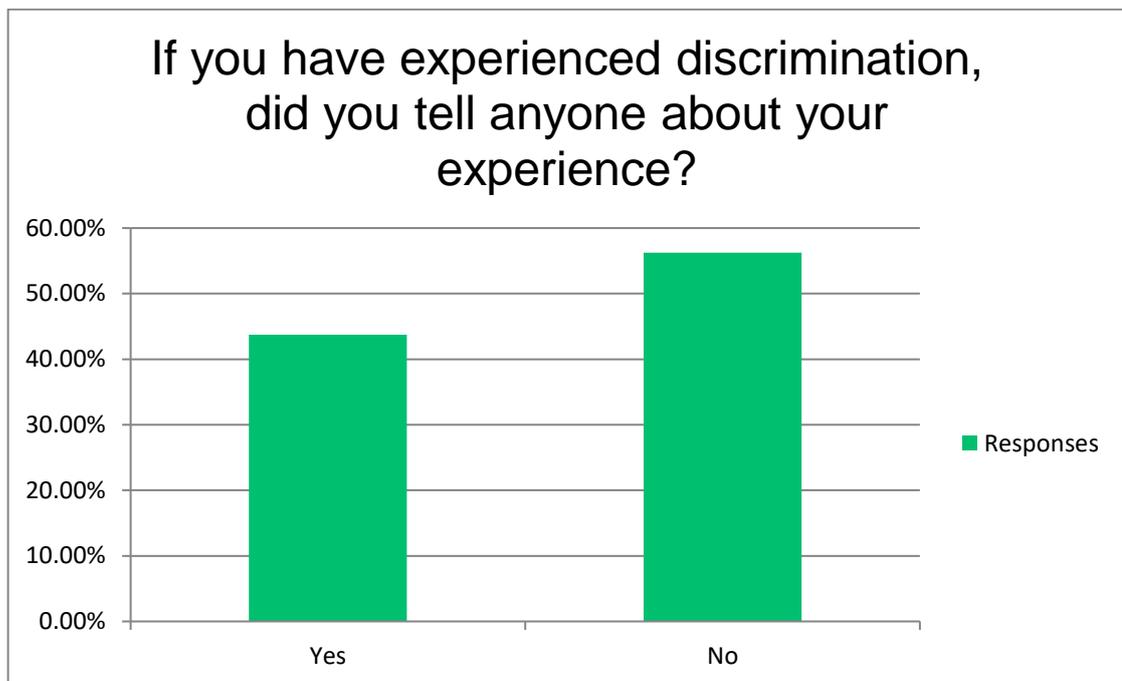
In the last year 12.5% of young people had experienced discrimination 6 times or more in relation to their sexual orientation and 12.5% of young people had experienced discrimination 6 times or more in relation to their disability.

37.5% of care leavers are facing discrimination on a regular basis with race, sexual orientation, disability and mental health being the main sources of discrimination, closely followed by gender, immigration status, mental health, culture and care status.

12% are experiencing discrimination on a regular basis some as frequently as 6 or more times a week.

15. If you have experienced discrimination, did you tell anyone about your experience?

Yes	43.75%
No	56.25%



Only 44% of young people told anyone else about their discrimination. This highlights a need for work to be undertaken to ensure young people have access to someone to discuss these experiences with.

16. If yes, who did you tell?

It is positive to see that there is an array of professionals and support networks that 44% of young people impacted by discrimination have felt able to talk to and have trusting relationships with. These include Social workers, support staff where young people live, college tutors and their friendship groups. The issue remains that 56% of young people were not able to share this information.

- Close friends or people I trust
- My counsellor
- Friends
- Social worker
- Staff
- People that I know who can give me support and advice
- Social services and key workers
- Carer

17. If no, why not?

Quotes from young people

Sometimes I keep it to myself because I know even if I talk to someone my situation will not change nor will I be fully supported.

I never did tell.

Embarrassing.

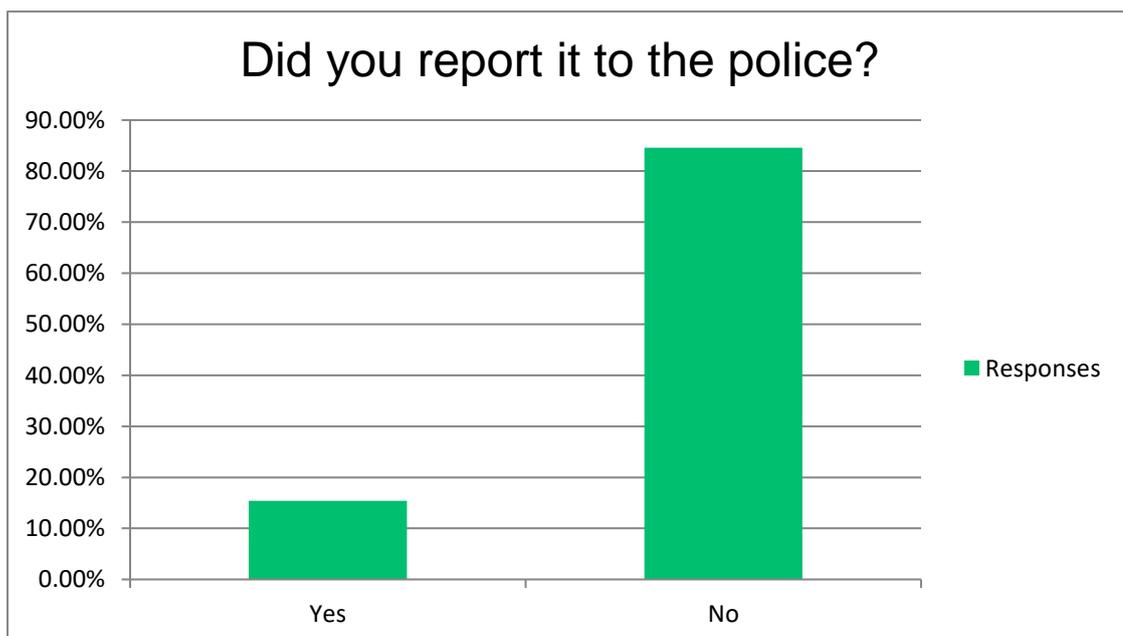
I haven't experienced discrimination and if had then I wouldn't tell anyone as I don't feel comfortable discussing it.

Some of the reasons that young people have not told other people are because they do not think things will change, some feel embarrassed by it and others fear they will not be supported. This concurs with other reasons that our care leavers have told us they do not want to discuss issues of discrimination but they have also shared that it makes them feel vulnerable and unsafe. They fear that people who do not share the same experiences of discrimination as them will not understand and will minimise the impact.

The experiences they have had are often painful and distressing and if they open up, they feel they may not be able to contain the upset and anger that they have buried in order to manage day to day.

18. Did you report it to the police?

Yes	15.38%
No	84.62%



19. If yes, what was the outcome?

Young people's quotes

They will keep me up to date.

They told me to block that person and stay away from them.

I just let things go not worth fighting over and getting angry and stressed out.

Young people's experience is that they do not receive a response that makes them want to report discrimination to the police and it is clear from the feedback below that they may not realise what is deemed a crime in relation to discrimination.

20. If no, why not?

Young people's quotes

Not taken seriously.

Because I don't have any problem.

Being left out of key meetings and experiencing microaggressions are much harder to prove, especially when you are someone who has newly entered a profession and you're being discriminated against by more experienced professionals.

If it's not a violent encounter, then no I don't need to report it.

I did not live a normal life. Growing up without having anyone is not the easiest thing.

I had mental breakdown until today that sometimes question myself why am I even living.

I don't have problem with the police.

Too late.

Fear or negative outcome.

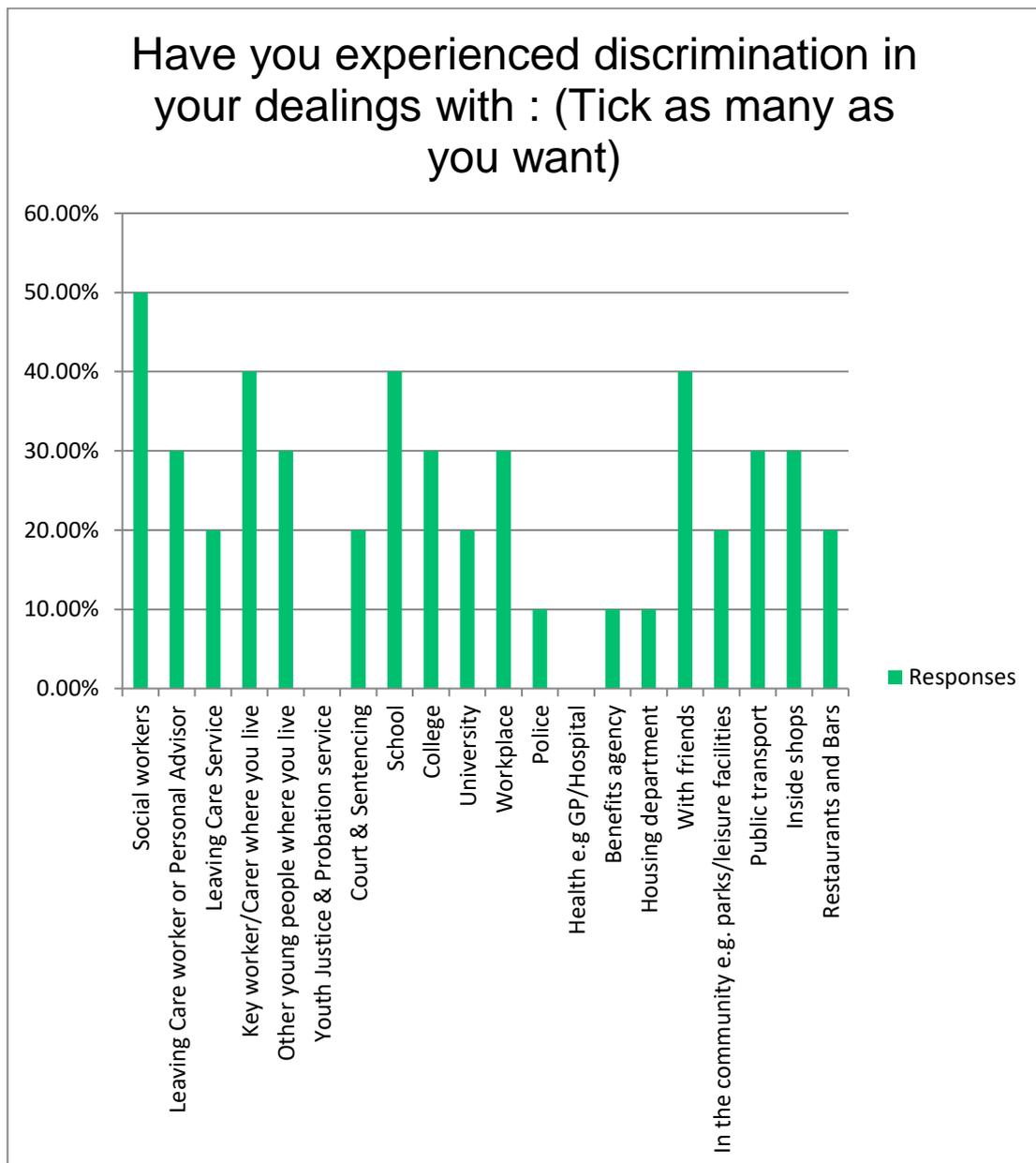
Immediate action was taken re the young person who has expressed his distress and his worker and psychologist are supporting him, but it clearly highlights the emotional impact of experiencing discrimination and internalising the experience as opposed to feeling that you will be supported.

It is clear that work needs to be undertaken with our partner agencies to alert them to the reasons that young people do not feel safe or do not feel reporting hate crime is justified.

Their responses to question 21 mean that it is by no means just a police issue as if young people are telling workers and not being advised to report crimes then the police will not even know of the level of discrimination young people are facing.

There is a need for multi-agency training where these findings can be shared with all partners and joint plans to develop professional's skills and understanding and a proactive response to our young people's daily lived experience of discrimination is developed.

21. Have you experienced discrimination in your dealings with: (Tick as many as you want)



50% of young people who responded to this question felt they had experienced discrimination from social workers, 40% of those who responded had faced discrimination from foster carers/ key workers 40% from school and 40% from friends.

30% had experienced discrimination from leaving care workers or personal advisors and 20% from the leaving care service as a whole.

30% of young people faced discrimination within college, 30% within their workplace and 20% within university.

30% identified discrimination when they used public transport and inside shops with 20% experiencing discrimination in restaurants and bars.

A further 20% experienced discrimination in their community e.g. parks and leisure facilities and 20% experienced discrimination in their dealings with courts and sentencing.

10% of young people experienced discrimination in their dealings with housing, benefits agencies and the police.

Those that responded "other" highlighted strangers in the community, college and within sports activities.

It is noted that no one had experienced discrimination within Youth Justice or Health professionals.

22. If you ticked any of the above, would you please give us brief details

Young people's quotes

I am waiting for court to give me an update.

I had a link worker make inappropriate comments about me potentially marrying a white Irish man when she was doing a home visit. It was said as a joke, but it was clear to me that she was uncomfortable with idea of me - a young black girl - being fostered by a white family. I have also experienced similar comments from my sisters' foster carers who over the years have made hurtful, snide remarks about me being fostered by a white family.

Whilst at university I frequently experienced discrimination in the form of being followed around in shops by security and microaggressions from mainly white students. I also held a part-time job whilst at university and was called in 'talked to' twice by the store manager for offences that other staff had made. This, I believe, was because I was the only black staff member working at the store.

I was also once fostered by a carer who reported that she thought I was going to hit her when we'd entered an argument. I felt like she was making me out to be far more aggressive than I actually was, and it still upsets me that she thought of me that way, especially at a time when I was extremely vulnerable and would never attempt to physically harm anyone.

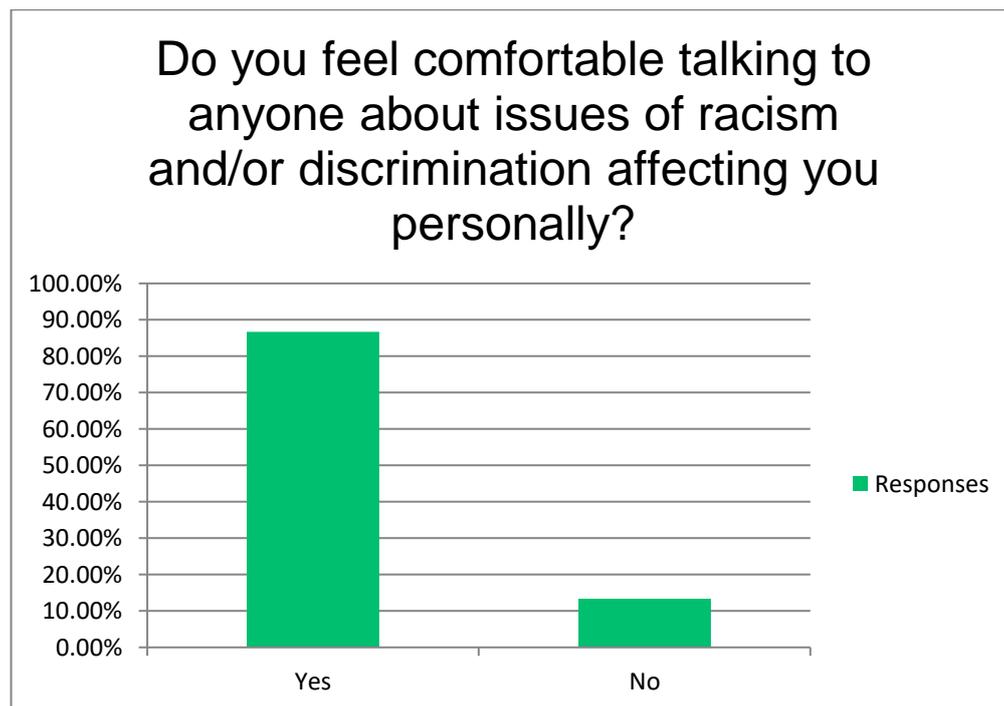
I was called a Terrorist in college because I'm Muslim and people assume that I would wanna kill the innocent and also with friends I've been called dozens of things.

This was a while ago but honestly I think it's wrong to discriminate people or to judge them and life is too short in my opinion there is more to life then discrimination against others and we will not be here forever so I live life 1 day at a time take things slow and get rid of any negativity.

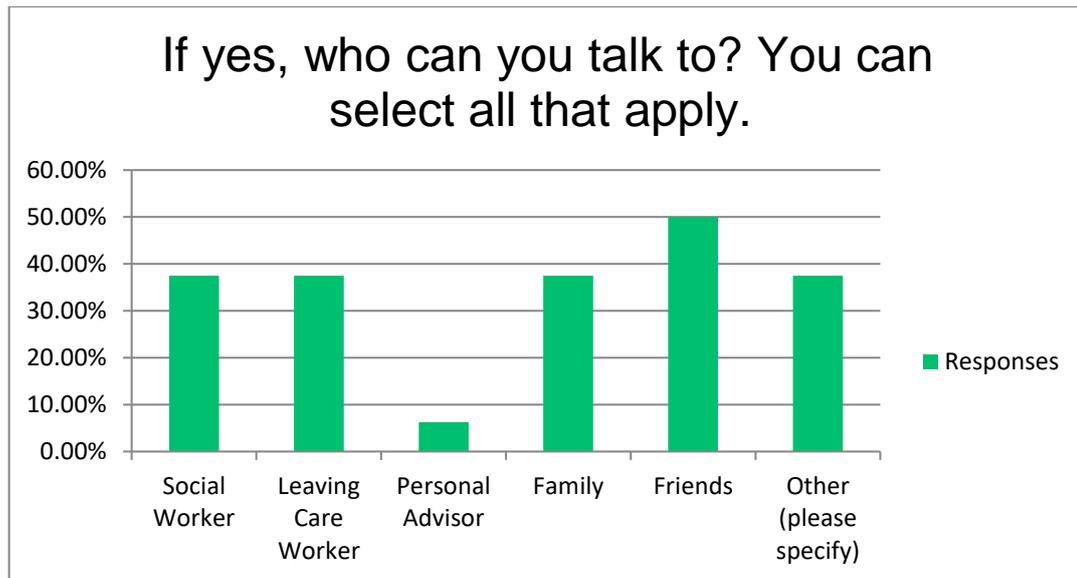
23. Do you feel comfortable talking to anyone about issues of racism and/or discrimination affecting you personally?

Yes	86.67%
No	13.33%

13% of young people do not feel comfortable talking to anyone about the issues of discrimination they face. Any future plan has to work for those who may be more cautious to engage and further discussions with Youth Justice and Health colleagues may support our efforts in this. We need to ensure that those who feel least able to discuss the issues they are facing are worked with proactively and for all our young people to see that there is no tolerance for discrimination



24. If yes, who can you talk to? You can select all that apply.



Social Worker	37.50%
Leaving Care Worker	37.50%
Personal Advisor	6.25%
Family	37.50%
In those supporting them. Friends	50.00%
Other (please specify)	37.50%

Other included carers, therapists, keyworkers in placement.

25. If you answered no, is there anything we could do to help?

31 young people skipped this and the one person who did respond said there was nothing we could do help re enabling them to have someone to talk to.

This may indicate that they were overwhelmed with the enormity of finding solutions to this or that they believe that is a question for services working for young people to develop with them.

26. What do we need to know to really make a difference to any inequalities issues you may face?

Young people's quotes

Nothing.

The right way address and ensure the young person is being supported till the end if the problem.

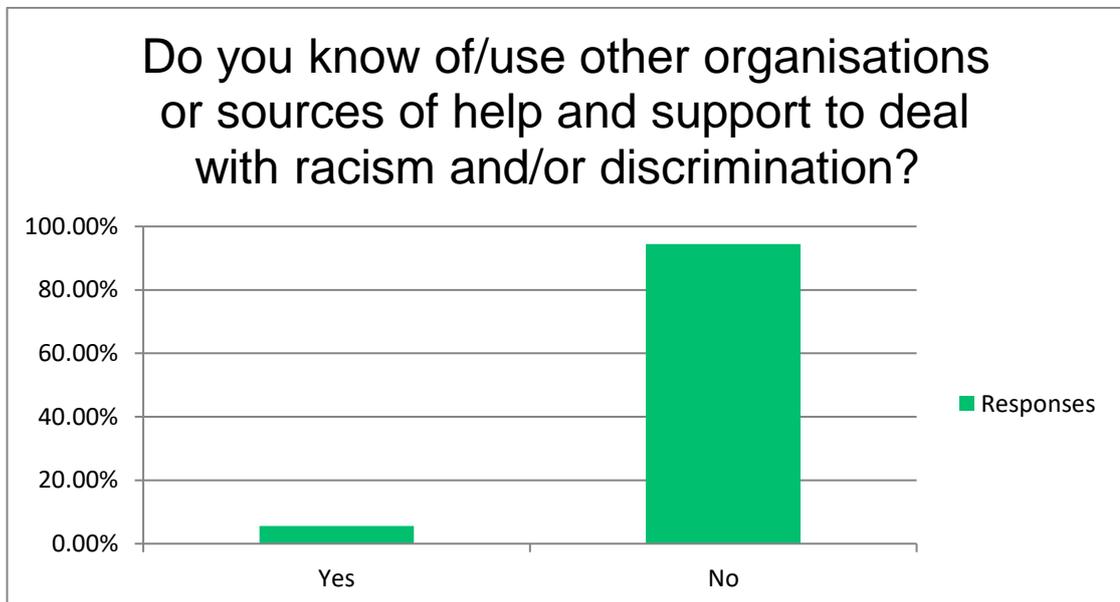
You need rigorous implicit bias training from all staff at Ealing council. This is particularly important for carers who foster children from a different ethnic background to themselves, and social workers who are dealing with vulnerable children, who may have low self-esteem.

I don't have any issues with this matter.

These important comments will all be taken into account within a future action plan for addressing issues of discrimination for care leavers.

27. Do you know of/use other organisations or sources of help and support to deal with racism and/or discrimination?

Yes	5.56%
No	94.44%

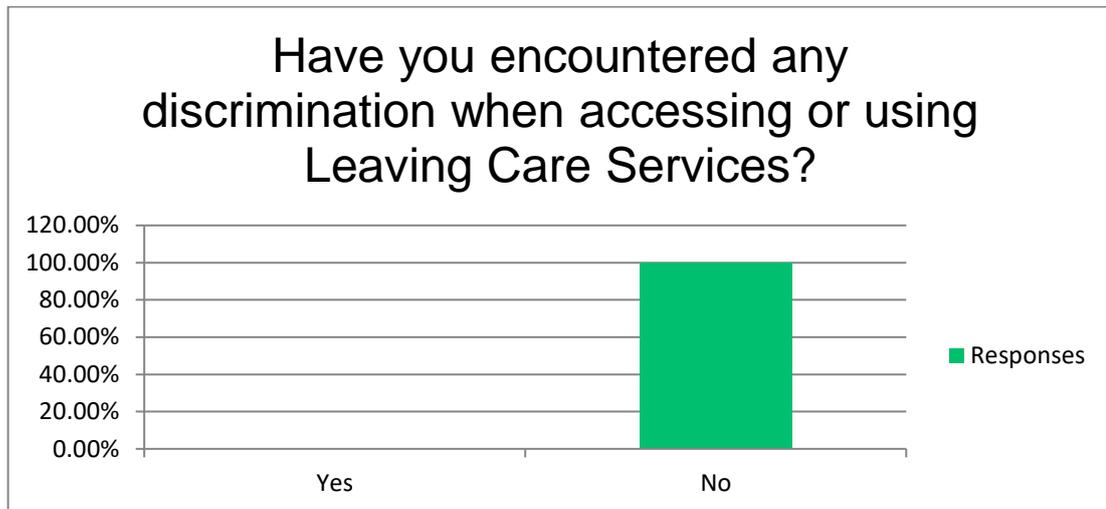


There is a clear action required to ensure that all care leavers have access to and contact details for organisations that will support them with issues of discrimination.

28. If you answered yes, can you tell us more?

The one response to this question is that they would go to Children's Services.

29. Have you encountered any discrimination when accessing or using Leaving Care Services?



The response here contrasts with a previous question (21) where young people had experienced discrimination from the Leaving Care Service, but the service will be using the information from the previous question to develop our improvement plan in this area.

It is possible that it is this question's position in the questionnaire i.e. one of the last questions, that has meant young people have chosen this response or it may be that the issues faced by young people is that leaving care have not been responsive enough in supporting their young people in issues of discrimination they face as opposed to direct discrimination from Leaving Care staff.

3 young people have raised the issue of permanent accommodation when we have contacted them about their immediate need at the end of the survey.

As a precaution we will defer to the responses in question 21 of people's experience from the leaving care service so that we can be sure we are taking the appropriate action in service improvements.

30. If you answered yes, please explain:

No responses.

31. What could your allocated worker do to support you with issues of racism and/or discrimination?

Young people's quotes

Nothing.

N/A.

I need a place to stay and settle like a human being.

Because I don't have family here.

Nothing.

They help me to resolve the issue and if it gets out of hand they help me to defuse the situation.

Not a lot I have trust issues with people so I'm not at ease to talk to ya

32. How could the Leaving Care service do better at showing it is committed to equalities, anti-racism and anti-discriminatory practices?

Young people's quotes

Nothing.

Nothing

N/A.

To know what's wrong and what's right

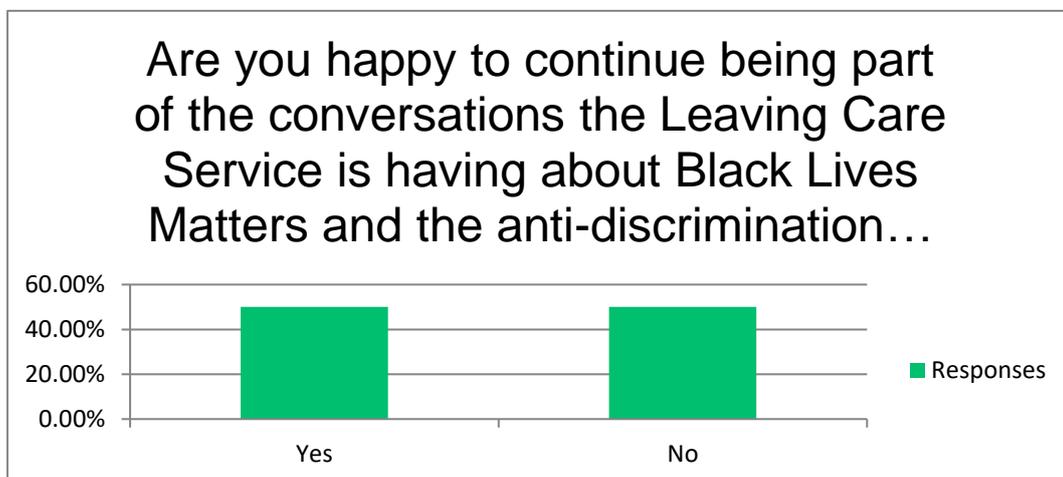
Nothing.

By standing up for what's right.

Hopefully have decent people who are and will help anyone who feels Discriminated against.

33. Are you happy to continue being part of the conversations the Leaving Care Service is having about Black Lives Matters and the anti-discrimination agenda?

Yes	50.00%
No	50.00%



50% of young people wish to continue being part of the conversations and planning for positive changes to services in relation to discrimination which is wonderful. We will be proactively seeking the views of young people throughout the development and implementation of an action plan to improve in this area.

34. If you have an immediate concern or issue that you would like us to help you with and wish to leave your contact details, you can do so below. Alternatively, you can contact your allocated worker. If you do leave your details it will be treated in the strictest confidence.

6 young people left details and were contacted as their responses came back into the service.

Conclusion

We are grateful for the time and energy young people have spent in completing this survey. It provides us with rich data and personal experiences with which to develop a multi-agency action plan to improve services to Looked After children and Care Leavers.

There is a high level of discrimination faced by our young people in many areas of their lives.

37.5% of care leavers are facing discrimination on a regular basis with race, sexual orientation, disability and mental health being the main sources of discrimination, closely followed by gender, immigration status, mental health, culture and care status.

12% are experiencing discrimination on a regular basis some as frequently as 6 or more times a week.

Whether this is institutional racism or individual unconscious bias or low expectation and lack of aspiration for them as individuals it has a significant impact on their lived experience on a daily basis.

Young people have experienced discrimination and low aspiration by those around them because of their care status, their immigration status, gender, culture, religion and ethnicity.

Young people with mental health needs and disability or learning difficulties face discrimination in a variety of settings and a high proportion of discrimination is faced by young people due to their sexual orientation or gender identification.

The survey shows that discrimination is experienced in a variety of settings including social care, educational and work settings, within placements, in contact with partner agencies and from young people's peer groups.

Young people want to be involved in finding solutions and they want us as professionals in their lives "*to do the right thing*" and "*to stand up for what is right*".

It is clear that the level of support for some young people in relation to discussing issues of discrimination does not feel safe enough and there is a low knowledge of support services and a limited understanding of what constitutes a crime.

Low levels of reporting are partly due to young people's belief that anything will be done, partly due to not feeling safe and partly due to a lack of proactive support from those around them in supporting them to report incidents.

Young people have asked that as part of the solution staff require training and a full understanding of Micro Aggressions and Unconscious Bias. Micro Aggressions can be opportunity limiting and as emotionally harmful as overt discrimination.

Young people have asked us to ensure there is training and understanding in relation to transracial placements and that workers own bias does not impede on support to the young person.

There is no difference in the discrimination levels nor of the support accessed for those who live inside and outside of Ealing.

Actions:

1. Development of a Leaving Care Equalities Action Plan.
2. Sharing the survey's high-level data with all young people within the leaving care service aged 16-25, Children's Services and with partners including Police, Housing, Education, Commissioning and Community Safety.
3. The need to ensure all care leavers have access to someone they can trust and who will support them in issues of discrimination and racism
4. The need to ensure staff have adequate training in areas of discrimination.
5. The need to ensure that LC staff support young people in challenging areas of discrimination.
6. For young people to be a part of / participate in the working group to develop the Action Plan
7. The need to embed feedback on discrimination in our pathway planning, Risk and Needs Assessments with young people
8. The need to provide young people with information and contact details of services that have expertise in dealing with support around discrimination
9. To provide Corporate Parent Committee with regular updates on the progress of the Action Plan.

4. Financial

Financial impact on the budget

There is no anticipated financial impact at this stage in progressing an Action Plan. It is anticipated that training implications could be absorbed into current budgets.

5. Legal

There are no legal implications to this survey.

6. Value For Money

7. Sustainability Impact Appraisal

N/A.

8. Risk Management

The main risks evidenced in this report are in relation to the support young people in Care and Leaving Care can access and the longer-term impact of discrimination on life opportunities for this vulnerable group.

9. Community Safety

Young people experiencing discrimination whilst in the community is a key issue for the Action Plan. Community Safety will be invited to help us in its development. The risk to young people of feeling devalued and discriminated against could impact on their vulnerability to be led into antisocial activities if they feel disenfranchised.

10. Links to the 3 Key Priorities for the Borough

The council's administration has three key priorities for Ealing. They are:

- **Good, genuinely affordable homes**

There is no direct link to this priority.

- **Opportunities and living incomes**

Young Care Leavers are already a vulnerable group having experienced loss and trauma in their lives. Discrimination whether individual or institutional needs to be proactively erased in order for our care leavers to be provided with the opportunities of all young people regardless of any protected factors they may have. Limited aspiration or discrimination that erodes their life chances must be addressed and changed in all spheres of their lives.

- **A healthy and great place**

Young people want to live in the area in which they feel safe to walk the streets and to access the facilities without fear of discrimination.

11. Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion

Young people have a right to fulfil their potential and have aspirational support for them as they move through to independence. The work from this report should benefit looked after children and care leavers in this area.

12. Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications

N/A.

13. Property and Assets

No property implications.

14. Any other implications

N/A.

15. Consultation

Consultations have been via the report and the meetings held with members and officers.

16. Timetable for Implementation

N/A.

17. Appendices

N/A.

18. Background Information

N/A.

Consultation (Mandatory)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent to consultee	Date response received	Comments appear in paragraph:
Internal				
Cllr Johnson	Portfolio holder Children's	3/9/20		
Judith Finlay	Executive Director Children Adults Public Health	30/11/20		
Angela Healy David Hall	Leaving Care Team Managers	27/11/20		
Carolyn Fair	Director Children and Families	26/11/20		
External				
Care leavers	Via survey	30/10/20		

Report History

Decision type:	Urgency item?
EITHER: Key decision OR Non-key decision OR For information (delete as applicable)	Yes / No (delete as applicable) [Is it a general or special urgency key decision, which was not included in the Forward Plan with at least one month's notice ?] If yes, set out the reasons both why the item was not included and why a decision cannot be deferred.
Report no.:	Carol Yates x 6157
	Head of Service Leaving Care /HST