



Diversity and Inclusion

2024-2026

A renewed commitment to creating an environment where everyone feels that they belong and are accepted.



A message from our CEO

Since our foundation in 2001, we have been a diverse company. Whether online or in-person, we support a wide range of customer demographics and needs. It's a source of great strength that our teams are representative of the communities we serve, providing inspiring role models for children. Over the last two years we have made great strides in making Explore a more inclusive space to benefit our children and people. We strive to create a welcoming environment where each individual feels part of the Explore family, and we now have better resources, policies and frameworks in place to realise this goal.

We recognise that the next part of our journey is to integrate these principles fully into the organisation. We want to empower everyone to be truly fearless by creating safe spaces for conversations, fuelled with curiosity and respect. It's very important that

everyone at Explore feels that they can bring their best, authentic self to work. By all being consciously inclusive, we help create the conditions for everyone to thrive.

The other big challenge we face is increasing diversity in our central team. Whilst there is no quick fix, we are committed to a specific plan and set of actions that can begin to shift the dial in this area.

Our 2024-26 Diversity & Inclusion Manifesto establishes where we are now, our aims and practical steps for achieving it. We're all in it together. We're excited to fearlessly tackle these areas, build upon our strengths and take our achievements to the next level.



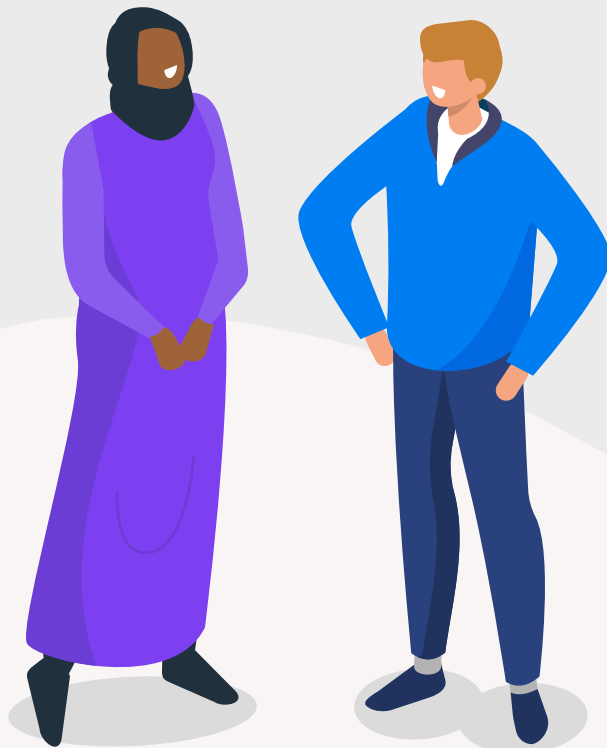
[Bill Mills, Founder and CEO](#)



At Explore Learning we dream bigger

We are committed to creating an environment where each individual feels that they belong and are accepted, where every person, member and employee, can bring their whole self into our learning space and be at their best. We know this work is never complete.

**We are in it for the long term
and promise to make lasting
and meaningful change.**



Our key outcomes include:

- ✓ Being an organisation where everyone can fully bring who they are to work every day.
- ✓ Our people gaining a better understanding of inclusion and consciously inclusive behaviours.
- ✓ Becoming a more diverse central team.

Our commitments:

- ✓ Create a specific plan to improve the diversity of our central team to ensure it more accurately represents our customers & employees across the business.
- ✓ Embed our Staff Networks across the employee journey, so they flourish and help drive improvements.
- ✓ Leadership will continually engage with Inclusion Champions Network and Staff Networks to improve inclusion at Explore.
- ✓ Renew current resources and create new ones, where gaps are identified.
- ✓ Continue to develop the accessibility of all our digital tools.
- ✓ Review and renew our SEND training resources for staff so they are up to date and reflect our offering.
- ✓ Tell more stories about the lived experiences of our people, to build greater connection and understanding between each other.

Our People



Where are we now?

- Our Senior Leadership Team is **40% female**.
- Based on the disclosures from our staff equality data, different characteristics are well represented across the business (e.g., sexuality, disability, religion, gender).
- The ethnic diversity of our tutors is significantly above the UK national average (over 60%) but our Central Team (10%) does not match this.
- Since 2022, we have significantly increased the diversity conversation through panel events, e-learning and learning resources. Over 50 staff and member resources have been created and over 200 staff have attended our panel events.
- Introduced staff networks to allow spaces for our people to connect with others and voices to be amplified, by meeting with leadership twice a year.
- Our data collection of staff equality information has improved since 2022 from 15% disclosure to 77%.

Where will we get to?

- Improve our Central Team ethnic diversity to match the UK Census national average of 18.3%.
- We will achieve this by creating a specific plan to address this gap. We will start by speaking to our staff to understand any barriers and hear suggestions of what can be improved across the organisation.
- We will share our plan and diversity data with our people.
- Culturally embed conscious inclusion as a part of what makes a great leader and manager at Explore.
- Review our policies to ensure a greater level of inclusivity e.g., religious event leave, adoption & fostering, family absence.
- Research and implement how we can further evidence and measure our D&I goals so we can understand where we are and track our progress.



Our Staff Networks



Where are we now?

- We created 6 staff networks in 2022. These were designed as spaces for staff with similar characteristics and lived experiences to connect, share and provide suggestions for the business. They are run by staff from centres and the central team.
- Our current networks are: Parents & Carers, Mental Health, LGBTQ+, Faith, Ethnically Diverse and Neurodiversity & Ability.
- Improvements and changes have happened as a direct result of staff network feedback e.g., customer conduct policy, flexible working, wellbeing resources.
- The networks are highly valued by staff as a place to connect with other people like them. At times, attendance & engagement has been challenging.

Where will we get to?

- Promote our staff networks via our internal communication channels and resources e.g., printed posters, intranet, newsletters.
- Ensure the networks are embedded into the new employee screening & onboarding journey, so staff are aware of networks when they join Explore.
- Ask members of our staff networks for feedback and suggestions of what they'd like for the networks, so we can ensure activities align with needs.
- Our leadership team will meet with our staff network co-ordinators at least twice a year to discuss specific topics to advance inclusion and our commitments.



Leadership and Governance



Where are we now?

- We are conscious that not all experiences and characteristics are represented in our leadership positions. Therefore, intentional activities are required to ensure voices are heard.
- The leadership team receives updates on D&I progress and plans, including key topics from our Inclusion Champions and the networks.
- Our Inclusion Champions Network meets every 6-8 weeks, with representatives across the business, led by our Head of ESG & Inclusion.

What we will do

- Review our manifesto of commitments bi-annually.
- Leadership and Inclusion Champions Network will hold each other accountable for their actions and be open to receiving feedback and accountability to move forward our aims.
- Our leadership team will visit centre teams for “learning walks” to speak to our people about key D&I topics or experiences, to help inform our decisions & plans.
- Continue to ensure the Inclusion Champions group accurately represents our employees, with members from different roles and levels, as well as diverse backgrounds.



Resources

Where are we now?

- Since our previous manifesto, we have created over 50 staff and member resources to advance inclusion, from an educator or line manager perspective.
- Our resources are available for all managers and tutors, via our intranet.
- Created a customer conduct policy, which outlines what we expect from our customers and protects our staff if they are discriminated against or threatened, based on their characteristics or who they are.

What we will do

- Review and renew our D&I module (created in 2022) which has been completed by almost 90% of Explore staff.
- Embed, empower and build confidence in our staff with our customer conduct policy.
- Continue to renew and create resources where gaps are identified, to build staff knowledge and skill.
- Use our staff networks to ask our people what current challenges they face so that new resources are created to meet the right needs.



Accessibility

Where are we now?

- We have a space for all to be their authentic selves by actively listening and having compassion for each individual.
- We embody relationship building and foster an environment of open communication and acceptance within our interactions.
- We have become a member of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme.
- Improved our candidate experience (e.g. we now ask for any interview adjustments needed and candidate pronouns).
- In 2024 we became a Disability Confident Employer.

What we will do

- Continue to embed the Sunflower Lanyard Hidden Disabilities scheme across all centres, so everyone knows the part they play.
- Document and continually update all accessibility information for our physical centres, so this can easily be shared with prospective and current staff when requested.
- Make our digital tools and products as accessible as possible, now our UX, Product and technology teams are in-house.



Education



Where are we now?

- Improved inclusivity in our content – over the past 3 years we have worked with staff and families to include content that reflects the lived experience of our members.
- Ongoing review of our content for historical accuracy and incorporating a wider variety of cultural references.
- Launched and embedded accessibility features into Compass.
- Improved the inclusivity of our school and community workshop offering.
- Launched a partnership to support Refugee families, as part of our Big Dream Programme. This has supported 20 families so far with fully funded memberships.

What we will do

- Review and renew our SEND training resources for staff so they are up to date and continually reflect our offering.
- Publish a short e-course for dyslexia, to further support our members in this area.
- Ensure our Big Dream Programme continues to support under-resourced families, specifically families who are new to the UK and for whom English may be an additional language. Our aim is to support at least 100 families with this over the next two years.
- Understand that content improvement is an ongoing process and that all audiences should be considered when reviewing or creating new resources.



Celebrating diversity



Where are we now?

- In 2023 and 2024, we created and published a Celebrations & Awareness calendar for our staff, so it can be used to highlight important events for members in their local area and for their teams.
- Since 2022, we have recognised key cultural events that are relevant and resonate with both our customers and staff, via our external & internal channels.
- Shared activities and resources in our member portal so families can learn and participate, should they choose.

What we will do

- Empower centre teams to recognise and celebrate religious festivals and events that are prominent in their local area and/or are relevant to their staff and members.
- Continue to share optional resources in our members area and in centres, during key celebrations or times of the year.
- Tell more stories about the lived experiences of our people, to build greater connection and understanding between each other.
- Take a dynamic approach to sharing stories about the lived experiences of our people, through different communication modes and channels. These will build greater connection and understanding between each other.

