



FROM THE DIANA AWARD

TRANSPHOBIC BULLYING STAFF GUIDE



Government
Equalities Office

WHY IS THIS WORK SO IMPORTANT?

Although in many ways society has come a long way in regards to LGBT+ rights and shifting attitudes, trans issues are sadly still at the very infancy of mainstream public understanding. Views invalidating trans identities are broadcast regularly in media in a manner which would certainly be deemed unacceptable if regarding LGB identities. These views can have extremely damaging effect on trans young people and their self-image.

Over the past five years, reported hate crimes in the UK against trans people have risen by a shocking 200%. It is therefore vital that young trans people feel supported and accepted in school, that a zero tolerance policy on transphobic bullying is enforced, that anti-trans language and views are challenged and the environment strives to be as inclusive as possible. In turn, the younger generation will foster a society where trans people feel safe and valid.

WHAT IS BULLYING?_

It's important to define bullying behaviour in order to distinguish it from one off incidents and relating conflict. It's also important to outline the definition in your policies and work towards a specialised policy for anti-HBT bullying.

THE DIANA AWARD DEFINES BULLYING BEHAVIOUR AS_

Repeated, negative behaviour that is intended to make others feel upset, uncomfortable or unsafe.

TRASPHOBIC BULLYING BEHAVIOUR IS_

The targeted abuse of an individual who does not identify as cisgender. They may for example identify as trans, non-binary, gender-fluid, agender etc.

Young trans people are one of society's most vulnerable groups with

- 4 out of 5 self-harming
- 45% attempting suicide
- 1 in 10 receiving death threats at school

Therefore it's vital school environments are a comfortable space for trans individuals.

!DID YOU KNOW?

According to Stonewall's School Report 2017, only 2 in 5 of LGBT+ young people reported that their school had actively said transphobic bullying is wrong.

HOW MIGHT TRANSPHOBIC BULLYING MANIFEST ITSELF?



VERBAL

- Transphobic slurs
- Intended misgendering or misuse of pronouns
- Verbal gestures and intimidation.



PHYSICAL

- Physically attacking someone due to their gender identity
- Forcibly undressed to 'prove biological sex'.



INDIRECT

Transphobic bullying can also be INDIRECT. This is where actions or words are carried out which are not spoken or inflicted directly upon someone who is not cisgender yet the bullying behaviour is still targeted. For example:

- Transphobic rhetoric on social media
- Excluding someone due to their gender identity (a common example being refusing to share a changing room with someone who identifies as trans. Exclusion can also manifest itself on social media or in gaming)
- Outing someone either on social media or through sharing information verbally without consent.



Misgendering can often be a genuine error especially as binary ideas of gender are so ingrained. Effort should be visible in calling people by correct names or pronouns once this has been addressed. Creating a school culture that respects pronouns and challenges gender stereotypes is necessary to prevent these incidents.

CHALLENGING TRANSPHOBIC LANGUAGE

It's important to challenge transphobic language inside and beyond the school walls. Fostering a school environment where students and staff are encouraged to be upstanders when witnessing transphobic language, helps trans students to feel happy, safe and comfortable during one of the most important and formative periods of their life. Not only should blatant transphobic slurs be addressed but also misgendering and the perpetuation of gender stereotypes, all of which contribute to a wider picture of intolerance.



CHARLIE,
ANTI-BULLYING AMBASSADOR

"There are some unkind words used against transgender people such as 'tranny', 'he-she', 'shemale'/' We're not animals, we're people who just have different brain wiring to what you're comfortable with. I was scared of what reaction I would get. Thankfully the reception I got was overwhelmingly positive but unfortunately others aren't so lucky."

GENDER IDENTITY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

CIS: Umbrella term for people whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth e.g. Someone who was assigned female at birth and identifies as female.

TRANS: An umbrella term for someone whose gender identity does not sit comfortably with the sex they were assigned at birth.

NON-BINARY: An umbrella term for someone whose gender identity does not sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'.

AGENDER: Someone who does not identify with having a particular gender.

GENDER FLUID: Someone whose gender identity is not static or fixed. It may change on a daily, monthly or yearly basis.

GENDER QUEER: A person whose gender identity is neither male or female, is in between or beyond genders or is a combination of genders.

INTERSEX: A person with both male and female sex organs or other sexual characteristics.

PRONOUNS: Words used to refer to someone's gender, for example, he, she, him, her. Some people choose to use gender neutral pronouns such as they/ them/theirs or ze/zem/zir.

RESPONDING TO DELIBERATE MISGENDERING

It helps to explain the differences between biological sex and gender identity when explaining the meaning of trans and other non-cis identities. Check out our worksheet on the following page as a useful activity

WAYS TO RESPOND

"You know xxxxx prefers to be referred to by xxxx pronouns. I would ask that going forward you respect their wishes"

If they continue to refuse:

"xxxx would feel safer and more comfortable if you used xxxx pronouns. Would you agree that everyone should feel safe, happy and comfortable in their time at school"?

"Referring to xxxx by their preferred pronouns doesn't infringe or affect your life in any way but does prevent them from feeling upset or unsafe"

"Perhaps you should do some research on trans/non-binary/gender-fluid experiences. Listen/watch real life stories from people that may identify in these ways particularly surrounding the importance of pronouns and report back to me on what you learn".

NB: ENSURE THESE CONVERSATIONS TAKE PLACE PRIVATELY

DID YOU KNOW?

"Only 4 in 10 students reported their teachers have said that transphobic bullying is wrong"

- Stonewall School Report 2017

BRIGHT IDEA

Introduce pronoun badges in your school and ask students to design them as part of a competition. This gets everyone involved in a fun and engaging way and opens up the conversation.

KEY TERMS_

Define the following terms below and consider how they are different



GENDER IDENTITY



SEXUAL ORIENTATION

GENDER EXPRESSION



BIOLOGICAL SEX



REPORTING AND RECORDING_

All schools should have an Anti-Bullying Policy in place but as best practice we recommend having either a separate Anti-HBT policy or specific sub-section that addresses this type of bullying.

Use your existing reporting and recording framework to create a specific process for transphobic bullying. It's important that bullying behaviour directed to someone due to their protected characteristics (including sexual orientation and gender identity) has a separate process to comply and display accordance to the Equality Act. It will also

reassure trans students that they are supported, any discrimination is actively challenged and their identity is valued. In turn this reduces the likelihood of mental health problems and promotes higher academic attainment and social integration.

! DID YOU KNOW?

Under the Equality Act of 2010 and the Education Inspections Act of 2006 schools are required to 'eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender reassignment, promote equality of opportunity, foster good relations and promote the safety and wellbeing of young people in their care'.

! BRIGHT IDEA

Create a survey to establish how staff and students feel about the frequency and impact of transphobic bullying?

Questions could include:

- How often do you witness HBT bullying?
- Do you feel like transphobic language is challenged effectively?
- What are the most common examples of transphobic language you hear?
- If someone wanted to change the gender they identify and present as would they feel supported?
- Are trans issues adequately addressed in lessons?
- Are pronouns discussed and respected?

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT _

- Have trans role models come into school to deliver workshops or assemblies.
- Include trans role models in your LGBT role model displays.
- Look into options surrounding your uniform policy. How can it be updated to be less gendered and binary?
- Are gender neutral bathrooms an option in your school? If not currently doable, think about how they can be integrated into future development plans.
- Include books by trans authors and featuring trans characters in the library.
- In PE try to minimise the gendering of sports and allow students to choose the sports they wish to play, or amend the curriculum so people of all genders, play some of all sport offered.
- Where possible, when it comes to overnight residential trips, again avoid separating into male and female dormitories.
- Sex Ed can be traumatic for young trans people as the content of the sessions are often so grounded in biological sex. We suggest including some content that is relevant to trans experiences of sex and avoid splitting the sessions into 'girls' and 'boys'.
- Ensure documents like permission forms include more than simply male/female when asking for gender. Other - please specify, for example, (preferred and official names)
- Normalise the use of pronouns. Start classes when the academic year commences by introducing your name and preferred pronouns. Invest in pronoun badges or encourage a culture where asking for people's pronouns prior to making assumptions is standard practice.
- Make allowances wherever possible: for example, if a trans student would rather wear their t-shirt during a swimming lesson perhaps allow for t-shirts to be optional throughout the entirety of the student body for these sessions.
- Trans flag visibility.
- Run assemblies about what it means to be trans with real life testimonials. Challenge misconceptions that people can only be trans with bottom surgery for example and introduce ideas about gender that are removed from embedded binary ideals.
- Train staff in trans awareness. Gendered Intelligence give fantastic training in this field and offer packages that work with student groups in educational settings.

EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY OPENLY TRANS PUPILS IN YOUR SCHOOL AT PRESENT, START PUTTING THINGS IN PLACE FOR THE FUTURE SO THAT ANY PROSPECTIVE TRANS STUDENTS FEEL WELCOMED, INCLUDED AND SUPPORTED.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS_



COMMUNICATE

Having an open channel of communication is key. If you are at all unsure or get stuck, ask the young person what they would like you to do and how they would feel most comfortable going forward. Many discussions surrounding transinclusivity fail to take into consideration the views and needs of the pupil(s) and this is truly key. If faced with, for example, not enough budget for a gender-neutral toilet or third changing room, ask the student(s) what they would like to do. Situations like these can often be solved much more easily and with less expense than anticipated once these conversations are being had.



DOCUMENTATION

If a young person wishes to transition consider the administrative elements as well as the pastoral support. This includes the updating of all school databases and registers to include the student's preferred name, gender and if appropriate, pronouns in notes sections.

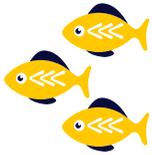


CHALLENGING GENDER STEREOTYPES

Part of creating an environment where young people feel able to freely express their gender identity without judgment includes challenging gender stereotypes. For example at primary level, challenge colleagues if students are pushed away from certain toys or activities because it's deemed 'inappropriate' for their gender e.g. girls being deterred from football. Avoid phrases like 'man up' and asking for a 'pair of strong lads' when requiring help with lifting.



FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS_



SCHOOL TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

If arranging a school trip or external sports fixture for example, where a trans student will be present, ensure that logistical elements like changing room and toilet facilities are considered beforehand, liaising with staff at the venue to ensure preparations are made. Avoid gendering dormitories on residential if possible. If travelling abroad with a trans student, consider that this can be a trigger for a number of reasons.

Security may question the young person if their passport details do not match how they present and a young trans person's body may look different through a security scanner (for example if their breasts are bound) leading to questioning. Ensure these discussions are had both with the student and with security personnel.

ZARA'S STORY

Zara was 10 when she decided she could no longer be a boy. Attending a primary school in South-West London she already had long hair, wore androgynous clothes and most of her friends were girls. Her parents took a lot of time to find out about being trans and supported her fully, discussing things in depth with the head and class teacher. Her transition was organized for a weekend and she left school early one Friday afternoon and the class teacher and head told the class that on Monday morning she was going to come back as the girl she had always known she was. They only told her class and the parents of children in the class. She came back on Monday and the only thing about her that changed was her name. She had very few problems; whenever a child, or parent of another child, tried to bully her, her classmates or staff would support her 100%. She stayed in school, did well in her SATs and continued to do very well at secondary school.



PREPARING PEERS

If a young person wishes to be known and/or present as a different gender, it's important to brief their peers in order to ensure they understand the change that is happening and make sure new pronouns and names are known. You may also wish, at primary level, to inform parents of students in the class to ensure going forward they also refer to the pupil in the correct manner. Please see the case study from the blog of trans activist Paris Lees, detailing a successful and supported transition in a primary setting.

Useful Links

www.net-aware.org.uk
Provided by O2 & NSPCC, this online tool is designed to help anyone understand what online applications do and how to use them

Access further information and advice on antibullyingpro.com/support-centre

Access free anti-bullying training online for all your staff team from the Anti-Bullying Alliance on anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/

Crisis Messenger Service

Test **DA** to **85258** if you are a young person experiencing a crisis, including being bullied for your gender identity or sexual orientation.

Educators Against Bullying

fb.com/groups/educatorsagainstbullying
We want to invite you to join a Facebook group for teachers, youth workers and other educators to share good practice, seek advice and support each other around the issue of bullying.

Get Involved

For more information about the training, including dates, please contact josh.buckland@diana-award.org.uk



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