



# INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING

developing an inclusive  
programme of study



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### **Stonewall**

[education@stonewall.org.uk](mailto:education@stonewall.org.uk)

[www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool)

Charity No 1101255

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# Foreword

The Government has made preventing and tackling homophobic bullying a priority for all schools. Ensuring that all young people can enjoy learning free from fear of bullying is the responsibility of every teacher, so providing teachers with the relevant knowledge and skills has never been so important.

However, in our 2009 groundbreaking research, *The Teachers' Report*, more than nine in the ten of the primary and secondary school staff polled by YouGov said they have received no specific training to prevent and respond to homophobic bullying. Many still start their teaching careers unsure about how to challenge homophobic behaviour and support young people who experience it.

Providing teachers with the information they need to do so doesn't have to be difficult. Simple and straightforward messages can be integrated into any form of initial teacher training, no matter what form that training takes.

Stonewall has a vision of a Britain where one day every young person grows up to secure every ounce of their potential. This practical guide will show you how to equip prospective teachers with the information they need to address homophobic bullying and provide the best possible education for young people, whatever their background.

## **Ben Summerskill**

Chief Executive Stonewall





# Your teaching career starts here...

Good initial teacher training (ITT) equips teachers with the information, resources and tools they need to help children and young people enjoy learning and fulfil their potential. But finding the time to teach trainees about the range of issues they might experience during their teaching career can be difficult.

Schools have a legal duty to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying, including homophobic bullying. All teachers should therefore be aware of their responsibilities under the law to address the problem and to support children and young people who sometimes feel excluded and isolated, for example lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) students and those with lesbian and gay parents and families.

Newly qualified teachers should begin their teaching careers with the confidence to challenge homophobic bullying and support all young people in their care, including LGB young people, from day one – wherever they teach.



**I was shocked to learn how real and present homophobic bullying is in primary and secondary schools.**

Primary GTP student

**Training materials on homophobia and sexuality are limited.**

Secondary course leader, ITT provider (East Midlands)

# So what's the problem?

Homophobic bullying is almost endemic in Britain's schools and can affect any young person at any stage of their education. It impacts on their self-esteem, confidence, achievement at school and, ultimately, their career and life aspirations.

As homophobic bullying is not just confined to the classroom, the school corridors or the playground, it's down to every member of the school community – from parents to headteachers and playground assistants to teaching staff – to have an understanding of what homophobic bullying is, and what they can do to prevent and respond to it.



**When people say 'gay'...  
I feel a lot worse than other  
people.** Mark, 8, has two mums



**I feel I need support in school  
to tackle homophobia, and  
possibly observe strategies  
being used by a more  
experienced member of staff.**

Secondary English GTP student

**65 per cent** of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people in secondary schools have experienced homophobic bullying

**98 per cent** hear the phrases 'you're so gay' or 'that's so gay' in school

**90 per cent** of secondary school teachers say young people in their school are bullied for being or being perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual

More than **two in five** primary school teachers say children in their schools experience homophobic bullying

**Three quarters** report hearing the phrases 'you're so gay' or 'that's so gay' in their schools

**Nine in ten** primary and secondary school staff have had no specific training to prevent and respond to homophobic bullying



# What's this got to do with our trainees?

All qualified and registered teachers have a duty of care to children and young people in their school. But trainee teachers – and many qualified teachers – are still unsure of their duties to promote young people's wellbeing and where this fits with their responsibility for pupils' academic achievement.

Teachers are required to tackle all forms of bullying, including homophobic bullying. Initial teacher training provides trainees with an invaluable opportunity to explore and discuss the range of challenges they may face in their teaching careers – such as homophobic bullying – and to feel confident in confronting it from day one.



**Dealing with homophobia should be a compulsory part of the PGCE course.**

Secondary PGCE student

**I think this issue should be taught to trainees to help support students and staff.**

Primary BEd student

Homophobic bullying can affect any young person, including those who:

- are lesbian, gay or bisexual
- are perceived to be lesbian, gay or bisexual
- have LGB parents and carers, family and friends
- are thought to be 'different'
- don't conform to gender stereotypes

# What is the role of ITT providers?

Initial teacher training prepares teachers for all aspects of school life, and Ofsted inspects ITT providers on what they are doing to ensure trainees have an understanding of equality and diversity issues.

This includes providing trainees with information about what homophobic bullying is and how to tackle it, as well as strategies for supporting young people, including LGB young people.

Integrating anti-homophobia work into initial teacher training not only meets providers' requirements, but also sends out a strong message to all trainees about its importance and, in particular, supports your lesbian, gay and bisexual trainees.

Teachers who feel confident to safeguard the wellbeing of children and young people they teach will ensure they fulfil their potential and make the most of their time at school.



**I strongly believe that initial teacher education needs to include more education on how to approach homophobic bullying.** Primary BEd student



**It's really important to talk with PGCE students about sexual orientation and homophobic bullying, not just because it hurts children and young people, but because they have a legal mandate to support and protect their pupils in the face of prejudice.**

Lecturer in Inclusive Education, ITT provider (London)

# It's everyone's responsibility

All registered teachers share a vision of their professionalism, which includes a focus on children and young people's wellbeing and creating environments where diversity is respected and equality promoted. Teachers come from many different backgrounds and as such will hold a range of views on different issues – for example, sexual orientation.

However, teachers need to understand that personal views which may cause harm or distress to young people or impact negatively on their education are not acceptable in school. This includes homophobic and discriminatory views which breach their responsibilities as qualified teachers.



**PSHE was about AIDS – the teacher didn't contradict that it was a 'gay disease' and implied what gay men did in bed was disgusting.**

Rachel, 18, independent secondary school



**We were just taught to be accepting in our PSHE lessons... we've also had some references in English e.g. one of the writers was lesbian, and we all just accepted it and it was just a fact.**

Pru, 16, academy (Wales)



As a Christian I believe that homosexuality is wrong. I believe that this mollycoddling of so-called gays is wrong. I have every confidence that as a teacher with over 30 years experience and as a head of year, I could discuss issues with girls who claim to be gay but I would probably not be very sympathetic.

Shannon, teacher, grammar school (East of England)

I teach PSHE (sex and relationships education), so it's a regular theme. Homosexuality is a deviant behaviour... If you want to be a sexual deviant, fine, in the privacy of your own home and if it's between two consenting adults. Just don't do things in public that offend and don't involve children (i.e. have them in the same home).

Martin, teacher, faith independent secondary school (West Midlands)


# What the law says

Schools have a legal duty to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying, including homophobic bullying.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 puts a duty on school governing bodies to promote the wellbeing of all children and young people in their care. This includes lesbian, gay and bisexual young people and those who experience homophobic bullying.

New Government legislation means that schools now have to be proactive in preventing homophobic bullying and make all children and young people feel included.

In its 2010 White Paper *The Importance of Teaching*, the coalition Government highlighted schools' responsibility to prevent and tackle homophobic bullying. In addition, the Public Duty requires all public bodies including schools, academies and free schools to eradicate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations – this means preventing and tackling homophobic bullying and language and talking about lesbian, gay and bisexual issues in schools.



All teachers should be aware of their role as part of a whole school approach to anti-bullying.

From April 2012 all schools will be required to publish information about what they are doing to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying, including homophobic bullying.

School inspection also requires that schools take homophobic bullying seriously.

From January 2012 the new Ofsted framework will place more focus on pupil achievement, the quality of teaching, the quality of the school leadership and management and behaviour and safety of pupils.

## We just don't have the time...

Trainees enter their teaching career through a range of different courses, and not all ITT programmes provide enough time for trainees to attend lectures on issues like sexual orientation and homophobia. Some will have access to seminars and lectures on a range of issues; some will spend most of their training in school learning through experience.

But whatever path to QTS they choose it's important that trainee teachers are provided with relevant information to help them fulfil their professional duties. Whether it's access to resources in your library, a seminar as part of a professional studies module, or simply a link to reliable information on your website, there's no reason that all NQTs can't be equipped with the information they need to be good and effective teachers.



**Training on homophobic bullying needs to be made available to all teachers. I'd be very happy to deliver this to my school.**

Secondary GTP student



**Training does cover inclusion and the pastoral role of teachers, so it's implicit within that, but not specifically addressed.**

Secondary lecturer, ITT provider (West Midlands)





My son was bullied and called 'gay' because he has long eyelashes. As a result he started cutting them off with scissors. This anti-bullying training is extremely important for all trainee teachers.

Primary GTP student



# PRIMARY SCHOOLS



I teach primary age children who use the terms 'poof', 'queer', etc when name calling. Emily, primary school teacher



Sometimes they say... you know, everybody's got a dad, he must be dead, or something. I say no, he's not dead. Well he's not there, he's never been there. All I've got is a donor dad and sometimes I get teased by them calling my dad a donor dad, donut dad. Mark, age 8

All children need to be prepared for life in 21st century Britain and all primary schools want children to learn and play in an environment where they can be themselves and can talk openly about their families.

But YouGov polling shows that more than two in five primary school teachers say they witness homophobic bullying in their schools, and three quarters say they hear children using the phrases 'you're so gay' or 'that's so gay'. Nine in ten have had no specific training on how to prevent and respond to homophobic bullying.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Teachers' Report*  
Stonewall (2009)



**It's like watching lightbulbs going on when trainees realise the implications of homophobic bullying on the children they will be teaching.**

Primary PGCE tutor, ITT provider (West Midlands)



**A child in my class has same-sex parents. I talked about it during circle time with the class.** Jaime, faith independent primary school teacher

Primary school children often experience homophobic bullying just for being perceived as 'different' from other children. However many primary schools already celebrate difference and use this as a way to prevent bullying. Children learn about different families and teachers encourage children to try new things – even if those activities are traditionally associated with boys or girls.

Teaching about different families means talking about the range of backgrounds and cultures that children come from. This should include those who have same-sex parents.



**Only got 30 minutes?** Introduce trainees to the issue of homophobic bullying and make sure they know where to find further resources.

At the end of this session, all trainees should:

- understand that homophobic bullying can affect any child in their school and what its impact can be on children
- recognise that homophobic language is the most prevalent form of homophobic behaviour and needs to be challenged by teachers

### Here's how to do it

- Stonewall's primary school teacher training DVD, *Celebrating difference*, gives you all the information you need. Show trainees the 'Introduction' chapter (5 minutes) and use the questions in the DVD resource book to discuss the issues (10 minutes). Then watch the 'Language' chapter (5 minutes) and use the related questions to explore the issue of homophobic language
- make sure all trainees know where to access further information. Ensure your library stocks the *Celebrating difference* DVD and your learning platform links through to [www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool/primary](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool/primary)



**An hour to cover homophobia?** In addition to the above, introduce trainees to the resources available to help them confidently challenge homophobic behaviour in an age-appropriate manner.

In addition to the above, at the end of this session trainees should:

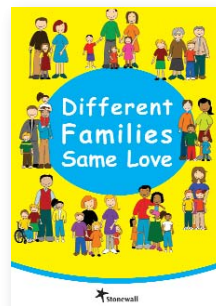
- understand how acknowledging and discussing different families helps to create an inclusive environment where all children respect difference
- know how to use the resources available to help primary schools discuss different families and lesbian, gay and bisexual relationships in a positive and age-appropriate manner

### Here's how to do it

- Introduce trainees to the theme of different families by using the

'Families' chapter of the Stonewall *Celebrating difference* DVD (5 minutes) and use the related questions to explore the importance of discussing different families and how to talk about it in the classroom (10 minutes)

- in addition, show students Stonewall's colourful *Different Families* posters which depict different families and ask them to plan how they could use them in the classroom, as well as other ways they can ensure different families are portrayed across the school



**Further resources:** Stonewall's Education Guide *Including different families* has more information for schools on how to celebrate difference; and visit our website for a list of Stonewall recommended books for primary children. Find out more at [www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool/primary](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool/primary)



**If you've got half a day** to cover homophobic bullying, encourage trainees to develop strategies to tackle homophobia as part of their wider anti-bullying and safeguarding work.

In addition to the above, at the end of this session trainees should:

- understand the importance of taking a whole-school approach and working with parents, carers, school governors and the wider community to tackle homophobic bullying
- be aware of the role national policy and legislation plays in helping them to create inclusive environments where all children can enjoy learning free from fear of bullying.

### Here's how to do it

- use Stonewall's primary ITT presentation to cover all the essential information primary trainees will need to tackle homophobic behaviour at school. Download a copy along with notes for lecturers at [www.stonewall.org.uk/teachertraining](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/teachertraining)

**Further resources:** don't forget to make Stonewall's national research available on your ITT learning platform. Download *The Teachers' Report* and *Different Families: the experiences of children with gay and lesbian parents* from [www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool)



# SECONDARY SCHOOLS



**We were told by a teacher that if a boy came out as gay, it would have to be reported. Hence, I was scared to actually admit to anything.** Tom, 18, beacon secondary school



**Once a girl in my year pulled a knife on me and said all dykes should be shot. They didn't even know [I was bisexual] they were only guessing.** Nat, 15, grammar school

65 per cent of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people experience homophobic bullying, and less than a quarter – only 23 per cent – have been told that homophobic bullying is wrong in their school. Over 60 per cent of young lesbian and gay people feel that there is neither an adult at home nor at school who they can talk to about being gay.<sup>2</sup>

Homophobic bullying is endemic in secondary schools. But nine in ten primary and secondary school teachers have received no specific training to prevent and respond to it. Which means that homophobic bullying is frequently going unchallenged and young

<sup>2</sup> *The School Report*  
Stonewall (2007)



**Use of phrases like  
'that's so gay' have  
become commonplace.**

Megan, administrative support,  
secondary school



**The majority of the anti-gay remarks  
are directed at students who are  
(probably) not gay but the remarks  
are intended as insults to insinuate  
that they are gay.**

Anna, librarian, secondary school



**I knew four really great  
teachers that helped me...  
the school librarian was  
amazing and I owe her a lot.**

Roy, 16, secondary school (West Midland)

people are missing out on much needed support.

But homophobic bullying doesn't only affect lesbian, gay and bisexual secondary school students. It also affects those who are perceived to be LGBT, those who have gay friends and family members and those who are thought to be 'different' in some way or don't 'fit in'.

Secondary school teachers need to know how to address LGBT issues through the curriculum as well as how to tackle homophobic bullying and support young people who come out to them as lesbian, gay or bisexual.



**Only got 30 minutes?** Introduce trainees to the issue of homophobic bullying and make sure they know where to find further resources.

At the end of this session, all trainees should:

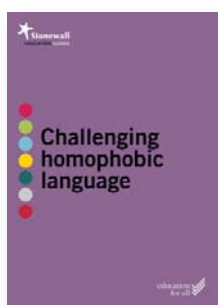
- understand that homophobic bullying can affect any young person, including lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils
- recognise that homophobic language is the most prevalent form of homophobic behaviour and needs to be challenged by teachers

### Here's how to do it

- Stonewall's secondary school teacher training DVD, *Spell It Out*, gives you all the information you need. Show trainees the 'Introduction' and 'Preconceptions' chapters (10 minutes) and explore the issues that arise. Then watch the 'Language' chapter (5 minutes) and ask trainees to talk about why it is important to challenge homophobic language
- make sure all trainees know where to access further information. Ensure your library stocks the *Spell It Out* DVD and your learning platform links through to

[www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool/secondary](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool/secondary)

**Further resources:** Stonewall's Education Guide *Challenging Homophobic Language* has more practical advice and information for schools.



**An hour to cover homophobia?** In addition to the above, introduce trainees to some of the resources available to ensure they confidently challenge homophobic bullying and support lesbian, gay and bisexual young people.

In addition to the above, at the end of this session trainees should:

- understand the challenges faced by many lesbian, gay and bisexual young people at school
- know how to support an LGB young person if they decide to tell them that they are gay



## Here's how to do it

- Stonewall's *FIT* DVD: watch Karmel's story (15 minutes), and use the related questions to explore the challenges Karmel faces, and how they might deal with coming out issues
- Watch the 'Gaining Trust' chapter of *Spell It Out* (5 minutes) and discuss the importance of being supportive if a student comes out as lesbian, gay or bisexual



**Further resources:** Stonewall's national research, *The School Report* and *The Teachers' Report* look at the issue of homophobic bullying in Britain's schools in more detail. [www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool)



**If you've got a half day** to cover homophobic bullying, encourage trainees to plan strategies to tackle homophobia that fit with their wider anti-bullying and safeguarding work.

In addition to the above, at the end of this session trainees should:

- understand the importance of taking a whole-school approach and working with parents, carers, school governors and the wider community to tackle homophobic bullying
- be aware of the role national policy and legislation play in helping them to create inclusive environments where all children can enjoy learning free from fear of bullying

## Here's how to do it

- use Stonewall's secondary ITT presentation to cover all the essential information secondary trainees will need to tackle homophobic behaviour at school. Download a copy along with notes for lecturers at [www.stonewall.org.uk/teachertraining](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/teachertraining)

**Further resources:** don't forget to make copies of Stonewall's national research available on your ITT learning platform, as well as our suite of Education Guides. Find out more at [www.stonewall.org.uk/educationresources](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/educationresources)

# School placements

Placements in schools for trainee teachers provide them with an ideal opportunity to find out more about daily school life and to apply their training practically in the classroom. Trainees should feel confident that schools they work with take a proactive approach to tackling homophobic bullying and address lesbian, gay and bisexual issues positively.

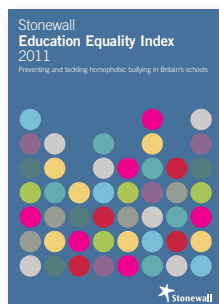
Before trainees take up placements, ITT providers should ensure that, as part of a whole school approach to tackling all forms of bullying, schools they work with have anti-bullying policies which specifically include homophobic bullying and that they challenge all discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. All trainees should be provided with information about the support they can expect – from their placement school and their ITT provider – if they do challenge homophobic bullying or if they experience discrimination themselves.

All schools have a different understanding of the endemic nature of homophobic bullying, and progress at different rates to implement strategies to prevent and respond to it. Providers should work with school leaders towards ensuring that all partners have a shared ethos of zero-tolerance to homophobic bullying.

Stonewall's Education Champions programme provides support to local authorities in their work to tackle homophobic bullying, and the School Champions programme provides tailored support and guidance to individual primary and secondary schools and academies, helping them to develop strategies to challenge homophobic bullying and celebrate difference.

Find out more about how you can ensure your trainee teachers take up placements in schools which champion LGB equality and tackle homophobic bullying.

Visit [www.stonewall.org.uk/educationchampions](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/educationchampions) and [www.stonewall.org.uk/schoolchampions](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/schoolchampions) for more information.

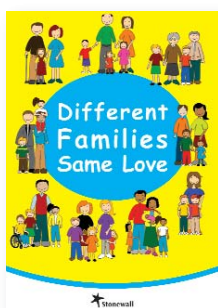


# Need more support?

Stonewall has a wide range of resources available to teachers, trainee teachers and ITT providers which can help address homophobic bullying and support lesbian, gay and bisexual young people. We can help you ensure that no matter how little time you have with your trainees, they are all equipped to deal with homophobia in their schools.



*Different Families: the experiences of children with gay parents (2010)*



*Different Families posters help schools to celebrate difference*



*Some People Are Gay. Get Over It! posters, postcards and stickers*



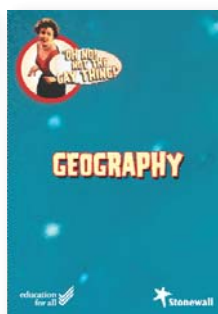
*Celebrating difference: Challenging homophobia in primary schools (2011) – our primary school staff training DVD*



*Education Guides – including Challenging homophobic language, Supporting lesbian, gay and bisexual young people, Including different families and Working with faith communities*



*The School Report – the experiences of young gay people in Britain's schools (2007) and The Teachers' Report – YouGov polling of over 2,000 primary and secondary school staff about homophobic bullying*



*'Oh no! Not the gay thing!' – a pack with ideas on how to address lesbian, gay and bisexual issues through the secondary curriculum*



*Spell It Out – our secondary school staff training DVD*



*FIT – Stonewall's feature-film for secondary schools*

For more information or to order any of these resources visit [www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool)

# Top ten tips for ITT providers

1

**provide information** make resources available to trainees, and tell them where they can access them

2

**practice what you preach** ensure that homophobic language and behaviour on your course are always challenged and that staff and students are aware of your equality and diversity policy

3

**review your training** ask trainees to feedback on how they might practically apply what they've learned about homophobic bullying and LGB issues

4

**know the law** make sure you keep up to speed on relevant legislation and policy and how this helps schools to address homophobic bullying

5

**use outside experience** ask for help and support from experts who can help you deliver essential information to trainees



6

**know what's required of you** use national standards and requirements to ensure that teaching about homophobic bullying is part of your programmes of study



7

**learn from others** use regional provider networks to learn about the strategies and resources used by other ITT providers in your local area



8

**don't reinvent the wheel** integrate training on homophobia and LGB issues into existing programmes of work on equality, diversity and wellbeing



9

**work with local schools** building strong links with local schools can help ensure that trainee teachers feel confident and supported to tackle homophobic bullying when on placements



10

**celebrate success** acknowledge and celebrate progress so that others know what you are doing to tackle homophobia and provide trainees with the best possible start to their careers

## We're here to help



Stonewall's **School Champions** programme provides tailored support and guidance to individual primary and secondary schools and academies, helping them to develop strategies to challenge homophobic bullying and celebrate difference.

For more information visit

[www.stonewall.org.uk/schoolchampions](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/schoolchampions)

or email [schoolchampions@stonewall.org.uk](mailto:schoolchampions@stonewall.org.uk)



Our **Education Champions** programme provides tailored support to local authorities in their work to prevent and tackle homophobic bullying in their schools. Through this programme, local authorities work with Stonewall and each other to establish ways in which they can address homophobic bullying and promote a safe and inclusive learning environment for all young people.

For more information visit

[www.stonewall.org.uk/educationchampions](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/educationchampions)

or email [educationchampions@stonewall.org.uk](mailto:educationchampions@stonewall.org.uk)

## Is your university gay-friendly?

All students should be able to choose a university where they can enjoy studying and be themselves.

**Gay By Degree**, Stonewall's University Guide is an online resource for lesbian, gay and bisexual students and all those in between, providing information to help them decide whether a university is gay-friendly or not. Visit [www.gaybydegree.org.uk](http://www.gaybydegree.org.uk) and find out what your university is doing to champion equality for lesbian, gay and bisexual people and create an environment which celebrates diversity.

## Get in touch...

[www.stonewall.org.uk/teachertraining](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/teachertraining)

[education@stonewall.org.uk](mailto:education@stonewall.org.uk)

08000 50 20 20





**Having input from Stonewall on many of our Education and Professional Studies modules has informed our students of the long-lasting effects of homophobic bullying on individuals and at an institutional level. The evaluations from the students were positive and being involved with Stonewall has informed other and future modules.**

Senior Lecturer in Education and Professional Studies, ITT provider (West Midlands)

**I've just come back from teaching a session on homophobic bullying. I talked about Stonewall's work, showed the website and included information about homophobia – I feel very proud of myself!!** Associate Dean, ITT provider (West Midlands)

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