



CELEBRATING DIFFERENCE AND BUILDING BELONGING

Making sure non-binary
students feel valued at
school and college

Stonewall

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource is produced by Stonewall, a UK-based charity that stands for the freedom, equity and potential of all lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace (LGBTQ+) people.

At Stonewall, we imagine a world where LGBTQ+ people everywhere can live our lives to the full.

Founded in London in 1989, we now work in each nation of the UK and have established partnerships across the globe. Over the last three decades, we have created transformative change in the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the UK, helping win equal rights around marriage, having children and inclusive education.

Our campaigns drive positive change for our communities, and our sustained change and empowerment programmes ensure that LGBTQ+ people can thrive throughout our lives. We make sure that the world hears and learns from our communities, and our work is grounded in evidence and expertise.

To find out more about our work, visit us at www.stonewall.org.uk

Registered Charity No 1101255 (England and Wales) and SC039681 (Scotland)

Stonewall is proud to provide information, support and guidance on LGBTQ+ inclusion; working towards a world where we're all free to be. This does not constitute legal advice, and is not intended to be a substitute for legal counsel on any subject matter.

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1. INTRODUCTION

More and more schools and colleges are taking steps to ensure that lesbian, gay, bi, and trans (LGBTQ+) students feel welcome and included. With more trans young people living their lives openly, schools and colleges are finding that trans students require specific support in order to feel safe and supported. Increasingly, many learning environments are providing support for trans girls and trans boys, but other identities under the trans umbrella remain less visible.

This resource was written in collaboration with Owl Fisher, a non-binary activist and film-maker. Led by their expertise, the resource is designed to provide schools, sixth form colleges and FE colleges specific insight into the experiences of trans people whose identity falls outside the binary of male and female. It focuses specifically on the experiences of non-binary young people in schools and sixth form colleges, and highlights issues that non-binary people of all ages continue to face.

This guide identifies ways in which schools and colleges can tackle these issues as a part of their work in trans inclusion, and provides practical tips on everything from training staff, talking about non-binary issues with students, and building an inclusive learning environment.

Our research shows that schools and colleges continue to make progress on tackling transphobic bullying and language and continue to create a more LGBTQ+ inclusive environment. However, the challenges that non-binary young people face are often overlooked. While the challenges that non-binary students face can be similar to those faced by LGBTQ+ students in general, there are challenges that are unique to them.

It's important that young people are given the opportunity to explore and have their gender identity respected in school and college. While not all young people who question their gender identity turn out to be trans or non-binary, it is important to give all students the opportunity to be their authentic selves. No young person should feel confined by gender stereotypes or gender norms and it's important that all young people feel safe to be open about their gender identity and experiences at school and college.



USEFUL TERMS

The term 'non-binary' refers to a person whose gender identity isn't explicitly a man or a woman. It can mean that their gender identity and gender experience is of being both a man and a woman, fluid in between or completely outside of that binary. So, non-binary is an umbrella term that encompasses a range of identities and experiences. While the term 'transgender' generally encompasses all people who aren't the gender they were assigned at birth (such as trans women, trans men and non-binary people), some non-binary people don't see themselves as trans. It's always important to respect the language someone uses to define themselves.

In order to understand non-binary gender identities better, it's vital to understand the difference between gender identity and gender expression.

Gender identity refers to a person's clear sense of their own gender. This is not something which is governed by a person's physical attributes.

Gender expression is how you choose to express yourself, whether that be in a masculine, feminine or an androgynous fashion. Just like with the rest of society, non-binary people have all sorts of ways to express themselves and their identity. So, non-binary people can present as masculine, feminine or androgynous and none of these expressions make their identity any less valid or worthy of respect.

"When you're a non-binary trans person you don't have many opportunities to learn about who you are in school, which leads to a general lack of understanding from people who aren't non-binary."

Lex ,16, Secondary School (Yorkshire and the Humber) school and college.

A NOTE ON ACRONYMS

At Stonewall, we use the acronym LGBTQ+, which stands for lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace. You can find definitions of these terms and other key terms [on our website](#) and in the glossary in this resource.

Other organisations may use a different acronym – for example, LGBT or LGBTI or LGBT+. Often, the acronym an organisation uses will depend on their areas of specialism or expertise, or the specific groups of people that they work with.

Our good practice guidance is developed by our team of expert teachers, trainers and education professionals and informed by the work of our School & College Champions. We're constantly developing our work and we regularly update our resources to introduce more information and advice on supporting LGBTQ+ children and young people – you can expect to see more content on supporting young people who are questioning and young people on the ace and aro spectrum coming soon.

2. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO CELEBRATE DIFFERENCE IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES?

It's important to celebrate difference in schools and colleges for many reasons.

Building an inclusive environment is essential to ensure that all students are able to nurture their talents and fulfill their potential. It will ultimately make their quality of life better, and give them a sense of belonging in a society that often poses many challenges for non-binary and gender diverse people.

Our research reveals that nearly three in five (57 percent) of non-binary students experience bullying at school and that up to 60 percent have played truant from school more than once (compared to 53 percent of girls and 47 percent of boys). Furthermore, up to nine in ten non-binary young people (89 per cent) have thought about taking their own life and one in three non-binary young people (35 per cent) have tried to take their own life (The School Report, Stonewall, 2017).

If we look at the wider population of trans people from all ages, three in ten non-binary people (31 per cent) have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity in the last 12 months. Half of non-binary people (52 per cent) adjust the way they dress because they fear discrimination or harassment, and one in four non-binary people (24 per cent) aren't open about their gender identity to anyone in their family. (LGBTQ+ in Britain: Trans Report, Stonewall, 2017)

While there are statistics on the numbers of LGBTQ+ young people in wider society, non-binary people and their experiences are often excluded from research. This is highlighted in a study by the Scottish Trans Alliance about the experiences of non-binary people in the UK. 86% of respondents stated that it was a lack of inclusive design that meant they were unable to describe their gender identity accurately on forms when accessing services. The study also shows that up to 84% of non-binary people feel that their gender identity isn't seen as valid when using services, and that 83% felt isolated or excluded. Lack of visibility and inclusion had a serious effect on their quality of life and mental well-being, with up to 63% of respondents describing that it made them less likely to use services they required. At work, 90% of respondents felt worried that their non-binary identity would not be respected and 55% worried it would ultimately affect their career progression negatively (Non-binary people's experiences in the UK, Scottish Trans Alliance, 2016).

It's therefore extremely important that we're teaching all students to celebrate difference in order to prevent negative attitudes and transphobia. If students are given the chance to learn about trans people, including non-binary people, it will create a safer environment for those students in education as well as outside of it.

There's a legal aspect to this work too. The Public Sector Equality Duty (s149(1) of the Equality Act 2010) places a duty on bodies carrying out public functions, in the exercise of those functions, to have due regard to the need to:

Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimization and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act – including because of the protected characteristic of sexual orientation and gender reassignment.



Advance equality of opportunity – which may include the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by those who are LGBTQ+ that are connected to their LGBTQ+ identity
- Taking steps to meet the needs of LGBTQ+ people that are different to those who are not LGBTQ+
- Encouraging LGBTQ+ people to participate in public life or any other activity where participation is disproportionately low

Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it – e.g. between LGBTQ+ pupils and those who are not LGBTQ+.

In England, the [Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties and Public Authorities\) Regulations 2017/353](#) include specific duties such as publishing equality information at least once a year to show how you have complied with the duty (regulation 4), as well as setting specific and measurable equality objectives which should be prepared and published at least every four years (regulation 5). An example of this might include tackling homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying.

For more information, including information on requirements in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, see [An Introduction to Supporting LGBTQ+ Children and Young People](#).

“I frequently got asked if I was a boy or a girl and was called names like shim, hermaphrodite, etc. I got pushed in corridors, kicked and told that I was a ‘nervous wreck’ when I would cry about the bullying.”

Charlie, 17, sixth form college, Wales

CASE STUDY: SECONDARY ACADEMY, SOUTH WEST ENGLAND

Support at this school has been bespoke to meet the individual needs of the students concerned. There is an LGBTQ+ group and the school has made links with the local LGBTQ+ community group. A gender-neutral toilet has also been established. If a student prefers to use a gender-neutral pronoun, it’s shared with staff with the student’s consent, and names are changed on SIMS.

A particularly powerful piece of work was the delivery of an assembly, What Does It Mean to be Trans? This featured one of the school’s trans students sharing their experiences. The school makes individualised arrangements for residential trips and includes lessons on what it means to be trans or gender neutral in its PSHE curriculum. This is being developed with Year 12 students, who are writing lessons for Year 7, 9 and 12.

3. BUILDING A SENSE OF BELONGING

Building a sense of belonging for non-binary students isn't just about them as individuals; it's about creating an environment where young people aren't restricted by gender norms and gender stereotypes.

Many of the things you can do will benefit all young people in the classroom or learning environment, as well as staff. This can include creating a policy or updating existing policies to include non-binary students and staff. Advice on non-binary inclusion for staff can be found in [Stonewall's Inclusive Policy Toolkit](#).

LANGUAGE

There are many ways to be inclusive of all young people, regardless of their gender identity. Our language and the way we speak is often embedded with hidden gendered cues and once we start to notice them we can move towards using language that's inclusive for all.

Instead of addressing groups of students with 'boys and girls', try more inclusive alternatives such as "students", "folks", "good morning, everyone", "listen up, everyone".

Use words such as "parents" or "grown-ups" instead of "mum and dad" and "partner" instead of "boyfriend/girlfriend".

Not everyone is comfortable with gendered titles such as "Ms" or "Mr". Titles are not always necessary, but if they must be used it's good to take note of alternative ones such as "Mx" (pronounced mix or mux).

Use the singular 'their' instead of 'his/her' in letters and other forms of writing, i.e. 'when a student finishes their work' as opposed to 'when a student finishes his/her work'.

Not everyone necessarily uses 'he' or 'she' pronouns and it's important to be respectful of students who use different pronouns. The most common gender-neutral pronoun is the singular 'they' (they/them/theirs).

Using people's correct pronouns shows that you respect them and who they are.

Using the pronoun 'they' is very useful when someone's gender or identity is unknown. You will often already be using it without realising, i.e. 'somebody left their hat, I wonder if they will come back to get it'.

As staff, introduce yourself at the start of the year with your name and pronoun to introduce students to the idea of stating their pronouns and the idea that it might not always be immediately obvious what pronoun someone uses.

Make sure that school and college policies and documents use inclusive language, i.e. using 'they' instead of 'he/she' and avoiding sentences that imply two genders and only address boys and girls or men and women. Where specifically talking about gender identity, make sure it is inclusive of non-binary gender identities and not just trans men and trans women.

"There is little to no education on transgender and non-binary identities, meaning I have had to teach most of my classmates and others in the years above and below me about what it means to be trans."

Jai, 17, secondary school, South West.

CELEBRATING GENDER DIVERSITY

There are many ways to make non-binary or gender diverse students feel included and recognised at school or college. This can be done by making sure there's representation of diverse people in the curriculum content or on displays and that it's included in subjects and activities, rather than only being discussed at particular times or when visitors come to speak on the topic.

Have resources such as pamphlets, information brochures or practical resources available in the classroom, library or with the school or college's pastoral team.

Make sure that the library, classroom or form room has books that address topics of gender diversity, or has characters or stories of people from different backgrounds.

There are many books being released that deal with topics of gender identity, such as the book 'Are You A Boy or Are You A Girl?' by Fox Fisher and Sarah Savage. A lesson plan for this particular book can be found on the Stonewall website, as well as other book recommendations for secondary schools and colleges.

Include trans and non-binary people in the curriculum. It can be anything from using gender neutral pronouns for someone in a maths problem, to theming a project around non-binary representation in the media or completing a project about 'they/ them' pronouns. For example, in history or geography lessons, you could look at different understandings of gender that have existed in different societies across the world and at different points of history. In many communities, there are long traditions of people recognising genders other than male or female.

Put up posters on displays from organisations that support trans and non-binary people, so that people can seek support if they need to. Putting up pictures of known non-binary people with some quotes and making sure displays show a diverse range of people with different gender expressions will help with acceptance and recognition.

Celebrate specific dates relevant to the trans and non-binary community by putting up posters, showing videos and organising events, e.g. around Trans Day of Visibility, Pride Month, LGBTQ+ History Month and Non-Binary Visibility Day.

Invite local trans organisations to come and do training and talks at school or college with year groups or in assembly.

Set up a support group within the secondary school or college that's led by and for trans and non-binary students. This can be an effective way to get trans and non-binary students to join social activities, to build friendships and get support.

"I hope that non-binary genders will be recognised by everyone and we won't get people talking about 'two genders', that transgender people feel a lot more included and feel safe as the person they really are, just in general more acceptance."

Chris, 14, secondary school, Scotland

"I found it really helpful when teachers put me at ease after I came out as trans by making an effort to use my new name and pronouns straight away. I recognise it isn't always easy to change quickly but I appreciated those who made the effort."

Ellie, 17, Independent School, South East



ID BADGES, UNIFORMS AND FACILITIES

For many young people, gendered ID badges, uniforms or facilities can be restricting, particularly for non-binary young people. Some non-binary people feel fluid in their identity so it's important to be respectful and open to different gender expressions from all students, regardless of their identity. Make sure that students have an opportunity to express themselves and have access to facilities in order to increase their well-being at school or college.

Always make sure that if you are supporting a non-binary person you are led by them before making any changes.

Give students the option to create their uniform from a list of approved items but without gendering them, i.e. offer them a selection of top pieces and bottom pieces that they can assemble. It can mean choosing between a specific type of shirt and blazer and choosing between trousers or a skirt. This will allow all students to express themselves how they see fit, regardless of their gender.

Students that aren't non-binary (or have not yet disclosed this due to fear of coming out) might want to wear different clothing, and it's important that everyone feels comfortable when coming to school or college to learn.

Where possible, make sure that forms, records on SIMs and (where possible) exam boards are inclusive of non-binary students, i.e. offering a third option where gender is registered.

Gender fluid students might prefer to have two separate ID badges. This will ensure that students are able to use ID badges that reflect their gender identity fully at any given time.

Avoid dividing students into groups of boys and girls, i.e. in PE lessons or other activities. This can make non-binary students feel excluded and isolates them from their peers.

Make sure there are gender neutral facilities such as bathrooms and changing rooms available for students at school or college. Many non-binary people feel excluded from gendered facilities and avoid using them altogether. Offering them a safe space will enhance their experience at school or college and make sure they can use the toilet safely and take part in activities, such as PE lessons, without having to worry.

Some non-binary students might be more comfortable using a male/female space than separate gender-neutral space. Make sure you discuss the preferences of each individual non-binary person rather than making assumptions.

When on residential trips, make sure that non-binary students have access to a sleeping place they feel comfortable in.

More detailed guidance on how to make your facilities inclusive for LGBTQ+ youth can be found in the Stonewall:

[An Introduction to Supporting LGBTQ+ Young People resource.](#)



CASE STUDY: SECONDARY ACADEMY, EAST ANGLIA

Aside from the gender-neutral uniform policy, gender neutral toilets and an anti-bullying policy that refers specifically to trans and non-binary students, the school's work has placed particular emphasis on student voice.

The school's Equality and Diversity group, SHIELD, puts members who are transitioning or identify as non-binary in touch with other students who are further along in their transition, so that they have peers to talk to and to answer their questions. This is arranged with the student's consent and they meet up at SHIELD meetings or, where this is too public, they use form-time to buddy up in the library.

In a private space, SHIELD members complete a gender passport in a one-to-one session with the dedicated staff member. Students are asked to tick boxes on "information I'd like others to know", which includes details like their pronouns and who they are out to. Out and confident trans students are encouraged to speak in assemblies about their experiences and how others can help.

"Changing rooms are awful. I feel sick and have panic attacks whenever we have PE. I have to get changed in the cubicle toilets."

Chris, 16, private single-sex secondary school, South East

"Introduction of gender neutral toilets are helpful for me as someone who is non-binary and other students who may be trans."

Sam, 16, Secondary School, Yorkshire and the North East

CASE STUDY: COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL, YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER

Leading from the front and setting an example dominate this school's approach to work around acceptance and inclusion. A Diversity Link Governor sits on the Board of Governors and reports back on the issues and challenges raised in their regular meeting with the school's Diversity Lead. This liaison resulted in a rewording of the school's policy on Equality and Diversity and gender-neutral uniforms, with all relevant policies published on the school website. Staff support pupils through one to one support sessions and develop positive relationships with them and their parents founded on trusting and integrity.

4. POSITIVE ROLE MODELS

Seeing yourself positively represented is incredibly important. Showing non-binary people in a positive light can be helpful in raising awareness and increasing understandings of students at school or college. Here are some examples of prominent non-binary people in the public eye that you might want to highlight.

Maria Munir is a campaigner and writer. Maria featured on BuzzFeed's list of top LGBTQ+ Brits and regularly speaks at organisations such as Stonewall, Amnesty International, and Women of the World Festival.

Juno Roche is an author, campaigner and former school teacher. Juno has been influential in raising awareness of the intersections between HIV and trans identities and is an accomplished author and public speaker.

CN Lester is a musician and campaigner. They're the author of *Trans Like Me* and raise awareness of trans rights through public speaking, performance arts and writing.

Owl and Fox Fisher, film-makers and campaigners. They run My Generation which is an ongoing film project celebrating trans lives and trans experiences. Their work has been shown on various platforms such as Channel 4 and the BBC. #ThisIsWhatNonBinaryLooksLike was started by Fox and Owl on twitter, and quickly became a trending topic, with the thousands of selfies shared showing just how many different expressions non-binary people have.

Sabah Choudrey is a campaigner who talks and writes about their experiences of being trans, Muslim and queer. They co-founded Trans Pride Brighton and have worked with trans and non-binary youth since 2014.

"One of the most important things for schools to remember is to demonstrate their support for LGBTQ+Q+ people throughout the institution. Even small things like having Stonewall posters up around the school and celebrating Pride Month can really help to show students that they are welcomed and recognised as an important part of the school community. When I was in my earlier years at school there wasn't a lot of active indication of the school's support for LGBTQ+Q+ students. I'm glad to see this has changed over the years, and I think students now will definitely feel more welcome in the school environment."

**Jo, 16, Secondary School,
South East**



CASE STUDY: SIXTH FORM ACADEMY YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER

After receiving an email from year 13 student who identified as non-binary, a staff member met with them the following day to find out how the school could support them. The student told the staff member how they wanted to be known from then on and this was then communicated by email to all staff members. The register system was updated with the student's preferred name although this couldn't be done on exam certificates without the necessary legal documents. The student was particularly pleased with a staff member's suggestion that the photograph on their ID badge be updated to reflect their new appearance.

CASE STUDY: INDEPENDENT SECONDARY SCHOOL, SOUTH EAST ENGLAND

The school's robust anti-bullying policy which refers specifically to HBT bullying, is supplemented by a range of other initiatives, including a transgender guidance policy and a gender-neutral uniform policy. Students can make confidential appointments with a dedicated counsellor or nurse and teaching staff are informed about how the student would like to be addressed in class and which pronouns to use. A safeguarding lead works with the student to smooth the process by liaising with their parents, agreeing an action plan about how to inform their classmates and signposts external agencies, such as Allsorts. A 'Trans Inclusion Schools' Toolkit' published by the local authority and Allsorts underpinned a lot of this work.

The school also included articles in the newsletter for parents and set up and promoted an LGBTQ+ group to students and parents. This work has helped two trans gender students so far, with no challenges from parents and very few from students. Any negative reactions from students are addressed through the anti-bullying policy and assembly sessions.

IN SUMMARY: 10 STEPS SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES CAN TAKE TO MAKE NON-BINARY YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL VALUED

1. LANGUAGE IN AND AROUND THE SPACE

It's important to use inclusive language so that all students feel acknowledged and respected, i.e. try using language such as "students" instead of "boys and girls". Avoid binary language which suggests there are only two genders. This will create an inclusive environment where everyone feels acknowledged and respected.

2. USE OF PRONOUNS

Be aware that people's pronouns might not always be what you would assume them to be. Some students might be using a different pronoun than they used to, whether that's having changed it to she/her pronouns, he/his pronouns or the singular they/them pronoun. The key here is making a conscious effort to use the pronouns they wish to use. If you use the wrong one, apologise and quickly move on. Using people's correct pronouns is your way of showing that you respect people and who they are. Make sure you use the correct pronouns for people whenever you are talking about them, regardless of whether they are there.

3. CELEBRATE GENDER DIVERSITY IN THE CURRICULUM

Including gender diversity in the curriculum can be easy, i.e. creating a project around they/them pronouns, talking about famous non-binary individuals, showing videos or even creating a maths problem where someone is referred to with they/ them pronouns.

4. ACKNOWLEDGE GENDER DIVERSITY THROUGH BOOKS

Make sure that there are pamphlets or information brochures available at school or college and seek out books and materials that have diverse representation. There are many resources, books, films and podcasts being released that deal with topics of gender identity.

5. RECOGNISE GENDER DIVERSITY IN DISPLAYS

Display posters and information for organisations that support trans and non-binary young people. Put up pictures of non-binary people in the media, this is an effective way to raise awareness of gender identity and show a range of gender and gender expression.

6. UPDATE POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Make sure that language in policies and documents is inclusive and accessible. Use “they” instead of “he/she” and use “pupils” or “students” instead of “boys and girls”. Avoid using binary language such as “either boys and girls” or sentences that imply there are only two genders, i.e. use “all genders” or “everyone, regardless of gender”.

7. UNIFORM

Allow students to wear uniforms that are comfortable for them. This is essential in helping them to feel good at school or college. Make sure that they’re offered options of tops and bottoms that suit them and their expression.

8. FACILITIES

Make sure that non-binary students are able to access facilities that they feel comfortable using. Wherever possible, offer gender neutral facilities, such as toilets and changing rooms. Ensure that non-binary students can have access to non-gendered sleeping arrangements (or allow them to choose which) on residential trips.

9. AVOID UNNECESSARILY GENDERED ACTIVITIES

Avoid dividing students into groups of boys and girls during PE or physical activities. This can cause distress to non-binary students who are forced to choose in between the two. Make sure that non-binary students are included and are comfortable with activities proposed.

10. COMBAT TRANSPHOBIC BULLYING

Make sure that bullying is tackled and that you address transphobic language and combat misconceptions other students might have. Staff should record every incident of transphobic bullying and language, make sure policies are explicit about tackling transphobic bullying and where possible, include trans and non-binary identities in the curriculum.

CASE STUDY: SECONDARY ACADEMY, YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER

Students in Year 7 receive workshops on diversity and inclusivity which includes resources and speeches on gender identity from staff as well as LGBTQ+ students. Feedback from students during and after the sessions are almost all positive. The students are very engaged by the issues and are interested and eager to understand more about a range of gender identities.

CASE STUDY: SECONDARY SOUTH EAST

The school has adopted a rigorous suite of policies, including an anti-bullying policy which explicitly refers to HBT bullying as both a formal document and student friendly version, and a specific LGBTQ+ policy. A Transgender Guidance policy was collated from examples from other schools, and includes a memorandum of understanding to be used with young people who are transitioning.

A staff member is designated as an LGBTQ+ Coordinator whose email is given to all students and whom they are encouraged to talk to. The Coordinator can also help students in talking to their parents. Students in the process of transitioning are given a variety of support, all of it reflecting their individual needs. Along with gender neutral toilets and changing facilities, there's an active Youth Pride Group which is visited fortnightly by an LGBTQ+ Youth Worker.

CASE STUDY: CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL, WEST YORKSHIRE

This primary school takes a whole school approach to celebrating diversity and individuality. As well as tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, the children learn about different LGBTQ+ identities. Non-binary people are discussed and pupils are able to understand that there are many different ways to express your gender identity.

Having a gender-neutral uniform ensures that pupils are able to wear the items of school uniform that they are most comfortable in. In addition to this, gender neutral toilets are available for any child to use.

The school nurture room is available for any pupil to visit, spend some time reflecting and discuss any concerns or worries they might have. This may include thoughts around their gender identity and staff are trained in how to support individual children effectively. Throughout the school, pupils are supported and encouraged to be themselves regardless of gender stereotypes. The children accept each other's differences and value each other as individuals.

On the whole, the wider school community are supportive of the school's non-binary inclusive approach. This approach is communicated through newsletters, curriculum maps, whole school events and church assemblies.

CASE STUDY: PRIMARY SCHOOL, EAST ANGLIA

The school pursues its commitment to diversity on every level. Equality and anti-prejudice policies refer specifically to transphobic and homophobic behaviours and the school's procedure for being a trans friendly school features on the school website and notice boards. The toilets in Key Stage 2 and Reception are gender neutral, and the school uniform is described as being for children, rather than for boys or girls. Gender stereotypes are covered in lessons throughout the school; Reception classes learn about men and women being firefighters and police officers, while Year 1 do the same about male and female astronauts. Topics for Anti-bullying week included boys who like to dance, while the whole school focused on children who are non-binary by reading 'Are You a Boy or a Girl'.

GLOSSARY

Agender

Agender refers to people who feel an absence of gender. They often describe themselves as genderless and don't have a strong connection or sense of gender.

Assigned sex

This is either of the two main categories (male and female) assigned to a person at birth on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions.

Cisgender (or cis)

Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people.

Gender dysphoria

Used to describe when a person experiences discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity. This is also the clinical diagnosis for someone who doesn't feel comfortable with the gender they were assigned at birth.

Gender fluid

Gender fluid refers to people whose gender identity is fluid and not fixed. It means that people can feel their gender identity is more feminine, masculine or androgynous depending on their experience at any given time.

Gender identity

A person's internal sense of their own gender.

Gender non-conforming

Refers to people who don't adhere to gendered expectations or gender roles in terms of their gender expression or behavior.

Genderqueer

Genderqueer (often used in the same way as non-binary) refers to a person's whose gender identity doesn't fall into being exclusively a man or a woman.

Gender reassignment surgery

Refers to a surgery where people undergo to affirm their gender and reflect their gender experience. Also referred to as gender affirmation surgery or sex reassignment surgery.

Gender variant

This is usually used in relation to people who do not conform to the gender roles and behaviours assigned to them at birth.

Gender expression

Refers to how a person expresses their gender through their appearance and mannerisms, i.e. in feminine, masculine or androgynous terms.

Gender reassignment

Another way of describing a person's transition. To undergo this usually means to undergo some sort of medical intervention, but it can also mean changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in your self-identified gender. It is a characteristic that is protected in the Equality Act, 2010.

Intersex

A term used to describe a person who may have the biological attributes of both sexes or whose biological attributes do not fit with societal assumptions about what constitutes male or female. Can identify as male, female, or non-binary.

Non-binary

An umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably with 'man' or 'woman'. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.

Pronouns

Words we use to refer to people's gender in conversation - for example, 'he' or 'she'. Some people may prefer others to refer to them in gender neutral language and use pronouns such as they/their.

Questioning

The process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Trans

An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. It may encompass one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, cross dresser, non-binary, gender queer.

Transitioning

The steps a trans person may take to live in the gender they identify as. Each person's will involve different things. For some this involves medical intervention, such as hormone therapy and surgeries, but not all trans people want or are able to have this. It also might involve things like telling friends and family, dressing differently and changing official documents. It's important to note that each person and their needs are different, and that non-binary people as well as trans men and women can transition. Transitioning shouldn't be seen as a binary sliding scale of going from A to B, or 'going all the way' or not.

RESOURCES

An Introduction to Supporting LGBTQ+ Young People

(Download)

Stonewall School Report 2017

(Download)

Getting Started Toolkit –

Celebrating difference and challenging gender stereotypes in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Download)

Getting Started Toolkit – A toolkit for preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in primary schools (Download)

Getting Started Toolkit - A toolkit for preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in secondary schools (Download)

Stonewall Trans Day of Visibility Posters

(Download)

Are You a Boy or Are You A Girl?

Lesson Plan (Download)

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Gendered Intelligence

(genderedintelligence.co.uk)

My Generation

(mygeneration.com)

Transform Cymru

(youthcymru.org.uk/transform-cymru/)

Scottish Trans Alliance

(www.scottishtrans.org)

Find local LGBTQ+ and trans organisations to your school or college:

www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/whats-my-area

CELEBRATING DIFFERENCE AND BUILDING BELONGING

Making sure non-binary
students feel valued at
school and college

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Registered Charity number 1101255
PUBLISHED BY STONEWALL, 2019

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