

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.

Stonewall

**LGBTQ+
INCLUSIVE RSHE:
PUTTING IT INTO
PRACTICE**

LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE RSHE: PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

WHO IS STONEWALL?

For more than 30 years, Stonewall has been working to create a world where lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) people are free to be themselves. We're working with more than 800 employers, representing a quarter of the UK workforce, to ensure that LGBTQ+ people are protected and included at work. We support and work alongside schools, colleges, communities, workplaces, and global partners to create a world where every LGBTQ+ person can achieve their potential. We believe we're stronger united, so we partner with organisations that help us create real change for the better. We have laid deep foundations across Britain - in some of our greatest institutions - so our communities can continue to find ways to flourish, and individuals can reach their full potential. We're here to support those who can't yet be themselves.

EDUCATION & YOUTH AT STONEWALL

Stonewall's Education & Youth team have worked with thousands of [schools and colleges](#) across England. For more than fifteen years, we've been helping teachers and education staff create inclusive settings, where all children and young people, including those who are LGBT, are free to be themselves. Our experienced team of teachers, trainers and education professionals are proud to support schools and colleges through our [School & College Champions programme](#), and local authorities and young people's organisations through our [Children & Young People's Services Champions programme](#). We've brought training and support to schools and settings across the country, from nursery schools to FE colleges: some of our work with church schools and schools with faith values and primary schools has been funded by the Government Equalities Office. We create quality, affordable [training](#); we produce sector-leading [research and education resources](#); we benchmark best practice through awards; and we provide guidance and support for teachers and professionals supporting LGBTQ+ children and young people. We're here to help you create a world where all children and young people, including those who are LGBT, can reach their full potential.

CEO FOREWORD

All children and young people deserve an education that supports them to thrive. Quality relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) is an important part not only of keeping children and young people safe, but of helping them to lead happy, healthy and fulfilled lives.



Children and young people are more likely to engage with RSHE teaching if they see themselves and their loved ones reflected in the content of their lessons – but 40 per cent of lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) pupils are never taught anything about LGBTQ+ issues at school. Our School Report showed that only one in five (20 per cent) have learnt about consent in same-sex relationships and fewer than one in five (17 per cent) have learnt about violence or abuse in same-sex relationships ([Stonewall School Report, 2017](#)).

This means LGBTQ+ children and young people aren't getting all of the information they need to form and nurture positive friendships and relationships, to recognise when they are at risk of harm, and to know how to seek help when they need it.

At Stonewall, we welcome statutory RSHE as an unprecedented opportunity to ensure all children and young people get the information they need to make healthy, informed choices. LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE is part and parcel of developing an inclusive curriculum and a whole-school culture of celebrating difference. In schools where diversity is valued, pupils learn to understand and respect difference of all kinds. This can help reduce prejudice-based bullying – including homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying – as well as challenging harmful stereotypes which are damaging and limiting for all pupils, like gender stereotypes. In schools where respect for difference is a core value, pupils are able to flourish as their unique selves.

At Stonewall, we've worked alongside thousands of primary schools, secondary schools and colleges to improve outcomes for LGBTQ+ children and young people. We've seen how passionate, resilient and determined schools have been throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, but we also know that implementing statutory RSHE has come at a time when schools are facing unprecedented challenges.

With that in mind, we've created this guide to help schools feel confident planning and delivering LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE. The guide is intended to provide a useful starting point for schools, helping teachers of RSHE to envision what quality LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE looks like, and develop an RSHE curriculum that works for their school.

We are grateful to Sex Education Forum for their help and guidance in developing the content of this resource.

The guide is full of tips for developing LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE provision, from planning the curriculum – including threading LGBT-specific content through major topics within RSHE – to monitoring and evaluating provision, and choosing quality, evidence-based resources. It can be read in its entirety, or readers can select the chapters that are most relevant to them.

LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE is an essential part of the work to ensure that LGBTQ+ children and young people are free to be themselves – at school and beyond. We hope that all schools, and all teachers of RSHE, will find this guide a valuable contribution.



Nancy Kelley, **Chief Executive, Stonewall**

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Why LGBTQ+ rather than LGBT?

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, LGBTQ+ 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.

In the [Department for Education's \(DfE\) statutory guidance on RSHE](#), which is referenced throughout this resource, the acronym LGBT is used. Where we are directly quoting the DfE's guidance, we have used the acronym LGBT – otherwise, we use the acronym LGBTQ+

throughout this resource. The resource makes clear what is a direct quote from the statutory guidance by the DfE and what is suggested good practice guidance from Stonewall.

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.

INTRODUCTION

School is a place where all pupils have an equal right to feel safe and to be included. The introduction of [statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education \(RSHE\)](#) supports all children and young people to be happy, healthy and safe.

Delivering LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE is an essential part of providing a timely, developmental curriculum which fosters respect and celebrates difference. This work benefits all pupils – whether they are lesbian, gay, bi or trans (LGBT), non-LGBT, or have LGBTQ+ family members or loved ones.

Yet [research by the Sex Education Forum in 2018](#) showed that only 20 per cent of teachers feel 'extremely confident' delivering LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE, with 10 per cent reporting that they are 'not confident at all'. A [survey carried out by the NEU and the NSPCC](#) in 2019 found that almost half of teachers said they don't feel confident delivering statutory Relationships and Sex Education.

This guide sets out how you can develop and deliver LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE, and give all of your pupils the information they need to grow up happy, healthy and free to be themselves.

USING THIS GUIDE

You can read this guide from beginning to end, or select the parts that are most relevant to you.

Section One focuses on curriculum: it outlines suggested topics and ideas for integrating LGBTQ+ content throughout the RSHE curriculum at primary and secondary.

Section Two focuses on implementation: it sets out ten key steps to building an LGBTQ+ inclusive approach, from auditing your curriculum to continuous monitoring and evaluation. Each step is illustrated with examples of what this work could look like in practice. You can read the steps in order, or select the steps most relevant to the work you're doing in your setting.

In **Section Three**, you'll find a checklist to help you feel confident identifying quality LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE resources and assessing the evidence base of a resource.

At the **end of the guide**, you'll find some suggested resources and wider reading.

THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act 2010 outlines nine protected characteristics:

AGE

DISABILITY

GENDER REASSIGNMENT

MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY

RACE

RELIGION OR BELIEF

SEX

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The Act protects people from unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act on the basis of any protected characteristic.

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. Similar requirements apply to governing bodies of educational institutions in Wales ([The Equality Act 2010 \(Statutory Duties\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2011](#)).

The Public Sector Equality Duty is a continuing duty of process rather than an obligation to achieve a particular outcome. The duty can be used to challenge a school, college or local authority's policies or decisions if, in coming to that decision, or formulating or implementing the policy, the body has not adequately taken into account the potential for discrimination or disadvantage based on a protected characteristic such as sexual orientation or gender re-assignment.

In thinking about the implementing the duty, it may be useful to consider:

- What do you know about the needs of LGBTQ+ communities in your school or college?
- How would you demonstrate what steps you are taking to engage with the LGBTQ+ communities in your school or college to understand their needs and experiences?
- How do these needs differ based on intersections with other protected characteristics, such as your children and young people or staff who are LGBTQ+ and of a particular faith?
- How far did you take into account the needs of your LGBTQ+ communities when you last developed or reviewed your bullying, uniform or behaviour policies?
- How far did you take into account the needs of your LGBTQ+ communities when you developed your co-curricular offers or admin processes?
- How far do you understand the experience of attainment of LGBTQ+ people when you plan your RSHE and wider curriculum?

LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE RSHE: WHY IT MATTERS

Quality RSHE supports all pupils to be happy, healthy and safe. LGBTQ+ young people and those who have LGBTQ+ family members are more likely to engage with this teaching if they can see themselves and their loved ones reflected in their lessons.

It's important to remember that, while you may have pupils in your class who are out as LGBTQ+, you may also be teaching pupils who have not come out yet, or who will only come to realise they're LGBTQ+ later in life. It's likely you'll be teaching pupils with LGBTQ+ family members, friends or loved ones. LGBTQ+ inclusive teaching is always relevant.

'We had a really great PSHE teacher who just gave us a space to talk about LGBTQ+ issues where we all felt comfortable and accepted.' Lake, 18, now at sixth form college (North West) – Stonewall School Report 2017

'My teachers at sixth form always tried to include LGBTQ+ people and issues. I think that a lot of my confidence and acceptance around my sexual orientation is because of the way my teachers celebrated LGBTQ+ history and the achievements of LGBTQ+ people.' Sadie, 18, now at university (Yorkshire and the Humber) – Stonewall School Report 2017

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

LGBTQ+ young people experience particularly high rates of poor mental health ([Stonewall School Report, 2017](#)). Although being LGBTQ+ is not a mental health condition, experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic (HBT) bullying can put pressure on a young person's mental health and emotional wellbeing. For example, 45 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people, including 60 per cent of disabled LGBTQ+ young people and 57 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people on Free School Meals, have experienced HBT bullying. Supporting all young people to respect and celebrate difference is an important part of reducing HBT bullying, and LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE is an integral part of this work.

In schools that make it clear that HBT bullying is wrong, LGBTQ+ pupils are - Less likely to be bullied at school for being LGBTQ+ - Less likely to worry about experiencing this bullying - More likely to tell someone if they are being bullied

Stonewall School Report, 2017

STONEWALL REPORTS

SCHOOL REPORT: In 2016 Stonewall commissioned the Centre for Family Research at the University of Cambridge to conduct a survey with young people who are LGBT, or who think they might be, on their experiences in secondary schools and colleges across Britain. Between November 2016 and February 2017, 3,713 LGBTQ+ young people aged 11-19 completed an online questionnaire, and this report presents the findings of this survey. [Find the report here.](#)

TEACHERS' REPORT: This report presents the findings of a YouGov survey carried out in 2014 with 1832 primary and secondary school teachers from schools across Britain. The survey asked staff about their experiences of homophobic bullying of pupils in their schools and the inclusion of sexual orientation issues in their classrooms. [Find the report here.](#)

SUPPORTING VULNERABLE PUPILS

Evidence suggests that LGBTQ+ young people may be particularly likely to engage in risk-taking behaviour. For example, **nearly one in five** LGBTQ+ under-18s (18 per cent) say they have used adult dating apps such as Tinder, Grindr and Her (Stonewall School Report, 2017). Often, these behaviours happen because LGBTQ+ young people are looking for community, but don't have access to safe spaces in which to meet LGBTQ+ people their own age, such as an LGBTQ+ youth group.

As with all young people, LGBTQ+ young people need information – including about consent, online safety, healthy relationships and safe sex – that is relevant to the experiences and relationships they may have, so that they can make safe, informed choices.

'I truly believe that the lack of education on LGBTQ+ issues is not only wrong but also dangerous, as we have to turn to the internet to educate ourselves on topics relevant to us.' Sam, 15, sixth form college (North West) – Stonewall School Report 2017

'I feel like I'm being left out on something that is important, and my school isn't equipping me with the right tools to understand my bisexuality.' Jessica, 13, single-sex secondary school (South East) – Stonewall School Report 2017

WHAT DO LGBTQ+ YOUNG PEOPLE SAY?

Only 20 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people have learned about safe sex in the context of same-sex relationships and just 13 per cent have learned about how to have healthy relationships. Fewer than 20 per cent of LGBTQ+ pupils have learned about consent, intimate partner violence or abuse in same-sex relationships (Stonewall School Report, 2017).

'Because I'd never had the opportunity to discuss anything LGBT-related at school, I repressed my identity for a long time. I thought it was unnatural and something that was looked down on.' Grace, 19, now at university (Wales) – Stonewall School Report 2017

LGBTQ+ young people tell us that they want to learn about safe sex, consent and healthy relationships, and they want to see a range of gender identities and sexual and romantic orientations reflected in the teaching they receive.

'I think that they should cover all forms of relationships including LGBTQ+ ones and when talking about protection, include LGBTQ+ people in that and not just straight people.' Bi non-binary young person at secondary school – from a Stonewall survey of LGBTQ+ youth groups

'I think they should teach that same-sex relationships do exist and are valid as much as opposite-sex relationships. They should teach about all the different sexualities so that everyone can feel included and educated.' Pansexual young person at secondary school – from a Stonewall survey of LGBTQ+ youth groups

KEY TERMINOLOGY

We've included definitions below for some of the terms used most frequently in this resource. You can find additional definitions in the [Stonewall glossary](#), and you'll find simpler definitions in our guide to [Creating an LGBTQ+ inclusive Primary Curriculum](#) – these can be a great option for younger pupils, pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), or any person who might need definitions to be broken down into simple, clear language. A helpful accompaniment to these definitions are our [Widgit symbol posters](#) for pupils who use symbol-supported communication.

Bi An umbrella term used to describe an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender. Bi people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including, but not limited to, bisexual, pan, bi-curious and queer

Cisgender, or cis A word to describe someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people

Gay Refers to a man who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. Also a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality – some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian

Gender identity A person's internal sense of their own gender. This could be male, female, or something else (for example see non-binary below)

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 assumptions about what constitutes male or female. Intersex people may identify as male, female or non-binary

Lesbian Refers to a woman who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women

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

Sexual orientation A person's emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to another person

Trans is a word that describes people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth.

Ace is an umbrella term used to describe a variation in levels of romantic and/or sexual attraction, including a lack of attraction. Ace people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including, but not limited to, asexual, aromantic and demisexual.

Asexual is used to refer to someone that does not experience sexual attraction.

Grey-A is used to describe someone who identifies somewhere between sexual and asexual.

Aromantic is used to refer to someone that does not experience romantic attraction.

Grey-romantic is used to describe someone who identifies somewhere between romantic and aromantic.

Demisexual is used to describe someone who only experiences sexual attraction after an emotional bond has been established.

Demioromantic is used to describe someone who only experiences romantic attraction after an emotional bond has been established.

SECTION ONE - CURRICULUM: WHAT COULD AN LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE RSHE CURRICULUM LOOK LIKE?

WHAT DOES THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE SAY?

The [statutory guidance from the Department for Education](#) (DfE) sets out what schools are required to teach within RSHE. When it comes to LGBTQ+ topics, the guidance says that:

Primary – Primary schools are required to teach about different families. In their [FAQs for schools](#), the DfE has stated that while it is not obligatory that they do so, ‘primary schools are strongly encouraged and enabled’ to cover LGBTQ+ content when teaching about different types of families in Relationships Education.

Secondary – The statutory guidance states that secondary schools must teach about ‘the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. All pupils should feel that the content is relevant to them and their developing sexuality’. You’ll find a useful summary from the DfE [here](#).

WHAT COULD AN LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE RSHE CURRICULUM LOOK LIKE?

In the statutory guidance on RSHE, the DfE outlines what pupils should know by the end of primary and by the end of secondary for each of the major topics. This is required content. Below, we’ve included some examples of how LGBT-specific content **could** be woven through some of the topic areas within RSHE at primary and secondary – these are our suggestions and are intended to get you started. You can adapt these recommendations, select those that are most useful to you and go beyond them to develop a comprehensive LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE curriculum that works well in your setting.

RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION - PRIMARY



FAMILIES AND PEOPLE WHO CARE FOR ME

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF PRIMARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- the characteristics of healthy family life commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other’s lives.
- that others’ families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children’s families are also characterised by love and care.
- that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children’s security as they grow up.
- that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- that other children’s families may look different to a pupil’s own, but are just as valid and worthy of respect – this can cover lots of different family structures and we recommend explicitly including families with LGBTQ+ parents.
 - that the law says same-sex couples can get married and adopt children.
- 📖 our Different Families resource pack provides a useful starting point for talking about the many ways in which caring families can be different from one another. It is included in [Annex B to the statutory guidance on RSHE, which lists suggested resources](#). Story books can also be helpful – our [primary school book list](#) has lots of recommendations.
- 📖 our Different Families lesson packs for [primary and special schools](#) may also be helpful.

RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION - PRIMARY

CARING FRIENDSHIPS

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF PRIMARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.
- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable; managing conflict; how to manage the above situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- that the characteristics of a healthy friendship include respecting all the ways in which our friends might be different to us – this could include respecting how people’s families can be different, including LGBTQ+ families.
- what to do if someone hurts or excludes us for being different (this may include teaching pupils how to report HBT bullying and language).

📖 Stonewall School & College Champion members may find our film resources, [FREE – the film](#), helpful in starting conversations about respectful and caring friendships.

If you’d like to know more about Stonewall School & College Champion membership, please visit [this page of our website](#)

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF PRIMARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, e.g. physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices to them, or have different preferences or beliefs.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- the conventions of courtesy and manners.
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- about discrimination, including discrimination against LGBTQ+ people, and why this is wrong.
- what HBT bullying is, why it is wrong and how to respond to it safely and appropriately, including how to report it within your school.
- what gender stereotypes are and how they can be harmful for LGBTQ+ people specifically – for example, it is a gender stereotype that all women want to be in a romantic relationship with a man, and that all gay men are effeminate.

RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION - PRIMARY

ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF PRIMARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of being respectful to others online including when we are anonymous.
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online; how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact; and how to report them.
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- how information and data is shared and used online.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- that using discriminatory language online can be harmful, including HBT language – for example, saying, ‘that’s so gay’ or calling people gay as an insult.
 - how to report harmful content online – we recommend that this includes reporting HBT bullying and language online.
- 📖 Stonewall and Childnet’s guide to online safety for adults supporting LGBTQ+ young people, [Staying Safe Online](#), has lots of helpful information and advice.

BEING SAFE

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF PRIMARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
- that each person’s body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.
- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
- where to get advice, e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

KEEP IN MIND: the same principles of staying safe apply to all children, whether they are LGBTQ+ or not, but it is helpful to ensure that your case studies, examples, videos, storybooks etc include LGBTQ+ characters. This shows pupils that this teaching applies to LGBTQ+ people and the relationships they have, or may go on to have, just as it applies to people who aren’t LGBTQ+.

📖 where you signpost to support services, helplines, websites etc, we recommend that you include support services specifically for LGBTQ+ children and young people and their families. Find recommendations in our [Introduction to Supporting LGBTQ+ Children and Young People](#).

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION - SECONDARY

FAMILIES

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF SECONDARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
- what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.
- why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.
- the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
- how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy.
- how to: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- that the law says same-sex couples can get married and adopt children.
 - that 'different types of committed, stable relationships' includes same-sex relationships.
- 📖 when teaching about recognising whether a relationship is safe and accessing help or support, we recommend that you include examples and case studies about LGBTQ+ people and include support services (both local and national) for LGBTQ+ people. Find recommendations in our [Introduction to Supporting LGBTQ+ Children and Young People](#).

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS, INCLUDING FRIENDSHIPS

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF SECONDARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn that they should show due respect to others in turn. This includes respecting people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying, and how and where to get help.
- that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010), and that everyone is unique and equal.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- that some people may be less interested in romantic relationships or may not want to have a romantic relationship at all, and there's nothing wrong with this. Some people who aren't interested in having a romantic relationship may describe themselves as aromantic.
 - how to recognise HBT bullying and how to respond to it safely, in line with your setting's policies. The following guidance from the [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) and from [Brook](#) might be helpful.
 - how stereotypes, including stereotypes about LGBTQ+ people, can be harmful.
 - how gender stereotypes can be harmful to people of all genders and to LGBTQ+ people specifically – for example, the stereotype that all men have a high sex drive and want to have sexual relationships with women.
 - legal rights and responsibilities around equality, including the Equality Act 2010 and how it protects many different people from discrimination: we recommend that you explicitly include LGBTQ+ people when teaching about this.
- KEEP IN MIND:** You could explicitly talk about homophobic, biphobic and transphobic discrimination, why this is wrong and what the law says. You could also help pupils understand that some people might experience multiple forms of discrimination (for example, a disabled trans person may experience transphobia and ableist discrimination; a Black gay man may experience racism and homophobia) – support pupils to understand the impact this can have, and ensure pupils know how to report all forms of prejudice-based bullying at school.
- how to respond with respect and care if a friend comes out as LGBTQ+.

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION - SECONDARY



ONLINE AND MEDIA

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF SECONDARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online, and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.
- not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.
- what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.
- the impact of viewing harmful content.
- that specifically sexually explicit material, e.g. pornography, presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- when teaching about different types of harmful content and how to report them, consider including HBT language, HBT bullying online and extreme content targeted at LGBTQ+ people, such as anti-LGBTQ+ hate speech or materials about conversion therapies.
- when teaching about online safety and the risks of meeting up with someone you have previously only spoken to online, include LGBTQ+ people in any case studies or examples to ensure LGBTQ+ pupils understand that this teaching applies to them just as it applies to their non-LGBTQ+ peers.

 Stonewall and Childnet's guide to online safety, [Staying Safe Online](#), has lots of useful information and advice.

BEING SAFE

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF SECONDARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- the concepts of, and laws relating to: sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.
- how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- which local and national support services LGBTQ+ young people can access for confidential advice, information and support – including services their families can access. Our Introduction to Supporting LGBTQ+ Children and Young People resource includes lots of recommendations.

KEEP IN MIND: The same principles of staying safe apply to all children and young people, whether they are LGBTQ+ or not, but it will be helpful to ensure that your case studies, examples, videos etc. include LGBTQ+ characters. This shows pupils that this teaching applies to LGBTQ+ people and the relationships they have, or may go on to have, just as it applies to people who aren't LGBTQ+.

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION - SECONDARY

INTIMATE AND SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS, INCLUDING SEXUAL HEALTH

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF SECONDARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively: e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women, and menopause.
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, their efficacy, and options available.
- the facts around pregnancy, including miscarriage.
- that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted.
- how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them, and key facts about treatment.
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

KEEP IN MIND: The same principles around consent, respect, safety from coercion and peer pressure apply to LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ pupils. All pupils should know that they never have to consent to sexual activity if they don't want to and they always have a right to withdraw their consent.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- that some people will not experience sexual attraction or will not be interested in sexual activity, and some will only feel sexual attraction sometimes – and this is normal. Some people who aren't interested in having sex or who only feel sexual attraction sometimes might describe themselves as asexual or ace. See the glossary definitions at the beginning of this resource, or the [Stonewall Glossary of Terms](#), for more info.
- that safe sex includes consent and respect, as well as protection from sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and managing the risk of unplanned pregnancy where relevant – and that this applies to LGBTQ+ people just as it applies to those who aren't LGBTQ+.
- we recommend all pupils, regardless of gender identity or sexual or romantic orientation, are taught about all the different methods of contraception, including methods to protect against unplanned pregnancy and methods to protect against STIs, as well as where contraception can be bought or accessed for free.
- what HIV is and how it is transmitted; explaining which groups experience the highest prevalence of HIV infections, while also explaining that HIV can affect anyone, regardless of their gender identity or their sexual or romantic orientation, or that of their sexual partners; the importance of regular HIV testing for at-risk people; how and where to get tested; what PrEP is, who can access it and how.

KEEP IN MIND: If you are signposting to external resources or agencies where pupils can get further information, advice or support about safe sex and sexual health, we recommend that you include local and national services for LGBTQ+ young people.

HEALTH EDUCATION - PRIMARY

MENTAL WELLBEING

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF PRIMARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.
- that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.
- how to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.
- how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
- the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, and voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.
- simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, and the benefits of hobbies and interests.
- isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.
- that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.
- where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support) including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
- it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- about how bullying, including HBT bullying, can have a negative impact on mental health and wellbeing.
- how to recognise and report HBT bullying.
- how celebrating and respecting difference can help everybody feel safer and more able to be themselves. This could include respecting the ways in which everybody's families can look different, including having LGBTQ+ parents or family members.

HEALTH EDUCATION - PRIMARY

INTERNET SAFETY AND HARMS

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF PRIMARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.
- about the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices, and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
- how to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private.
- why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted.
- that the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.
- how to be a discerning consumer of information online, including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.
- where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- how to recognise and report HBT language, bullying and abuse online including how to report this on apps, websites or gaming platforms that pupils might be using.
- why HBT bullying and language online (including using 'gay' as an insult) can be hurtful, and the impact it can have for pupils who are LGBTQ+ or have LGBTQ+ family members.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF PRIMARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- the characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
- the importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise.
- the risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity).
- how and when to seek support, including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- how gender stereotypes can stop people from participating in the kinds of sports or physical activities they most enjoy – for example, boys might feel like they're not allowed to enjoy dancing, or girls might feel they're not allowed to enjoy rugby.
- everybody has a right to choose the sports and activities they want to participate in, regardless of what gender they are.

KEEP IN MIND: It may be helpful to provide information about how trans pupils can access advice or support at school if they have worries or questions about taking part in sports – for example, worries about where they will get changed. For information and advice, see our [Introduction to Supporting LGBTQ+ Children and Young People](#).

HEALTH EDUCATION - PRIMARY

CHANGING ADOLESCENT BODY

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF PRIMARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.
- about menstrual wellbeing, including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- that most people will experience changes to their body during puberty, and that puberty can affect different people's bodies in different ways.
- each pupil should have access to information that is relevant to their body and the changes they might experience during puberty.

KEEP IN MIND: A trans pupil's body might be changing during puberty in a way that doesn't match their gender identity – for example, a trans boy going through puberty might be experiencing some of the same physical changes that girls experience. Avoid splitting pupils by gender if you can, so that pupils can learn about the ways in which all bodies change during puberty, and find the information that's relevant to their experience.

If, after exploring all other alternatives, a school decides to group some activities by gender, they should make it clear that trans pupils can participate in the gender group they feel most comfortable in, and provide opportunities in advance for trans pupils to discuss how they'd like to receive this teaching with their teacher. The DfE's guidance on the Equality Act in schools makes clear that 'Pupils undergoing gender reassignment should be allowed to attend the single sex class that accords with the gender role in which they identify'. As not all pupils (trans or cis) may want to receive this teaching in (gender) groups, schools should proactively plan different ways to deliver this teaching (for example in smaller group/1-2-1 teaching) – this is particularly helpful in ensuring non-binary pupils are included.

HEALTH EDUCATION - SECONDARY

MENTAL WELLBEING

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF SECONDARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
- that happiness is linked to being connected to others.
- how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.
- common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression).
- how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.
- the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- about the impacts of HBT bullying and other forms of anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination on the mental health of LGBTQ+ children and young people.
- that being LGBTQ+ is not a mental health condition, but experiencing bullying, poor treatment or isolation can make LGBTQ+ young people more likely to experience poor mental health outcomes.
- how to support good mental health and emotional wellbeing, including through safe, age-appropriate access to community with other LGBTQ+ young people – for example, through an LGBTQ+ youth group or an appropriately moderated online forum.

HEALTH EDUCATION - SECONDARY

INTERNET SAFETY AND HARMS

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF SECONDARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image) and how people may curate a specific image of their life online.
- the risks involved in over-reliance on online relationships, including social media.
- the risks related to online gambling, including the accumulation of debt.
- how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.
- how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- the impacts on the mental health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ young people of being exposed to HBT language and content.
- how to set boundaries around personal internet usage and protect their emotional wellbeing online, for example through limiting screen time; blocking people who harass, bully or discriminate; using privacy settings to limit access to their social media pages.
- the different types of extreme content LGBTQ+ young people might encounter and the harmful impact they can have, including anti-LGBTQ+ hate speech and materials about conversion therapies. How to report extreme content and how to seek support if exposed.

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND FITNESS

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF SECONDARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.
- the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill health.
- about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- how gender stereotypes and homophobia, biphobia and transphobia can stop people (including LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ people) from participating in the kinds of sports or physical activities they most enjoy.
- that everybody has a right to choose the sports and activities they want to participate in, regardless of their gender or sexual or romantic orientation. Stonewall's [Rainbow Laces campaign](#) is a good place to look for information on this topic – see our [Rainbow Laces activities](#) for schools.

KEEP IN MIND: It will be helpful to provide information about how trans pupils can access advice or support within the school if they have worries or questions about taking part in sports – for example, questions about where they will get changed, or what they can wear during PE.

Find more information in [An Introduction to Supporting LGBTQ+ Children and Young People](#).

HEALTH EDUCATION - SECONDARY

HEALTH AND PREVENTION

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF SECONDARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- about personal hygiene.
- germs including bacteria and viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
- about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.
- (late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening.
- the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
- the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- (Late secondary) that every person with breast tissue, including men, should perform regular self-examination to identify early signs of breast cancer, and how to do this.
- (Late secondary) that every person with a cervix should be aware of early indicators of cervical cancer and should attend regular cervical screenings when invited to do so by their doctor (usually from the age of 25) – this is regardless of whether they are sexually active and regardless of the gender of their sexual partners.
- (Late secondary) the importance of regular self-examination of the testicles for early signs of testicular cancer, and how to do this.

CHANGING ADOLESCENT BODY

WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE FROM THE DFE SAYS YOU MUST COVER BY THE END OF SECONDARY. PUPILS SHOULD KNOW:

- the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.
- the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill health.
- about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

HOW LGBTQ+ CONTENT COULD BE THREADED THROUGH THIS TOPIC AREA. CONSIDER TEACHING:

- that most people will experience changes to their body during puberty, and that puberty can affect different people's bodies in different ways.
- each pupil should have access to information that is relevant to their body and the physical changes they might experience during puberty (as well as the emotional changes they might experience).

KEEP IN MIND: A trans pupil's body might be changing during puberty in a way that doesn't match their gender identity – for example, a trans boy going through puberty might be experiencing some of the same physical changes that girls experience. Avoid splitting pupils by gender if you can, so that pupils can learn about the ways in which all bodies change during puberty, and find the information that's relevant to their experience. This is also relevant at late secondary, as pupils begin to learn about self-examination and cervical screening.

If, after exploring all other alternatives, a school decides to group some activities by gender, they should make it clear that trans pupils can participate in the gender group they feel most comfortable, and provide opportunities in advance for trans pupils to discuss how they'd like to receive this teaching with their teacher. The [DfE's guidance on the Equality Act in schools](#) makes clear that 'Pupils undergoing gender reassignment should be allowed to attend the single sex class that accords with the gender role in which they identify'. As not all pupils (trans or cis) may want to receive this teaching in (gender) groups, schools should proactively plan different ways to deliver this teaching (for example in smaller group/1-2-1 teaching) – this is particularly helpful in ensuring non-binary pupils are included.

TEACHING ABOUT THE LAW:

In the statutory guidance on RSHE, the DfE outlines the importance of teaching about the law.

WHICH LAWS MIGHT BE RELEVANT TO LGBTQ+ INCLUSION?

Where LGBTQ+ inclusion is concerned, help pupils understand what the law says about equality and protection from discrimination for LGBTQ+ people. You may want to cover the following laws:

Human Rights Act 1998

Protects the rights of many people – including LGBTQ+ people – at work, when accessing services, in marriage and relationships. See a summary [here](#).

Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013

Ensures same-sex couples can marry.

Equality Act 2010

Outlines nine protected characteristics – including sexual orientation and gender reassignment – and protects people from unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act on the basis of any protected characteristic.

Adoption and Children Act 2002

Allows for same-sex couples to adopt children.

SECTION TWO - IMPLEMENTATION: TEN STEPS TO IMPLEMENTING LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE RSHE

This section of the guide helps you map out an LGBTQ+ inclusive approach to RSHE, from first steps to ongoing monitoring and evaluation. For each step, we've included some examples of what this work might look like. It may be helpful to read these tips alongside the [Roadmap to Statutory RSE](#) by the PSHE Association and Sex Education Forum. At the end of this guide, you'll find a list of other helpful resources to support you.

STEP ONE: BE CLEAR ON WHAT THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE SAYS

Make sure you know what the [DfE's statutory guidance on RSHE](#) says about LGBTQ+ inclusion. Section One of this guide contains a useful summary.

We recommend that you use the statutory guidance as a jumping-off point: make sure that you've covered all of the required content on LGBTQ+ people and relationships as set out in the guidance for your age phase, but develop your confidence to go beyond the requirements, and ensure your provision is tailored to your pupils' needs.

A good place to look for resources to help you plan and deliver your provision is [Annex B to the statutory guidance](#) by the DfE, which lists suggested resources, including resources by Stonewall and others.

Primary schools must teach...

... about different families, which the statutory guidance specifically states **can** include LGBT parents. The DfE [has stated](#) that while it is not obligatory that they do so, 'primary schools are strongly encouraged and enabled' to cover LGBTQ+ content when teaching about different families.

Secondary schools must teach...

... about 'the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. All pupils should feel that the content is relevant to them and their developing sexuality'.

STEP TWO: UNDERSTAND WHAT LGBTQ+ PUPILS AND THOSE WITH LGBTQ+ PARENTS OR CARERS MIGHT NEED

Use research, best practice guides and resources to help staff develop their understanding of how LGBTQ+ pupils' needs might be different from non-LGBTQ+ pupils'. Stonewall's [Introduction to Supporting LGBTQ+ Children and Young People](#) has lots of helpful information for primary schools, secondary schools, special schools and colleges to help you get started. The [School Report 2017](#) can tell you more about LGBTQ+ young people's experiences at secondary school.

While LGBTQ+ pupils will need some specific information relevant to their experiences, for many topics within RSHE, the things pupils need to know will be the same for LGBTQ+ pupils and those who are not LGBTQ+. For example, when teaching about staying safe, all pupils should learn about the importance of consent, including asking for and giving consent, and what the law says about the age of consent.

STEP THREE: ASSESS HOW LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE YOUR CURRENT PROVISION IS

It's important to be clear on what's working well in your current provision and what needs to be improved. Have a look at your curriculum and lesson content to review what you teach about LGBTQ+ people and relationships and when you teach it.

Consider whether all of your RSHE teaching is LGBTQ+ inclusive, including teaching on families, healthy relationships, online safety, physical and mental health, as well as sexual health and intimate relationships (for secondary schools and primary schools choosing to teach sex education).

It's important that all pupils can learn about LGBTQ+ people and role models who are from a similar background to them **and** LGBTQ+ people from different backgrounds to them. Look at the LGBTQ+ people you teach about and check to see whether you're introducing pupils to a diverse range of LGBTQ+ people, including LGBTQ+ people of colour, LGBTQ+ disabled people and LGBTQ+ people of faith.

Stonewall's role model poster packs and lesson resources can help you get started with this. For example, see our [Trans Day of Visibility posters](#), our role model posters for [UK Disability History Month](#), and our Black History Month lesson plans for [primary schools](#), [secondary schools and colleges](#) and [special schools](#).

CONSULTING WITH PUPILS AND STAFF

Don't forget to ask your pupils for their opinions, so you can be sure your provision is tailored to the needs of your school community. School Councils, Prefect teams or LGBTQ+ groups could take the lead on this work.

Consider setting up a focus group with pupils, asking what pupils think works well about your LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE provision and what could be improved. Consult with older and younger year groups and compare and contrast pupils' experiences as they move through the school.

Don't forget to consult with staff and school leadership, including Governors or Trustees. Use the [Sex Education Forum's 12 Principles Poster](#) as a prompt, asking staff to select which principles are areas for improvement and which are areas of strength within your school. Compare and contrast feedback from leaders and other staff with feedback from pupils.

TAKING ACTION

Once you've identified any gaps in your provision, create an action plan: it can be helpful to break the work down into chunks, and set timeframes for achieving your goals so you can stay on track.

CASE STUDY: C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL, OXFORDSHIRE

The culture of the school is based on Christian values of love, respect, determination, creativity, creation and peace, and these are embedded throughout the curriculum.

They have written a PSHE curriculum as a school, and formal lessons take place weekly for all classes. To ensure their teaching is LGBTQ+ inclusive, teachers avoid making assumptions with the language they use, including using gender-neutral language where possible. They use Stonewall's Different Families, Same Love resources and displays that show and celebrate family difference.

A good question to ask yourself as you review your provision is: would an LGBTQ+ pupil at this school, or a pupil with LGBTQ+ family members, see themselves reflected in this teaching?

Good questions to ask yourself as you review topics and lesson plans are:

How would an LGBTQ+ pupil's experiences around this topic be different to the experiences of their peers who aren't LGBTQ+?

How would their experiences be the same?

What specific information would an LGBTQ+ pupil need to be taught during this lesson/topic so that they can make healthy, informed choices?

You can ask yourself the same question for pupils with LGBTQ+ family members.

Remember to avoid making assumptions about whether or not pupils are lesbian, gay, bi or trans. You may have pupils in your class who are LGBTQ+ but have not come out yet, or who will only come to realise they're LGBTQ+ later in life. You may have pupils with LGBTQ+ loved ones. LGBTQ+ inclusive teaching is always relevant.

STEP FOUR: BUILD A DEVELOPMENTAL AND TIMELY LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

LGBTQ+ topics, content and themes should be integrated into the RSHE curriculum, rather than taught as stand-alone lessons. The statutory guidance states that: ‘At the point at which schools consider it appropriate to teach their pupils about LGBT, they should ensure that this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson’.

Ensure you are taking a developmental approach, returning to and expanding upon topics as pupils grow in age and maturity, so that understanding can be built over time.

Ensure that resources such as photos, diagrams, videos, drawings and illustrations reflect a variety of relationship types and gender expressions, as well as reflecting a range of body types, ethnicities and disabilities. For an example, see *The Every Body Book* by Rachel E. Simon or *Making A Baby* by Rachel Greener.

Consider using inclusive language when writing social stories to support understanding for pupils with SEND – for example, using language like ‘most girls have periods’ instead of ‘all girls have periods’ when writing social stories about menstrual hygiene; or making sure that you include examples of a young person with two mums or two dads when writing social stories about different types of families and relationships.

Look at how you use repetition to support pupils’ understanding throughout the school year and as pupils move up through the school – this may be particularly relevant for pupils with SEND. Using posters around the school, such as our [Widigt symbol posters](#), our [Different Families posters](#) or our [‘Some People Are...’](#) posters, can be a helpful way to keep conversations going and remind pupils of core LGBTQ+ inclusive values.

Developing an LGBTQ+ inclusive curriculum across all subject areas supports you to expand on LGBTQ+ topics and themes – our curriculum guides for [primary](#) and [secondary](#) can help you map out an inclusive curriculum for your age phase.

CASE STUDY: SECONDARY SCHOOL, SOMERSET

The school ensures that RSHE for every year group is LGBTQ+ inclusive, but they also have a policy of ensuring that LGBTQ+ people, issues and relationships are incorporated into lessons across the curriculum, not just in RSHE. This helps students develop a rounded understanding of what it means to be LGBTQ+.

In RSHE, topics are built up developmentally as students grow in age and maturity. Students in Year 7 start by learning about equality and diversity, puberty and life changes, bullying, and emotional health and wellbeing. These topics are then continued upwards through the year groups in an age-appropriate way: for example, Year 11 pupils consider pornography and mental health alongside coping with stress, while Year 12 pupils look at different relationships (including LGBTQ+ relationships) and body image.

STEP FIVE: EQUIP STAFF WITH TRAINING AND SUPPORT

It’s important that all staff feel able to include LGBTQ+ families, people and relationships with confidence and sensitivity in RSHE teaching.

Take some time to understand how confident staff feel delivering LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE. Consider asking staff to rate their confidence out of 10, where 0 means ‘not confident at all’ and 10 means ‘extremely confident’. You may wish to break this down even further, asking staff to rate their confidence on particular topics. Ask staff what would build their confidence further.

Look for training or resources that will address the needs staff have identified. Stonewall has a range of [e-learning courses](#) which can help staff explore different aspects of supporting LGBTQ+ children and young people. These courses are completed online: they take 3-4 hours to complete in one go, but staff can dip in and out and complete them over a longer period of time, making them a good option for busy schedules.

Consider providing opportunities for team teaching, so that less confident colleagues can learn from those who are more confident or experienced.

STEP SIX: ENSURE YOUR RSHE POLICY IS LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE

Your policy lets your school community and the wider community know your setting’s ethos, so make sure it’s clear that you take an LGBT-inclusive approach to RSHE. Include a summary of what you teach and when, and explain that you are fulfilling your duties under the Equality Act 2010.

You can also use your policy to explain why LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE (and inclusive teaching more widely) is important to the school. For example, you may wish to point out that your LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE provision is part of: a whole-school approach to LGBTQ+ inclusion; your work to tackle prejudice-based bullying; the ways in which you ensure all pupils feel included and represented at school, and learn how to treat people who are different to them with respect.

STEP SEVEN: ENGAGE PARENTS AND CARERS TO HELP EVERYBODY UNDERSTAND WHAT YOUR LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE APPROACH LOOKS LIKE

The statutory guidance on RSHE from the DfE requires all schools to have consulted with parents and carers on RSHE. Effective parental engagement can be an important part of developing LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE. The DfE, along with the NAHT, ASCL and NGA, have produced some [guidance](#) on how to engage with parents and carers.

It's important to know that according to the DfE:

'Schools ultimately make the final decisions and engagement does not amount to a parental veto. The Department for Education will back schools that, having engaged with parents and carefully considered their views, take reasonable decisions about their Relationships Education policy.'

The Sex Education Forum offer [training and support](#) on carrying out effective consultation with parents and carers. You'll also find useful tips in [this guidance](#) on parental engagement questions.

It can be reassuring to give parents and carers opportunities to look at your lesson materials and examples of pupils' work throughout the school year: you could do this via your website, your newsletter, or – in the case of storybooks or visual materials – through school displays. Seeing what RSHE looks like in context can build parent and carer confidence that LGBTQ+ people, families and relationships are reflected in your teaching.

CASE STUDY: SPECIAL SCHOOL, SECONDARY

As an SEN school, they support some of the most vulnerable pupils who need rigorous teaching around all RSHE topics. They ensure the content they deliver is LGBTQ+ inclusive by using case studies featuring same-sex relationships, using gender-neutral language when discussing partners, and delivering training to all staff teaching RSHE and PSHCE.

All parents/carers are informed of the RSHE curriculum: letters are sent home to each parent/carer covering what their child will be learning about during RSHE lessons. Parents/carers are invited to get in contact with any concerns or issues. They also run a Parents' Group before RSHE teaching begins, where parents/carers are invited in to look at their RSHE curriculum and sample resources.

STEP EIGHT: MONITOR AND EVALUATE YOUR PROVISION

Explore a range of assessment techniques to check pupils' learning over time – the Sex Education Forum's [Monitoring, Evaluating and Assessing RSE – the basics](#) has lots of useful tips.

Build in regular opportunities to review what's working well and what could be improved, looking for feedback from both pupils and staff. Provide a variety of ways for both pupils and teaching staff to evaluate your LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE provision – consider using evaluation surveys, anonymous evaluation boxes, or having group discussions in lessons or form time.

STEP NINE: ENSURE THE WAY YOU TEACH IS LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE, AS WELL AS THE CONTENT THAT YOU TEACH

Take time to explain the meaning of key terms. You'll find child-friendly definitions in the glossary at the end of our guide on [Creating an LGBTQ+ inclusive Primary Curriculum](#).

Remember that LGBTQ+ people are as diverse as any other group, and it's important to avoid stereotyping LGBTQ+ people and relationships. This could be in relation to career choices, personal appearance or behaviour.

Make sure you know how to provide support if a pupil tells you that they are LGBTQ+. Stonewall's [Introduction to Supporting LGBTQ+ Children and Young People](#) has lots of advice about how to support a pupil who is coming out.

Avoid making assumptions about whether a pupil is LGBTQ+ and remember that you may be teaching pupils who haven't yet come out. Even pupils who are out as LGBTQ+ generally will not want to be singled out during a lesson. Make use of distancing techniques such as case studies, videos, books or stories to introduce LGBTQ+ content without spotlighting any individual pupil's identity.

Be prepared for questions from pupils about LGBTQ+ topics. The guide to [learning in a safe environment](#) includes a range of helpful tips for dealing with sensitive questions during a lesson, including 'parking' questions to be answered later.

Certain topics in RSHE might be especially challenging, or even distressing, for some vulnerable pupils. This can apply to LGBTQ+ pupils just as it applies to pupils who aren't LGBTQ+. Some LGBTQ+ pupils may also find it challenging when you are teaching about LGBTQ+ content specifically, for example if they have had difficult experiences around coming out. Make sure you've thought about how you can provide support for a pupil experiencing distress during your lesson.

You could use ground rules at the beginning of a lesson or unit of work to create a safe learning space. You could include a range of different ways for pupils to choose their level of participation in each activity, so that pupils can pace themselves as they need to. This guidance from Public Health England and the PSHE [Association on learning in a safe environment](#) has lots of helpful tips.

STEP TEN: EMBED LGBTQ+ INCLUSION BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Building a whole school culture of celebrating difference can enhance your LGBTQ+ inclusive RSHE provision. Building staff knowledge and confidence ensures that pupils have regular opportunities to revisit and reflect on topics across the curriculum and wider school life.

You'll find lots of helpful advice and information in Stonewall's Getting Started toolkits for [EYFS](#), [primary](#) and [secondary](#).

CASE STUDY: PRIMARY SCHOOL, MANCHESTER

Staff reviewed the curriculum together and have ensured high-quality delivery of this teaching through lesson observation and group lesson planning.

They use events including LGBTQ+ History Month and International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia to take the opportunity to talk about LGBTQ+ people and identities. In their Key Stage 2 provision, the school also uses their PSHE curriculum to talk about gender identity and what it means to be trans, for instance by using the BBC documentary 'I am Leo', which follows the story of a trans young person.

LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE RSHE: THINGS TO REMEMBER

Bear the following things in mind as you plan your curriculum and choose resources for use in the classroom.

1. LGBTQ+ PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS EXISTED:

A wide range of sexual and romantic orientations and gender identities have existed throughout human history. This is true across many different cultures. LGBTQ+ identities are not new.

2. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE CAN HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR GENDER IDENTITY OR THEIR SEXUAL OR ROMANTIC ORIENTATION:

Some children and young people will know that they are LGBTQ+, and some will be questioning whether they might be. It's important not to assume that we know how somebody identifies unless they have told us, and to remember that the way in which a person identifies might change throughout their lifetime.

3. GENDER IDENTITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND ROMANTIC ORIENTATION ARE NOT THE SAME:

A person's sexual and romantic orientation and their gender identity are different parts of who they are. A person's gender identity doesn't determine whether they'll be attracted to other people, or who they will be attracted to – for example, just because someone is a man, it doesn't mean they are exclusively attracted to women. For some people, their sexual orientation (who they are physically or sexually attracted to) and their romantic orientation (who they might want to have a romantic relationship with or fall in love with) can be different. Some people may not be interested in sexual activity, or only sometimes. Some people may not be interested in romantic relationships, or only sometimes.

4. SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR IS NOT DETERMINED BY GENDER IDENTITY OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION:

Just because a person identifies a particular way, that doesn't mean that they will or will not be having a particular type of sex. Everyone has a right to information about their bodies, about safe sex and access to sexual health services that are relevant to them.

5. LGBTQ+ PEOPLE ARE NOT ONE HOMOGENOUS GROUP:

LGBTQ+ people are as diverse as any other group of people. Many LGBTQ+ people will also have other protected characteristics, such as race, faith or disability status, which may shape their experiences and sometimes the way they are treated by others. Similarly, different groups within the LGBTQ+ community will have different experiences and needs. Discrimination, stereotyping or exclusion can happen within the LGBTQ+ community.

6. EVERYONE HAS A BODY. NOT EVERYONE'S BODY IS THE SAME.

Every person's body is unique and it's normal for a person's body to not look the same as everyone else's. Most children and young people will experience a range of physical changes as they go through puberty, and not everybody's body changes in exactly the same way. This is true for all children and young people, including those who are LGBTQ+ and those who are not. For trans young people, their bodies may change during puberty in a way that doesn't match their gender identity, or how they feel inside. Intersex young people may experience different physical changes to young people who are not intersex. The way a person's body looks or changes doesn't invalidate who they are.

SECTION THREE: RESOURCE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

It's important to feel sure you're choosing and using quality LGBTQ+ inclusive resources, especially if you're using resources made by someone else. You can use the checklist below to assess a resource before you use it in the classroom and be sure that it's reflecting the key principles outlined in this resource.

You don't have to be able to answer 'yes' to every single question in order to be confident that you're using a quality LGBTQ+ inclusive resource – but as you work through the checklist, be aware of what the resource you're considering includes and doesn't include, and how far you can adapt it.

A good place to start looking for resources is [Annex B to the statutory guidance on RSHE, which lists suggested resources, including resources by Stonewall and others.](#)

COVERING THE BASICS

Is the resource appropriate for the age and level of understanding of the pupils you're working with?

Is the resource differentiated for pupils with SEND, or can you differentiate the content yourself?

Is the resource factually correct and up to date?

Does the resource include definitions of key terms like lesbian, gay, bi, trans, non-binary and gender identity?

Does the resource include evidence (such as statistics, case studies, survey responses etc) to back up any claims it makes?

IDENTIFYING SOURCES

Who made the resource?

What expertise do they have in LGBTQ+ inclusion?

Do they advocate for and include lesbian, gay, bi **and** trans people?

REPRESENTATION MATTERS

Does the resource include lesbian, gay, bi **and** trans people, including non-binary people? (This may be less relevant if you're looking for a resource about a specific group within the LGBTQ+ community – e.g. a research report about bi people)

Do case studies, examples, images, videos etc. include LGBTQ+ people and relationships? Are a diverse range of LGBTQ+ people represented, including Black LGBTQ+ people, LGBTQ+ people of colour and disabled LGBTQ+ people? Does this representation avoid stereotypes?

Does the resource include the voices and experiences of LGBTQ+ people? This can include quotes, case studies, interviews, statistics from research done with LGBTQ+ people, etc.

IDENTIFYING A TRANS-INCLUSIVE RESOURCE

Ensuring that trans people and identities are included in your teaching is vital: it helps children and young people who are or might be trans, or who have trans family members, feel included. For young people who are not trans, learning about different gender identities and a diverse range of trans role models is part and parcel of learning about equality, diversity and respect.

Teachers can make use of distancing techniques such as case studies and stories to introduce content about gender identity and trans people without spotlighting any individual child or young person's identity.

The following questions can help you identify a quality trans-inclusive resource:

Who is the resource made by? Is it made by an organisation that includes and advocates for trans people? If not, is the resource recommended by any organisations that advocate for trans equality?

Does the resource include the voices and lived experiences of trans people? This can include quotes, case studies, interviews with trans people, statistics from research, etc.

Does the resource provide definitions of key terms such as trans, cis, non-binary and gender identity?

Does the resource make a clear distinction between gender identity and sexual or romantic orientation?

Do case studies, examples, images, videos etc represent a diverse range of trans people, including Black trans people, trans people of colour and disabled trans people? Does this representation avoid stereotypes?

Does the resource link to local and/or national organisations that can provide advice, information and specialist support for young trans people and their parents or carers, such as the [Gender Identity Development Services \(GIDS\)](#)?

SPOTTING GOOD QUALITY RESEARCH

It's important that resources you use in the classroom are evidence based: any claims and arguments should be backed up by solid evidence (this can include quantitative data, such as statistics from research, and qualitative data, such as case studies or quotes from interviews). If the resource doesn't do this, then it should make a clear distinction between what is an opinion and what is a conclusion drawn from evidence.

The prompt questions below are a useful starting point to help you explore and assess the evidence base of a resource.

SOURCES AND STATISTICS

ARE CLAIMS OR ARGUMENTS BACKED UP WITH EVIDENCE?

Does the resource provide evidence for any claims or arguments it makes? This can include quantitative data, such as statistics from research, and qualitative data, such as case studies or quotes from interviews.

Is the evidence cited (the source acknowledged, preferably with a link or a reference so a reader can go and look at the source)?

WHERE RESEARCH AND STATISTICS ARE INCLUDED IN THE RESOURCE, WHERE DOES THE RESEARCH COME FROM?

Who carried out the research? What are their credentials – i.e. are they skilled and experienced in carrying out research?

If the research is about a particular group of people, were people from that group directly involved in carrying out and/or participating in the research?

Who else recommends, quotes, shares or endorses the research? What do you know about the organisations or institutions who recommend or share the research? Do they have a reputation for expertise on the topic? Would you usually trust their recommendation?

SAMPLE

HOW MANY PARTICIPANTS DID THE RESEARCH INVOLVE?

Is the sample representative of the population being studied?

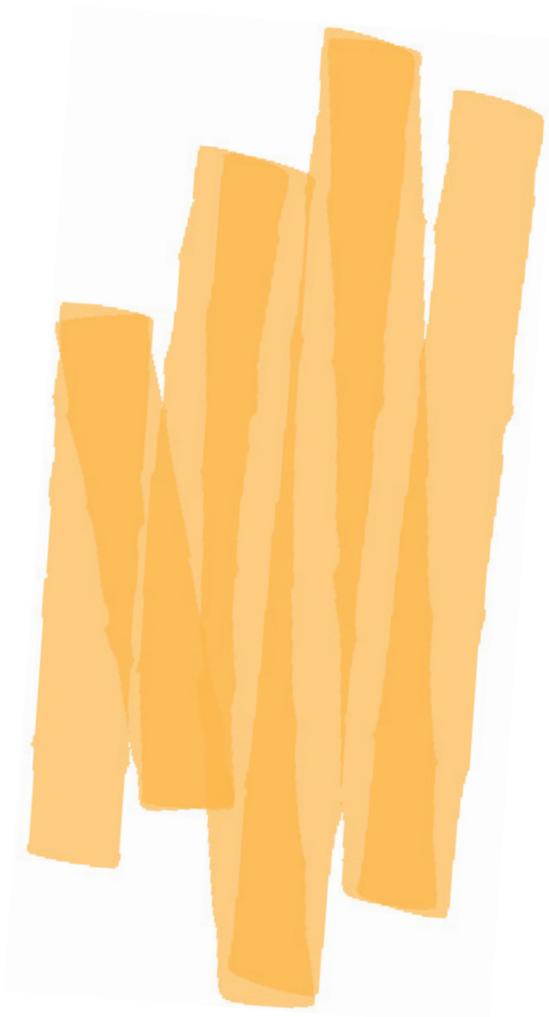
If the research makes generalised claims about a population (for example, 'bi people in England think that...' or 'Schools in London have found that...'), check how many people were involved in the study.

If it's only a small group, it's likely the research isn't representative of the whole population being studied. Small sample groups can still be useful because they give us an idea about what **some** people in that group think, but they shouldn't be used to support broad claims.

SAFEGUARDING LGBTQ+ CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Getting LGBTQ+ inclusion right contributes to effective safeguarding in your setting. When you celebrate difference and help children and young people to understand that all forms of bullying – including homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying – are unacceptable, your pupils feel more confident in their rights and responsibilities and more able to ask for help when they need it. LGBTQ+ children and young people feel safer and happier when their school or college actively includes and celebrates LGBTQ+ people ([Stonewall School Report, 2017](#)).

Safeguarding is extremely important to Stonewall – it sits at the heart of our programmes and events. We believe that no one should ever experience abuse, exploitation or neglect. We believe it's everyone's responsibility to safeguard children and adults at risk from abuse and to take action when made aware of the risk of harm. If you would like to talk to Stonewall about safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people, get in touch with us at education@stonewall.org.uk. The following information can provide a useful starting point.



COMING OUT

It's important to know that a young person coming out to you (telling you that they are lesbian, gay, bi or trans) isn't a safeguarding disclosure in itself. Unless you have a reason to worry that they are at risk of harm or abuse, you don't need to alert your Designated Safeguarding Lead or inform the young person's parent or carer. You may be worried about not sharing this information with parents or carers, but it's really important that LGBTQ+ young people are supported to come out at their own pace. Bear in mind that a young person's parents or carers may not be supportive of their sexual or romantic orientation or their gender identity. Where this is the case, informing parents or carers against the young person's wishes may expose the young person to greater risk.

Of course, many parents, carers and family members will be supportive – and it's really important that LGBTQ+ young people have access to a support network. So, if a young person comes out to you, you should ask them if they've come out to family, friends or other teachers. If they haven't yet, ask them if they'd like to, and if so, whether they'd like your help with this. Consider sharing [Childline's resources on coming out](#) with the young person. Check in with them regularly to make sure they're getting the right support. Local LGBTQ+ youth groups are another valuable source of support – help young people find their local group through the [Proud Trust's youth group directory](#).

Sometimes, it may be necessary to inform other members of staff that a young person is LGBT, particularly if you're concerned about a risk to a child's safety that is directly connected to their LGBTQ+ identity. For example, if a young person tells you that they're worried they'll be made homeless if their family find out they are trans, this should be treated as a disclosure and you should follow your organisation's safeguarding policy. [The NSPCC have some useful guidance](#) that can help you with this.

RISK-TAKING BEHAVIOURS

It's crucial to distinguish between a child or young person coming out and an LGBT child or young person sharing that they are engaging in risk-taking behaviour, or showing signs that they are being abused or exploited. For example, a young person under the age of 16 may tell you that they are gay and that they are in a sexual or romantic relationship with a young person over the age of 16, or with an adult. This should be treated as a disclosure, in the same way as it should be for a non-LGBTQ+ young person in the same position. Some LGBTQ+ young people may be more likely to engage in certain risk-taking behaviours, such as not telling anyone they're going to meet up with someone they met online. Often, this can happen because a young person is looking for community but doesn't have a safe space (like a youth group or an appropriately moderated online forum) in which to meet LGBTQ+ people their own age. This may make some LGBTQ+ young people more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, so it's important to be alert, keep the lines of communication open between you and the LGBTQ+ young people you support, and check in with them regularly.

For more information about supporting LGBTQ+ young people with coming out, see our [Introduction to Supporting LGBT Children and Young People](#).

FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

[Stonewall glossary](#)

Find a child-friendly glossary in our guide to [Creating an LGBTQ+ inclusive primary curriculum](#)

RESOURCES FOR PLANNING YOUR LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE RSHE PROVISION

[Statutory guidance on RSHE from the Department for Education](#)

[Department for Education \(2018\) Equality Act 2010: advice for schools](#)

[UNESCO \(2018\) International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education: an evidence-informed approach](#)

[Sex Education Forum Curriculum design tool](#)

[Sex Education Forum webinars and training](#)

[Sex Education Forum 12 Principles Poster](#)

[Oxfordshire County Council's RSE Framework and Resources for Pupils with Additional Needs](#)

GUIDANCE ON FAITH AND LGBTQ+ INCLUSION

[Valuing All God's Children: Guidance for Church of England schools on tackling HBT bullying](#)

[The Wellbeing of LGBT+ pupils: a guide for Jewish Orthodox Schools](#)

[Made in God's Image: challenging homophobic and biphobic bullying in Catholic schools](#)

[Imaan – the UK's leading LGBTQ Muslim charity](#)

[Hidayah LGBT](#)

[Keshet – for LGBTQ equality in Jewish life](#)

[Sarbat LGBTQ+ Sikhs](#)

FURTHER RESOURCES

Find a list of organisations and resources that might be helpful when supporting LGBTQ+ children and young people in our [Introduction to supporting LGBTQ+ Children and Young People](#).

STONEWALL RESOURCES AND RESEARCH ON SUPPORTING LGBTQ+ CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

You'll find a range of guidance and resources for schools and colleges on our website. In particular, you might wish to look at:

[Celebrating Bi Inclusion In Secondary Schools](#)

[Celebrating Difference And Building Belonging: Making Sure Non-Binary Students Feel Valued At School And College](#)

[Celebrating Diversity Through Pupil Voice](#)

[Creating An LGBTQ+ inclusive Primary Curriculum](#)

[Creating An LGBTQ+ inclusive Curriculum: A Guide For Secondary Schools](#)

[Delivering LGBTQ+ inclusive Further Education](#)

[Primary Best Practice](#)

[School Report \(2017\)](#)

[Student Voice: Setting Up A Student LGBTQ+ Group In Secondary Schools & Colleges](#)

[Staying Safe Online](#)

[The Teachers' Report \(2014\)](#)

WORKING WITH STONEWALL

Stonewall's School & College Champions programme is a network of primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and settings across the country working together and with Stonewall to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and to work in a more LGBTQ+ inclusive way. Find out more about membership [here](#). We have a range of [e-learning courses](#) available for schools, colleges and Children and Young People's Services. If you have any questions or would like to know more, please [visit our website](#). Can't find what you're looking for? Drop us an email at education@stonewall.org.uk

Stonewall's Children and Young People's Services Champions programme supports local authority Children and Young People's Services and Public Health, as well as children and young people's organisations, to put LGBTQ+ inclusion at the heart of their work. For more information visit www.stonewall.org.uk/cyps or email cyps@stonewall.org.uk

LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE RSHE: PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

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