

LGBT+ AWARENESS & INCLUSION



THE RAINBOW FLAG AWARD

The Rainbow Flag Award is a national quality assurance framework for all schools and colleges. The award focuses on positive LGBTQ+, (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, plus other related identities), inclusion and visibility.

The Rainbow Flag Award encourages a whole organisation approach to LGBTQ+ inclusion, as well as developing strategies to effectively challenge and combat transphobic, homophobic and biphobic bullying.

Committing your school or organisation to the Rainbow Flag Award is a commitment to improve the lives of all the young people that you work with, as well as the LGBTQ+ young people in your care, those from LGBTQ+ families, and LGBTQ+ staff members.



Why are we doing the Rainbow Flag Award?

The Rainbow Flag Award is a framework to support schools and colleges to take a positive approach to LGBTQ+ inclusion, and there are multiple reasons for ensuring settings are LGBTQ+ inclusive: there is a legal responsibility, Ofsted, and a moral responsibility.

It is not a legal requirement to do the Rainbow Flag Award. However we are doing it as we believe it is the right thing to do because it will support the school in :

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Fostering good relations across all protected characteristics



Why are we doing the Rainbow Flag Award?

“We are offering fully funded opportunities for schools in West Sussex to complete The Rainbow Flag Award in January 2025.

The award encourages a whole school approach to LGBT+ inclusion, focuses on positive LGBT+ visibility and helps develop strategies to effectively challenge LGBT+phobic bullying. Committing your school to the Rainbow Flag Award is a commitment to improve the lives of all the young people that you work with, as well as the LGBT+ young people in your care, those from LGBT+ families, and LGBT+ staff members.”

Vik Machin, Schools and Colleges Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Advisor Education & Skills | Children, Young People and Learning | West Sussex County Council



Equality Act 2010

- Applies to all maintained and independent schools including academies
- Sexual orientation and gender reassignment (trans identities) are **protected characteristics**
- It is unlawful to discriminate against people who identify with any of the protected characteristics
- There is an argument that if LGBT+ people feel unsafe and uncared for in a school, this is indirect discrimination



The Equality Act 2010 and schools

Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities

Protected Characteristics

Types of discrimination ('protected characteristics')

It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- **Age**: Discrimination based on a person's age.
- **Disability**: Discrimination based on a physical/mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- **Gender Reassignment**: Discrimination based on a person's gender reassignment, including proposing to undergo, undergoing, or having undergone a process to reassign their sex.
- **Marriage and Civil Partnership**: Discrimination based on a person's marital or civil partnership status.
- **Pregnancy and Maternity**: Discrimination based on a person's pregnancy or maternity.
- **Race**: Discrimination based on a person's ethnic origin, nationality, or colour.
- **Religion or Belief**: Discrimination based on a person's religious belief or lack thereof, or any other belief.
- **Sex**: Discrimination based on a person's sex.
- **Sexual Orientation**: Discrimination based on a person's sexual orientation (heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual).

Public Sector Equality Duty

- Applicable to all maintained schools including academies
- Compliance with the equality duty is a legal requirement and are central to the OFSTED inspection framework
- The duty has three elements
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimization and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
 - Foster good relations across all protected characteristics

Public Sector Equality Duty Guidance for Schools in England



Equality and Human Rights Commission
www.equalityhumanrights.com

Keeping Children Safe in Education

205. A child...being [LGB] is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however they can sometimes be targeted by other children...

209. Risk can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavor to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

Please note that the points in this guidance that refer to supporting trans, non-binary, and exploring young people signpost you to the draft guidance the government released for consultation. As this guidance is draft, it should not be implemented.

Keeping children safe in education 2024

36. ... schools should **ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met**, and that all **pupils understand the importance of equality and respect**. Schools must ensure that they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, ... under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics

37. ... 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 stand- alone unit or lesson. Schools are free to determine how they do this, and we expect all pupils to have been taught LGBT content at a timely point as part of this area of the curriculum.

59. ... Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, ... LGBT parents, ...) Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them...

The schools inspection handbook states that schools should ensure “an inclusive environment that meets the needs of all pupils, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, and where no discrimination exists, for example in respect of wider opportunities for pupils”.

Guidance

School inspection handbook

Updated 5 April 2024



Moral Obligation?



just like us

Growing Up LGBT+ (2021) taken from research of children 11+

- 48% of 11+ pupils interviewed in the Just like us research survey, stated they have had little to zero positive messaging about being LGBT+ at school in the last 12 months.
- Only half (49%) of LGBT+ pupils (11+) who have 'never' had positive messages feel safe at school on a daily basis; this increased to 58% with 'few' positive messages and increases again to 68% with 'strong' positive messages.

Moral Obligation?

Predictors of self-harm and suicide in LGBT youth: The role of gender, socio-economic status, bullying and school experience (2023)

- Trans adolescents, compared with non-trans young people, were almost four times more likely to report self-harm, over three times more likely to report suicidal ideation, and two and a half times more likely to report an attempted suicide.
- Compared with those who identified as male/female, adolescents who identified as non-binary were four times more likely to self harm, twice as likely to report suicidal ideation and 20% more likely to report attempting suicide
- In terms of protective factors, ***adolescents who reported a more positive school experience were 40% less likely to report self harm or attempted suicide, and 65% less likely to report suicide ideation***
- 'It is important for schools and colleges to be aware that teaching about LGBT people, families and relationships and tackling [LGBTphobic] bullying needs to be accompanied with fostering an atmosphere of inclusivity, so that all LGBT young people feel safe and enjoy being at school and college.'

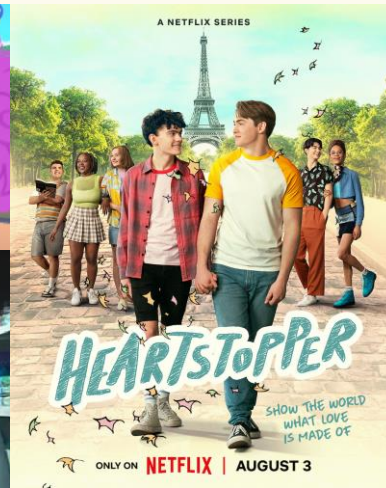
Moral Obligation?

Understanding How School-Based Interventions Can Tackle LGBTQ+ Youth Mental Health Inequality: A Realist Approach (2023)

- Globally, research indicates that LGBTQ+ young people have elevated rates of poor mental health in comparison with their cisgender heterosexual peers.
- The ***school environment is a major risk factor*** and is consistently associated with negative mental health outcomes for LGBTQ+ young people.
- We found that context factors such as ***a ‘whole-school approach’ and ‘collaborative leadership’ were crucial*** to the delivery of successful interventions.
- Our theory posits three causal pathways that might improve mental health: (1) interventions that ***promote LGBTQ+ visibility*** and facilitate usualising, school belonging, and recognition; (2) ***interventions for talking and support*** that develop safety and coping; and (3) interventions that address institutional school culture (***staff training and inclusion policies***) that foster school belonging, empowerment, recognition, and safety. Our theoretical model suggests that ***providing a school environment that affirms and usualises LGBTQ+ identities and promotes school safety and belonging can improve mental health outcomes for LGBTQ+ pupils.***



Moral Obligation?



Moral Obligation?

Google

gay

Wikipedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gay

Gay - Wikipedia


Gay: Used to describe men and women attracted to the same sex, though lesbian is the more common term for women. Preferred over homosexual except in clinical ...

History · Sexualization · Homosexuality · Gay community vs. LGBT...

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gay_men


Gay men - Wikipedia

Gay men are male homosexuals. Some bisexual and homoromantic men may dually identify as gay, and a number of gay men also identify as queer.



Videos

2:53




First Premier League openly gay player would be huge for ...

Sky Sports · Sky Sports

6 hours ago

2:07




Gay man stabbed to death at Brooklyn gas station in possible ...

YouTube · NBC New York

3 days ago

INSIDE INDIAN GAY CONVERSION INDUSTRY



Inside India's gay conversion industry

YouTube · Sky News


transgender

American Psychological Association

https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbtq/transgender-pe...


Understanding transgender people, gender identity and ...

9 Mar 2023 — Transgender is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity (sense of themselves as male or female) or gender expression ...



Videos

12:27




"It's Grotesque!" Panel Has HEATED Debate Over ...

YouTube · Piers Morgan Uncensored

2 days ago


0:26



Indiana transgender students to use bathrooms according to ...

YouTube · WTHR

1 day ago



Where GOP hopefuls stand on transgender issues

Politico

22 hours ago

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THE
RAINBOW FLAG
AWARD

YOUR MEMBERSHIP

The Rainbow Flag Award runs over four academic terms, with new cohorts starting in each of the Autumn, Spring, and Summer terms. Starter training will happen early in your first membership term. Following this, evidence of your LGBT+ inclusive work can be shared for feedback and review twice during your membership before we visit your school. The Rainbow Flag Award process follows this structure:

TERM 1	
First Half Term	Second Half Term
Receive starter training and begin to work towards your Rainbow Flag Award.	Start uploading evidence to your Evidence Log to demonstrate how the Rainbow Flag Award indicators are being met in your school.
TERM 2	
First Half Term	Second Half Term
The evidence of your work so far will be reviewed by your local Rainbow Flag Award delivery partner against the indicators listed in this handbook.	Attend an optional group coaching meeting online with the other schools in your cohort to discuss your feedback and ask any questions you may have. Continue to upload evidence of your work to your Evidence Log.
TERM 3	
First Half Term	Second Half Term
The evidence of your work so far will be reviewed by your local Rainbow Flag Award delivery partner against the indicators listed in this handbook.	Attend an optional group coaching meeting online with the other schools in your cohort to discuss your feedback and ask any questions you may have, and discuss your school visit. From this point, you will not be able to upload any further evidence to your Evidence Log. Any indicators which haven't been met will need to be evidenced in your school visit.
TERM 4	
Before the end of this term	
<p>A member of the Rainbow Flag Award team will audit the policies on your website and visit your school. During the half day visit you will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show us any evidence you have that demonstrates how you meet any outstanding indicators, this may include sharing lessons and resources, a school tour, conversations with staff, parents, governors or something else. - Facilitate a group conversation with young people (from your LGBT+ group if you have one). - Following this, you will receive feedback from the visit, and hopefully your full Rainbow Flag Award certificate. 	

All of the above is included in your membership fee. For schools that do not complete the Rainbow Flag Award in their membership term, extension processes may be arranged for an additional fee. Termly deferments may be permissible in exceptional circumstances and can be negotiated with the central Rainbow Flag Award team.

RAINBOW FLAG AWARD SECTIONS

**SKILLED
STAFF**

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**INCLUSIVE
CURRICULUM**

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**SUPPORTIVE
GOVERNORS
& PARENTS**

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**PASTORAL
SUPPORT**

PAGE 15

**EFFECTIVE
POLICIES**

PAGE 11

**STUDENT
VOICE**

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STANDARD:

Staff, including Senior Leadership Teams and non-teaching staff, can recognise and consistently challenge and report transphobia, homophobia and biphobia, and are confidently using positive and appropriate language around gender identity and sexual orientation.

INDICATORS:

1. At least two staff, including at least one member of SLT, have attended all elements of the Rainbow Flag Award starter training.
2. Effective training around gender identity, trans (including non-binary) identities, and inclusion has been cascaded to the wider staff team, including non-teaching staff.
3. Effective training around sexual orientation, lesbian, gay and bisexual identities, and inclusion has been cascaded to the wider staff team, including non-teaching staff.
4. Staff can confidently and consistently: recognise and appropriately challenge incidents of transphobia, homophobia and biphobia, and record incidents on school-wide systems such as CPOMS, SIMs, ClassCharts, etc.
5. Staff feel confident using appropriate and positive terminology around gender identity, such as "trans", "non-binary" and "cis". They understand how gender identity is different to sex/gender assigned at birth.
6. Staff feel confident using appropriate and positive terminology around sexual orientation, such as "lesbian", "gay", "bisexual" and "straight".
7. Staff are supported by systems, policies and processes that enable them to record and use students' names and pronouns that may differ from their legal name and the pronouns associated with their sex/gender assigned at birth.

Indicators 2 and 3 do not have to be achieved in separate training sessions, but we would encourage you to think about the benefits of running them as separate sessions or separating them within your training. See Page 8 for further details.

TOP TIPS

This is a whole organisation approach to LGBT+ inclusion so the whole organisation needs to be involved, you can't do this on your own! Training and engaging with your whole staff team from the very start is crucial. Encourage staff to reflect on their practice and commit to making changes to future-proof LGBT+ inclusion in their subjects and spaces.



STANDARD:

Governors and parents and carers understand the need to combat transphobia, homophobia and biphobia through positive LGBT+ education and representation, and know where to go for information, and if needed, support.

INDICATORS:

1. Governors are invited to LGBT+ awareness and inclusion training and feel confident using appropriate and positive terminology for LGBT+ people and identities.
2. Governors are committed to; ensuring their school is an LGBT+ inclusive learning environment, and a stance against transphobia, homophobia, and biphobia.
3. Information has been shared with parents and carers about the LGBT+ inclusive work and/or events happening in school throughout the year.
4. Governors, as well as parents and carers, know how to access information and support in school and outside of school, through signposting to internal staff as well as appropriate local and national LGBT+ services for children and young people, and families.

TOP TIPS

In our experience, parents and carers who are nervous about this kind of education are often misinformed about what it looks like. Taking the time to proactively share the resources, and educate them in the process, is time well spent!



STANDARD:

Effective policies are in place to positively support whole organisation LGBT+ inclusion, and address transphobia, homophobia and biphobia.

You are not required to send us your policies or upload them to your Evidence Log. Prior to our visit to your school, we will review the public facing policies that sit on your website. Some of the policies we may review include Uniform, Anti-bullying/Behaviour, Safeguarding, Equality, Teaching and Learning, and Relationships and Sex Education policies.

However, we will need to see evidence that these policies have been shared, understood and implemented by staff either during our visit or on your Evidence Log.

As updating policies can take months, we recommend looking at your policies as soon as possible to ensure they are LGBT+ inclusive. Consider using the Developing Effective LGBT+ Inclusive Policies Guide to support you with this process.

INDICATORS:

1. Policies are trans inclusive; they demonstrate a commitment to supporting your trans (including non-binary) students with the steps they may choose to take as part of their transition, creating a trans positive learning environment, and robustly challenging transphobia, in line with legal, statutory and moral obligations.
2. Policies are inclusive of people who experience same-gender attraction; they demonstrate a commitment to supporting your lesbian, gay and bisexual students, creating a positive learning environment for them, and robustly challenging homophobia and biphobia, in line with legal, statutory and moral obligations.
3. LGBT+ inclusive policies have been comprehensively and effectively shared with the staff team, understood and implemented.

TOP TIPS

It is better to make sure that all of your policies are LGBT+ inclusive than to create a stand-alone LGBT+ inclusion policy. However, you may wish to have a policy that aids staff in supporting 'transition requests' from trans (including non-binary) young people or young people exploring their gender identity, which links to positively framed good practice guidance.

Don't forget to demonstrate that staff have seen, understood, and implemented your policies.



STANDARD:

LGBT+ people and identities are positively represented across all areas of the curriculum. This includes in lessons and activities that are LGBT+ inclusive, as well as those that are LGBT+ specific.

INDICATORS:

1. Staff positively educate about the existence of trans (including non-binary) people by making them visible across many curriculum areas.
2. Staff positively educate about the existence of lesbian, gay and bisexual people by making them visible across many curriculum areas.
3. The examples and images of LGBT+ people used in the curriculum areas ensure that the intersectional identities of many LGBT+ people are visible, e.g. your young people see that Black Muslim LGBT+ people exist.
4. Information shared through PSHE and Relationships Education is reflective of all family structures and relationships.
5. Students are taught about the language that pertains to gender identity (trans, non-binary, cis) and to sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, straight).
6. Through comprehensive PSHE programmes, students know how to recognise, report, and challenge transphobia, homophobia and biphobia.
7. Following PSHE/Relationships Education lessons which introduce LGBT+ identities, and the lessons in the wider curriculum that discuss transphobia, homophobia and biphobia, students are signposted to further information and support for themselves, should they need it.

TOP TIPS

A beneficial starting point might be encouraging curriculum leads to audit their subjects – where are LGBT+ people and identities currently visible in their lessons? Where are the opportunities for LGBT+ inclusion in their lessons? Is LGBT+ inclusion and visibility in lessons intersectional; do your students see that LGBT+ people can also be people of faith, people with disabilities, people who are also a part of the Global Majority, etc.?

To meet indicators 1 and 2 we expect to see LGBT+ inclusion in multiple curriculum areas, seeing LGBT+ representation in only one or two subjects will not be enough to meet these indicators.



STANDARD:

Children and young people wishing to explore/ express their gender and/or sexual orientation feel supported to do so. Skilled staff from within the organisation support them, including through signposting and referrals to appropriate local youth work services.

INDICATORS:

1. Key staff make themselves visible as LGBT+ allies who can provide support and are open to reports of transphobia, homophobia and biphobia.
2. All students are made aware of the support that exists within school.
3. Key staff are trained and are comfortable in offering 1-2-1 support to students wishing to discuss gender identity.
4. Key staff are trained and are comfortable in offering 1-2-1 support to students wishing to discuss sexual orientation and/or sexuality.
5. Key staff recognise that young people with LGBT+ parents/carers, other family members, and/or friends may need 1-2-1 support and feel comfortable offering this.
6. Staff respond to incidents of transphobic, homophobic and biphobic bullying appropriately and sensitively, ensuring the victim is provided with any support they need as well as being informed of what actions have been taken in response to their report.
7. Staff and students are aware that being LGBT+, in itself, is not a safeguarding issue.
8. Staff are confident signposting and referring students and families to appropriate LGBT+ youth organisations and services.

TOP TIPS

Make sure you are boldly using LGBT+ language (as well as colours and flags) on your flyers and display boards – saying “you can speak to us about anything” is not explicit enough.

Thoroughly research an organisation or service to ensure their services are age-appropriate before signposting to them.

Be aware of the additional barriers young people and staff with intersectional identities face. Those who belong to multiple minority groups may face different and additional challenges.



STANDARD:

Student-led initiatives are valued and supported to create an LGBT+ inclusive and positive environment.

INDICATORS:

1. Through youth voice structures, such as school councils and anonymous feedback mechanisms, student feedback is sought with regards to LGBT+ inclusion and their suggestions are acted upon.
2. Student-led activities that positively celebrate LGBT+ lives and people are encouraged and supported by the school.
3. Students are supported to undertake initiatives that mark significant dates on the LGBT+ calendar, such as LGBT+ History Month, Pride, Trans Day of Visibility, and IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia).
4. Students have engaged in a live conversation with a member of the Rainbow Flag Award team, to ascertain student perspectives of LGBT+ inclusion happening at the school.

TOP TIPS

Take the time to appreciate students as assets. Who is better placed to share what life is like for LGBT+ young people in your school than your students?

Consider seeking this feedback from your students early on in the process as their experiences may help to inform the work you do in this section and others.

Any questions?