

## Why is this Important?

### Equality Act 2010

Everyone with is protected from discrimination, harassment and victimisation based on 9 protected characteristics: race, religion, **sex**, **sexual orientation**, **gender reassignment**, disability, age, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership.

### Schools' Legal Duties

Every school has a legal duty to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relationships between all members of its community. Schools need to be safe and inclusive places for everyone.

### Tackling Bullying & Prejudice

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying occurs in schools. 70% of primary school teachers hear expressions like 'that's so gay' in school and almost half of them say that children in their school experience homophobic bullying (Stonewall, 2018). Tackling bullying can best be achieved with support from home.

## Further Information:

### Legislation:

#### Equality Act 2010:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

#### Children and Social Work Act 2017

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents/enacted>

#### Education and Inspection Act 2016:

[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents)

### Explaining Terms:

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/glossary-terms>.

### Tackling HBT Bullying:

EqualiTeach Free to Be Best Practice Guide: [www.equaliteach.co.uk/free-to-be](http://www.equaliteach.co.uk/free-to-be)

<https://parentinfo.org/article/tackling-lgbt-bullying-at-school>

### Support Groups:

Free2B Alliance is a London based community organisation, supporting LGBT+ young people and their parents/carers: [www.free2b-alliance.org.uk](http://www.free2b-alliance.org.uk)

Mermaids supports gender diverse children and young people and their families: [www.mermaidsuk.org.uk](http://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk)

# Guide for Parents and Carers

## DISCUSSING LGBT+ EQUALITY WITH YOUR CHILDREN

# How to Discuss LGBT+ Equality with Young People

Young people can be exposed to information from unreliable sources and so being prepared to answer their questions fairly and accurately is important. Below are suggested age-appropriate answers for common questions primary-aged pupils may ask:

## What does LGBT+ mean?

It is used to describe people's relationships and identities. The letters describe people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.

## Sexual Orientation

### What does 'gay' mean?

Being gay means when a man is attracted to and loves another man, or a woman is attracted to and loves another woman. The word 'lesbian' is sometimes used for women.

### Why does Jay have two dads/mums?

All families are different. Some families have a mum and a dad, some have one parent, some have adoptive parents, some live with grandparents and some have two mums or two dads. But they are all families and love and care for each other.

### Can two men / women get married?

Yes. In this country if two men or two women are in love, want to be together and they are adults then they can get married.

## What does bisexual mean?

This is when a person can love and is attracted to a man or a woman.

## How do people become gay?

A person does not become gay. They are born gay, but they maybe don't realise for a while. Some people realise when they are very young, sometimes in primary school. Some people realise when they are in secondary school, and some people don't realise until they are adults. It doesn't matter when a person realises though. What is important is that we treat everyone kindly and respect different types of people.

## Our religion says being gay is wrong.

Following your religion is important, but it is not okay to treat other people badly. Religion does not teach us that it's ok to be unkind to people. In our society, we respect and value all different people and families.

## Gender and Gender Identity

### What are gender stereotypes?

Gender stereotypes are unfair ideas that all boys or all girls will like or do the same thing. One example is to say that 'girls can't play football' or 'all boys are good at maths.' These are often untrue and they are unfair as they can limit children's choices.

## What does trans/transgender mean?

This is when a person is (biologically) born as a boy but knows that they are a girl, or when a person is born as a girl but knows that they are a boy. Their biology does not match who they know they are.

## What does cis/cisgender mean?

Being cis or cisgender is when a person is born a girl and knows that they are a girl, or if someone is born a boy and knows that they are a boy. Their biology matches who they know that they are.

## Is it bad to be transgender?

No, it isn't. Sometimes people make fun or bully transgender people because they don't understand. It is unkind to bully someone and against the school rules as our school should be a place where everyone feels safe and happy.

## I want to become a girl/boy. Can I?

*Try to investigate why they are saying it, and if necessary, seek support for them and yourself (see the more information section). Inform your school so they can help. And remember that someone could be questioning their gender identity for many different reasons and this may not mean that the young person is transgender.*