10 TOP TIPS

FOR CREATING AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

1 CHALLENGE HOMOPHOBIA, BIPHOBIA & TRANSPHOBIA

We should never ignore pejorative language. Ensure that you help pupils to understand why they shouldn't use pejorative language rather than just making them avoid using it around you. Pupils should know that if they use the word 'gay' as an insult it will be treated as homophobic bullying and dealt with accordingly.

2 BE A VISIBLE & PROUD LGBT ALLY

Small everyday things that visibly show you are an LGBT ally can have the greatest impact in creating an inclusive environment. Think: rainbow lanyards, LGBT badges or flags! Wearing or displaying these items also signifies you are someone who pupils can trust within the school.

3 TRY TO AVOID ASSUMPTIONS & UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Sometimes we need to remind ourselves and make a conscious effort not to make assumptions. Don't assume that a pupil being LGBT is an 'issue' to address or a negative thing. Try not to assume heterosexuality or 'heteronormativity' within the classroom/community.

4 USE CORRECT PRONOUNS

Ensure you respect a person's pronouns if they ask you to start using a different pronoun to the one you have previously used for them; ie: 'she/he/they'. You might make mistakes and that's okay, just apologise, move on and consciously try to get it right next time.

5 CHALLENGE GENDER STEREOTYPES AND NORMS

It's important for young people to develop their own sense of gender identity and what it means to them. Their environment at school can help this develop in a positive and supportive way. Use LGBT identities to celebrate difference and as an opportunity to enrich learning within the classroom. Diversity should be celebrated.

LGBT YOUTH SCOTLAND

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10 TOP TIPS

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6 DEVELOP AN LGBT GROUP / GENDER AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION ALLIANCE (GSA)

How Good is our School? (4) suggests schools create an 'equalities working group' that supports inclusion and equalities work. A pupil-led LGBT group can create opportunities for leadership and visibility whilst promoting wellbeing within a school environment. If you don't have one set up in your school, see our guidance for setting up a GSA, available for download at lgbtyouth.org.uk

7 THINK ABOUT LANGUAGE

Language is powerful and can often reinforce stereotypical messages. Dividing a class by 'boys' and 'girls' can be distressing for trans/non-binary pupils. Instead of saying "ok, girls and boys" try "ok everyone". Some schools now use 'Head Pupil' to be more inclusive.

8 VISIBILITY WITHIN THE SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM

How might your school curriculum be more inclusive of LGBT identities? Think role models, lesson plans, subjects, books and films. Our Guide to Curriculum Inclusion is available for download at lgbtyouth.org.uk

9 UNDERSTAND THE LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE AND POLICIES WITHIN YOUR SCHOOL

There are frameworks, policies and legislation to ensure we are teaching about, and protecting LGBT identities. Think about the policies in your school and how they might be more LGBT inclusive; your anti-bullying policy, uniform policy etc.

10 LEADERSHIP

Cultural change doesn't happen overnight. It takes persistence and time. Having a staff team committed to creating an inclusive school environment is vital. Leadership from senior management, working alongside teachers, pupils and parents/carers will ensure there is a whole school approach to inclusion.

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