

## **Timeline of Progress for Equal Rights**

### **Further information cards for learners**



#### **1972: The first Pride parade is held in London.**

In 1969, in New York City, after years of being targeted by the police for being LGBT, a group of people at the Stonewall Inn started to fight back. This led to multiple nights of riots and brought many LGBT people together.

In 1970, exactly a year later, a protest march was held to remember what happened at the Stonewall Inn and to demand equal rights. This was the first 'Pride' event. In 1972, London held a similar event for the first time, and only a few hundred people attended to protest for equal rights for LGBT people. In 2022, over a million people attended the Pride event in London.

There are now Pride parades and protests all over the world, including 27 in Scotland in 2022. These are held all over the country and are events which celebrate LGBT people and culture, and campaign for equal rights for LGBT people in Scotland.

#### **1980: The law making it illegal for two men to be in a relationship is removed in Scotland.**

In 1967, a law was passed in England and Wales making it legal for two men to be in a relationship together. Before this, it was illegal all over the United Kingdom and men could be arrested and put in prison for having a relationship.

Scotland has a different legal system and it was decided not to allow the same thing to happen here. It wasn't until 1981 that relationships between two men were allowed.

Relationships between two women were also seen as criminal through laws dating back to 1533, but after 1885 laws about same-sex relationships were only about two men. Women who loved other women were essentially ignored. Today, same-sex relationships, whether it's two men, or two women, have the same legal status as a relationship between a woman and a man.

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**1988: Section 28 (or Clause 2a as it's known in Scotland) becomes law.**

In 1988 a law was introduced to stop local authorities and schools 'promoting homosexuality' (another word for being gay). Some people thought it would not be okay to talk about gay people in a positive way at school.

This was started after it was reported that a local council had a book schools could request about a girl who lived with her two dads. In the 1980s, some people found that shocking. No one was ever arrested because of this law, but it did mean many schools who were talking positively about LGBT people stopped, and learning about LGBT people and history vanished from a lot of schools across the UK.

**2000: Section 28 (or Clause 2a as it's known in Scotland) is removed as a law.**

Twelve years after it was created, in the year 2000, this law was repealed. This was one of the first actions of the new Scottish Parliament.

This happened after a long campaign to remove Section 28, which began almost as soon as the law came into power. One of the people who led the fight was the actor Sir Ian McKellen, who plays Gandalf in the Lord of the Rings movies.

In 2009, David Cameron MP was the leader of the Conservative party, the political party which created the law in 1988. He apologised for Section 28, recognising that it was the wrong thing to do.

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**2003: A law is passed which makes it illegal in the UK to fire someone from a job because they are lesbian, gay or bisexual.**

A similar law from 1999 made it illegal to fire a transgender person from a job just because they are transgender.

You cannot tell someone is LGBT just by looking at them and employers will not ask someone about that in a job interview, so often they don't know if someone is LGBT when they are offered a job.

If that person decides to tell their employer and the people they work with that they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (and they do not have to do this) then they now cannot be fired because of who they are.

**2004: A law is passed creating a pathway for transgender people to legally change their gender on their birth certificate.**

This law means that transgender people are able to have a new birth certificate issued with their new gender (male or female) recorded on it once evidence has been submitted.

Other forms of identification such as a passport or driver's licence do not require the same level of evidence, and can be changed with the use of a form completed by the individual.

This helps transgender people make sure all of their official documents match who they are.

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**2007: A law is passed in Scotland meaning that single lesbian, gay, or bisexual people, or people in same-sex couples can foster or adopt children.**

Hundreds of children in Scotland every year are adopted by their new families, with thousands living with foster families. Before 2007 in Scotland, lesbian, gay, or bisexual people were often rejected if they tried to foster or adopt children.

This was an example of inequality that many lesbian, gay and bisexual people who wanted to have children of their own found very unfair. Now they can adopt children! Transgender people can also adopt or foster children as they have the same rights to access these agencies as everyone else.

**2010: The 'Equality Act' is passed.**

Before 2010, there were many different laws relating to how people in society should be treated fairly. The 'Equality Act' pulled all of these together and set out how to stop people from being discriminated against. It included 9 'protected characteristics' which describe parts of people's identities which can sometimes be targeted for discrimination.

These 'protected characteristics' are: **age, disability, gender reassignment** (being transgender), **being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, race** (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), **religion or belief, sex,** and **sexual orientation** (being lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual etc).

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#### **2014: Same-sex marriage is legalised in Scotland**

Until 2004, two women in a relationship, or two men in a relationship, had no legal way of having that relationship recognised.

In 2004, this was addressed by creating 'civil partnerships' for people in same-sex relationships which gave them most of the rights of being married, but two men were not considered to be each other's husbands, and two women were not recognised as each other's wives. Many same-sex couples still wanted to be able to get married, just like a lot of their friends and family could.

In Scotland, a law was passed in 2014 allowing same-sex couples to get married, and the first legal same-sex weddings were held on New Year's Eve that year.

#### **2018: In Scotland, the Scottish Government sets out the expectation that all schools will have lessons about LGBT people, themes and history.**

This is known as LGBT Inclusive Education and helps to ensure that young people in Scotland don't go through school never hearing about LGBT people, history and themes.

After it was announced in 2018 there was time put aside to create training, resources and guidance for schools. It is now expected that every school includes lessons about LGBT people. This lesson is an example of this! What other LGBT people or historical events have you learned about?