

LGBTQ+ POLICY

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Committee Responsible	SBS
Designated member of staff	Vicki Price & Sharon Mercer
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PHILOSOPHY

At Grey Court School every student matters. We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination in all its forms. All students are entitled to have access to the whole curriculum and are able to take part fully in school life regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. We believe every student has the right to a full-time and stimulating education in order to develop their full potential and achieve success. The learning environment in which our students engage in should be supportive, safe and welcoming to gender diversity. We also respect the equal rights of our staff, families and other members of our school community. We are opposed to and will challenge all forms of discriminatory, racist, disablist, sexist, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic language or behaviour.

AIMS

This policy aims to

- Create and foster a learning environment that is inclusive and free from discrimination and harassment, regardless of sex, gender, identity, sexual orientation or gender expression.
- Promote healthy communication between teachers, students and parents to reduce stigmatisation and support the successful education, development and wellbeing of every student and member of staff.
- Provide guidance and inform members of our community about the best ways to support and protect students who are LGBTQ+ and those who are undergoing gender reassignment.
- Adhere to relevant statutory legislation concerning bullying, harassment and discrimination
- Promote an ethos of valuing and respecting individuals differing sexual and gender identities and gender expressions.

LEGISLATION

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998 (UK)
- Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999
- Gender Recognition Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2011

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act of 2010 ensures legal protection against discrimination, harassment and victimisation (direct or indirect) for everyone under the nine protected categories, including anyone who is undergoing gender reassignment (also known as Transgender or Trans). The Equality Act specifically refers to School and young people and applies gender reassignment to anyone who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) 'for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex'. Under the Act, schools must protect any student who is taking steps to reassign their sex and gender whether these are social (changing their look, dress, name or the pronoun they use) or include medical intervention (for example hormone therapy or surgery). The school governing body has a responsibility to ensure that the school is complying with its requirements under the Equality Act.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) 2011

The Public Sector Equality Duty 2011 (created by the Equality Act 2010) requires all schools in England to eliminate discrimination of nine protected categories including sexual orientation and gender reassignment. Schools must ensure that LGBTQ+ students and people are proactively supported by providing a safe, understanding and supportive community, tackling all forms of bullying and promoting equality of opportunity. Schools must take proactive steps to support LGBTQ+ students by promoting respect and understanding of LGBTQ+ people and issues across the whole community.

What is LGBTQ+?

LGBTQ+ is an acronym used to describe people within these communities:

Lesbian - a female homosexual who experiences romantic, sexual and/or emotional attraction to other females.

Gay - a person who is romantically, sexually and/or emotionally attracted to people of the same sex

Bisexual – a person who is romantically, sexually and/or emotionally attracted to people of both sexes.

Transgender – an individual whose gender expression or identity is different from their assigned sex at birth. This is sometimes abbreviated to trans.

Queer – an umbrella term for sexual and gender minorities that are not heterosexual or cisgender.

The plus sign - represents all other sexual or gender identities

Nonbinary – a person who does not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth (trans) and also has a gender identity that cannot be categorised as exclusively male or female (nonbinary).

(See glossary for further definitions)

What is Transgender?

A transgender person is someone who feels that their assigned sex at birth conflicts with their true gender identity. Transgender issues manifest at different times in life in different individuals. Transgender (trans) young people often express a desire to change their name, pronoun and what they wear. In cases of gender dysphoria (a strong and persistent discomfort and distress with one's gender) the condition is often apparent in early childhood, when such a child may express dissatisfaction and 'clinically significant distress', related to their assigned gender. Many of these children attempt to repress their differences, through fear of, or as a result of rejection. Therefore, people around them may be unaware that they are unhappy with their assigned gender. Transgender young people who experience gender dysphoria tend to be very conscious of their body; appearance, weight and other people's opinions about their body. It is important to ensure emotional health support is available.

We recognise that:

- The terms people use to describe themselves may change over time
- Sexual orientation and gender identity are not the same thing
- Gender non conformity and gender dysphoria are not the same thing
- Not everyone thinks of themselves as 'male' or 'female'
- Not everyone identifies with the sex that they were assigned at birth
- Students who may be LGBTQ+, or questioning their gender, may find the environment challenging and require support and interventions such as counselling

Transition Plans and Support

- Being transgender or gender-questioning is not a safeguarding issue; however, we recognise that the process of transitioning socially can be challenging and potentially stressful, making students feel more vulnerable.
- If a student has made the decision to transition, or a parent/carer has informed the school of their decision to allow their child to live as their gender choice, the school will work with the students and parents/carers to devise a transition plan in line with the student's needs, wishes and concerns. As no two transitions are the same, there will be a checklist, adapted for each student, to address the key factors that should be considered before, during and after a student's transition. This will be completed with the student and parent/carer and a designated member of the pastoral team.
- The key focus of the transition plan will be to ensure the student feels supported, valued and has equality of experience with their peers and treated in a manner consistent with their gender identity.
- The transition plan will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is effective and that the correct support is in place at the time.
- Information about their transition will be kept confidential and shared on a need to know basis, unless the student and their parent/carer requests the information is shared.
- We may also refer trans students to the school counsellor and an organisation such as Mermaids UK, which is the leading charity for transgender and nonbinary young people.
<https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/young-people/> or <https://genderedintelligence.co.uk/>
- Staff training will be implemented to ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities and how they can support LGBTQ+ individuals, and ensure a smooth and supportive process, for transitioning students, for example alternatives to the use of gender-specific language in the classroom and developing skilful handling of any inappropriate comments.
- Students seeking referral to the NHS Gender Identity Development Service will need to see their GP or another medical professional.
- If the student is taking any medicines linked to their gender that the school needs to be aware of, we will follow the normal school policy on medication.

Managing issues specific to LGBTQ+ students

We recognise that issues surrounding toilets, changing facilities, PE lessons, school trips, exchanges and overnight stays should be addressed on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the student and their family, seeking expert advice where necessary. Outlined below are the key concepts that will guide our practice in school.

Change of Names

Respecting a young person's request to change name and pronoun is a pivotal part of supporting and validating that young person's identity. With parental permission staff and students can :

- Use preferred names or initials
- Use preferred pronouns. Non-binary people adopt non-gendered pronouns, for example 'they', 'them', 'their', rather than 'he' or 'she'. Others prefer bespoke pronouns such as 'zir', 'zie', 'zim'.

Record Keeping /Exam Entries

- A change of name by deed poll is not required to make a change to school records such as SIMS
- Records should be updated and gender markers changed in consultation with the student and their parent/carer. In England the DfE guidance allows schools to amend the gender of any student at any time within their own management information systems.
- Unique Pupil Numbers (UPN) and Unique Learner Numbers (ULN) are linked with legal names (the name under which the student starts their education, often on their birth certificate), but preferred names can be used, including on official registers.
- It is possible to change a name on a school or college roll or register for a preferred name and when sending details of young people to exam boards.
- Students can be entered under any name with an exam board. However, once a result is accredited it will need to be linked with a UPN or ULN which existed in the school census information submitted in January of the exam year.
- Exam certificates can be issued in a preferred name but individual exam boards will require evidence of a change of name by deed poll.
- Students may wish to change their exam certificates to their preferred gender identification. Please advise that this can be done via the following link:
<https://genderkit.org.uk/article/updating-exam-certificates/>
Students would first have to sit the exams and then apply to have their name changed on the exam paper. Please note having their desk labelled as their birth name and having to put this on the exam paper may cause some distress.

School Uniform

- All students are expected to follow the School Uniform Policy, which covers uniform, make-up, jewellery and hairstyles.
- All students can wear the Grey Court uniform of their choice providing it fits within the Grey Court uniform policy
- Students in the sixth form do not wear school uniform and must adhere to a smart/casual dress code.

Toilets and PE Changing Facilities

- All students have the right to access toilets and changing facilities. The facilities for trans students will be discussed on a case by case basis in discussion with the young person. A gender neutral toilet is provided with access to a single stall toilet.
- Currently all students wear their PE kit to school on the days they have PE and do not need to use the changing facilities.

Residential Trips

- To exclude LGBTQ+ students from residential trips would be contravening the Equality Act.
- Risk assessments should be carried out prior to residential trips so that reasonable adjustments can be made to allow the young person to participate.
- A degree of discussion, care and preparation is required to enable trans students to participate in residential trips. This will be determined on a case by case basis and include the parent/carer and student where appropriate.
- The sleeping arrangements, toilets and washing facilities will need to be thought about carefully before the trip takes place

Curriculum and Learning

- Staff will have access to training sessions to ensure all members of staff are aware of their responsibilities, as well as to develop their skills and knowledge of LGBTQ+ issues.
- The teaching of gender stereotypes and the gender identity spectrum are taught explicitly through the sex and relationships component of Personal Development and Wellbeing (PDW) lessons from year 7 onwards in an age appropriate way.
- All subjects must be inclusive of LGBTQ+ issues and include teaching about diversity and difference and explaining that it is positive to be understanding of others.
- The school raises awareness of LGBTQ+ issues through whole school tutor time and assemblies, for example LGBTQ+ History Month in February and LGBTQ+ Pride Month in June, in order to promote an accepting and understanding attitude and prevent prejudice-based incidents.
- Students are educated on inappropriate language and name-calling and instances of such will not be tolerated.

Prejudice Related Bullying

The school will not tolerate prejudice-related bullying of any description. Any incidents that occur will be dealt with using restorative approaches, with the aim to educate and repair relationships to prevent these recurring. Incidents will be dealt with and recorded in line with our Behaviour Policy, Relationship Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.

PE Lessons

- All students are encouraged to engage in the wide selection of PE and sports on offer
- The school will carefully manage PE lessons with the aim to prevent any discomfort or discrimination. This will be managed on a case by case basis.
- The issue of physical risk within certain high contact sports will need to be carefully managed.
- With competitive sports, we recognise that some sports are classified as 'gender affected sports'. Guidance should be sought from the appropriate sporting bodies around safe participation in these sports.
- All students wear the Grey Court PE kit
- All students currently come to school wearing their PE kit on the days they have PE

Work Experience

Where a work experience placement is being considered, the school will be sensitive to this in their planning before any LGBTQ+ person is placed in any business or organisation. Careful discussion about the placement with the young person, parents or carers will take place to ensure confidentiality is not broken and the agreed amount of sharing of information takes place. Every effort will be made to find the most suitable way to ensure the placement is successful.

Confidentiality

All people have a right to privacy. This includes the right to keep one's sexual orientation, trans status or gender identity private at school. Information about a young person or staff member's trans status, legal name, or gender assigned at birth also constitutes confidential medical information. School staff should not disclose information that may reveal a young person's transgender status or gender identity to other members of the school community unless the child or parent/carer has given permission for them to do so. Staff need to be careful about discussing the LGBTQ+ person beyond the confines of the school.

LGBTQ+ young people and staff have the right to discuss and express their gender identity openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much information to share. When contacting the parent/carer of a trans young person, school personnel should use the young person's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to their gender assigned at birth, unless the young person, parent or carer has specified otherwise.

RELATED POLICIES:

- **Equality Policy**
- **RSE and Health Education Policy**
- **Anti-Bullying Policy**
- **Behaviour Policy**
- **Relationship Policy**
- **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER SUPPORT

- Equality Advisory Service www.equalityadvisoryservice.com
- Free2B <https://free2b.lgbt/>
- Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIREs) www.gires.org.uk
- Mermaids- Family and Individual Support for Teenagers and Children with Gender Identity Issues www.mermaidsuk.org.uk
- NHS- Live Well. Support for Young People www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Transhealth/Pages/Transyoungpeople.aspx

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Binding – a method used by transitioning people to strap down their chest so that it is less obvious. This can be hot, uncomfortable and restrictive but can be important to their psychological and emotional wellbeing. It might make certain PE lessons difficult for them to participate in and could sometimes lead to breathing difficulties, skeletal problems and fainting. Binding should not be worn for long periods of time and should not be slept in.

Biphobia – An irrational fear, hatred or abuse of an individual who identifies as bisexual. Bisexual people may face stigmatisation and invalidation in the forms of bullying from both heterosexual and homosexual people.

Cisgender - Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people.

Cross-dresser – a person who wears clothing not commonly associated with their sex

Gender – the way that a person feels about themselves in relation to their physical and mental self; the basis of their identifying as male, or female, or neither, or either, or both.

Gender Dysphoria – a medical term used to describe a person who experiences discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity.

Gender Expression - how a person chooses to outwardly express their gender, within the context of societal expectations of gender. A person who does not conform to societal expectations of gender may not, however, identify as trans.

Gender Identity - a person's innate sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else nonbinary, which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth.

Gender Reassignment - another way of describing a person's transition. To undergo gender reassignment usually means to undergo some sort of medical intervention, but it can also mean changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in their self-identified gender. Gender reassignment is a characteristic that is protected by the Equality Act 2010, and it is further interpreted in the Equality Act 2010 approved code of practice.

Gender Recognition Certificate – an official document presented by a Gender Recognition Panel that enables all official documents and records (including birth certificate) to be amended to the true gender of the individual thereby providing full legal recognition. Not all trans people will apply for a GRC and you currently have to be over 18 to apply. You do not need a GRC to change your gender markers at work or to legally change your gender on other documents such as your passport.

Homosexual – A person who is romantically, sexually and/or emotionally attracted to people of the same sex. This is usually used to describe a man who is attracted to another man.

Homophobia – An irrational fear, hatred or abuse of an LGBTQ+ individual where a person may deliberately and directly harass or disrespect someone who is an LGBTQ+ individual. Homophobic bullying is often based on an actual perceived sexual orientation.

Intersex – a person who has anatomy or genes that do not conform to typical definitions of male and female. Most intersex people identify as either men or women. This is not the same as nonbinary, who feel their innate gender identity is something other than male or female.

Pronoun: Words we use to refer to people's gender in conversation - for example, 'he' or 'she'. Some people may prefer others to refer to them in gender neutral language and use pronouns such as they/their and ze/zir.

Sex –Assigned to a person at birth on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions. Sometimes the terms 'sex' and 'gender' are interchanged to mean 'male' or 'female'.

Sexual orientation – A common pattern of emotional, romantic and/or sexual attractions to men, women, both or neither.

Transitioning: The steps a trans person may take to live in the gender with which they identify. Each person's transition will involve different things. For some this involves medical intervention, such as hormone therapy and surgeries, but not all trans people want or are able to have this. Transitioning also might involve things such as telling friends and family, dressing differently and changing official documents.

Transphobia: The irrational fear, hatred or abuse of someone based on the fact they are trans, including denying their gender identity or refusing to accept it. Transphobia may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, trans.

Transsexual – a Transgender person who lives fulltime in their true gender.