

# 5A TEACHING ABOUT LGBT+ FAMILIES, IDENTITIES AND RELATIONSHIPS

## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ARE EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Before talking about how to teach, or engage with aspects of Relationships Education that concern LGBT+ realities, identities and relationships, it is important that there is an understanding that these topics need to be taught in a climate of real equality, diversity and inclusion and that this needs to be backed by robust policies, implemented throughout the school. Policy implementation needs to take into account the backgrounds, academic and pastoral needs of the pupils and students, whilst not showing a bias towards the needs or views of any one group. Equality, diversity and inclusion are the responsibility of everyone: the school cleaner; the school's kitchen staff; governors and trustees; teachers and all those working in the classrooms; as well as senior managers.

The [DfE Relationships Education RSE and Health Education Guidance guidance \(2019\)](#), the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, advice to schools (2014), as well as the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (2019), make it clear that equality and inclusion of minority groups, including those who have minority gender identities and sexual orientations, are a legal requirement. LGBT+ inclusion is also a necessary and desirable aspect of providing education in schools and should be included in Relationships Education, as part of PSHE, in an age appropriate way that is sensitive to the backgrounds, families and identities of our children and young people. How this subject is discussed, included and taught in our schools is important for the wellbeing of staff and pupils, as well as helping to reflect and prepare all children and young people for life in 21st century Britain.

It is important to be sensitive to the way all individuals in the school community describe their identities, including their gender identities, and to guard against making cisnormative (and heteronormative) assumptions. For example, a young person or adult may use gender neutral pronouns such as they/them, while the majority of the school community use the gender-specific she/her and he/him. It is vital that individuals' wishes to be addressed as they choose be respected.

Useful videos, helping people to understand equality law, can be found on the Equality and Human Rights Commission website [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

When schools are developing an LGBT+ inclusive whole school approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, they may consider participating in the [Rainbow Flag Award](#).

Many schools see themselves as playing a central role at the heart of their communities. When families join the school, they will take a much greater part in school life if they see themselves included and reflected in the school environment. The children whose families feel part of the school community benefit as a result.

## RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT

In the [3A Relationship Education Policy](#), the section on Equality reads as follows. Discussions about LGBT+ families, identities and relationships should be carried out in this context.

[The Equality Act 2010 has special resonance in Relationships Education. Through this area of learning we seek to develop key interpersonal skills such as respect and empathy which enable pupils to understand the rights and responsibilities we all have towards one another.](#)

The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We will ensure that our provision of Relationships Education is not only equally accessible and inclusive for all pupils with protected characteristics, or who have family members with protected characteristics, but also that it reduces discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and encourages good relations between different groups.

In order to ensure that Relationships Education meets the needs of all:

- We will reflect a range of lifestyles and family structures so that all children see themselves and their families reflected back in the lessons.
- We will ensure that the law in relation to, for example, marriage, online behaviours, sexuality, gender and violence are explained in age appropriate ways.
- Where there are different cultural or religious views about families, relationships or behaviours, we will share these to ensure children see their family views represented.
- We will not seek to gain consensus, but will accept and celebrate difference.
- We will, as appropriate, ensure that a variety of views and beliefs are reflected back to pupils.
- In order to ensure that children of all genders can access information they need, we will teach in mixed gender groups wherever possible.
- We will encourage respect and discourage abusive and exploitative relationships.
- We will not ask children to represent the views of a particular religious or cultural group to their peers, unless they choose to do so.

We support children in developing their knowledge about and attitudes towards diversity throughout units of work including:

- Diversity and Communities
- Family and Friends
- Beginning and Belonging

## EARLY YEARS AND FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

Learning at EYFS is not included in the scope of the Relationships Education guidance (DfE 2019). However, the importance of good quality relationships and an age appropriate understanding of and respect for difference forms an important part of the EYFS framework.

Our approach is shaped by the requirements set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework. This includes the following:

Principles: children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

**Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

**Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

**Safeguarding requirements:** Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.

Ethos and practice in EYFS settings should include an understanding of the needs of children, who may have LGBT+ parents or family members, for representation and inclusion, so that they feel seen and understood at school. An example might be how an EYFS setting thinks about being inclusive on Mothers' Day for children who have two mums or two dads, are in foster care, who live with a grandparent or whose mother has died.

## PRIMARY SCHOOL

The DfE Guidance (2019) states:

Schools should ensure that all their teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. 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 standalone 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.

This doesn't really help schools to understand what to teach and when to teach it, but it does make it clear that LGBT+ lessons are not to be taught in isolation, where the content is only about LGBT+ families, relationships and identities, but incorporated in lessons where relevant and age appropriate. An example of this could be learning about marriage, where it is important to include representation of heterosexual and gay marriages and the fact that, by UK law, same sex couples are able to marry. Schools will choose when to introduce this, if children do not ask about it themselves.

Issues concerning LGBT+ identities and relationships may also be explored as part of Anti-bullying lessons. It may be that a child has been bullied or putdown for challenging perceived gender norms through dress, behaviour or friendships. Some children may respond to this by using homophobic, biphobic or transphobic language, regardless of the identity of the person being bullied. Whenever people are treated badly or bullied because others identify them as not adhering to stereotypical norms, this must be challenged. In this case, learning about respect, challenging stereotypes and different identities is not primarily a lesson on LGBT+ identities, but a lesson on respectful relationships and positive friendships which challenge bullying.

The DfE guidance (2019) states that, by the end of primary school, as part of Relationships Education, in the topic 'Families and people who care for me', there are a number of things that pupils should know:

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security, and stability
- the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives
- that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
- That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up
- that marriage\* represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.

\*[including marriage of same sex couples]

In the topic 'Respectful relationships' (also part of Relationships Education) pupils should know:

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- the conventions of courtesy and manners
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness [it is important that those pupils who may think they are LGBT+, or have LGBT+ family members, are encouraged to respect themselves and their backgrounds]
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying,), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.

Talking about differing families should include families that are headed by same-sex parents/carers, along with families headed by opposite sex parents/carers, step-families, one parent families, those being headed by grandparents, children in local authority care, children acting as carers within the family, extended families and others. Discussion of respectful relationships, self-respect, anti-bullying and stereotypes, should incorporate LGBT+ relationships and identities alongside other identities.

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#### KEY STAGE ONE

Discussing families and what a loving family should be like is frequently taught in Key Stage 1 and should include mention and images of different family types. In the Cambridgeshire Primary Personal Development Programme (PDP), this learning is covered in Diversity and Community 1/2. The relevant Learning Objectives are:

To begin to understand what builds their sense of identity through exploring similarities and differences (RR)

To begin to understand that perceptions of gender may limit personal expression and choice (RR)

To express their family's structure, traditions, culture and beliefs and recognise that other families are different (FP)

The focus at KS1 is to base the learning on the lived experiences of children in the class, so the children understand the diversity within their peer group and learn to communicate respectfully with each other.

It is also worth noting that there are likely to be children in school with LGBT+ parents/carers or with LGBT+ family or friends and this must be respected, and the children made to feel valued and understood in schools. Talking about different families will help with this.

Schools may choose resources which reflect a breadth of family structures, ensuring that children in the class see themselves reflected back in the resources. Example texts, which schools may consider for use, are referenced in the DC1/2.

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#### KEY STAGE TWO

In the Cambridgeshire PDP learning about LGBT+ identities and relationships mainly occurs in Diversity and Communities 3/4 and Diversity and Communities 5/6. The relevant learning objectives in these units are as follows:

#### Diversity and Communities 3/4

To explore how perceived similarities and differences contribute to the building of a sense of identity (RR)

To explore personal characteristics often associated with gender and understand how these affect behaviour, identity and choices

To know that families are made up in a variety of ways (FP)

To understand about the breadth of cultures, traditions and beliefs of people in their locality (RR)

To understand the importance of valuing difference and diversity (RR)

To understand what stereotypes are, their negative effects and ways to challenge them (RR)

#### Diversity and Communities 5/6

To explore the elements that make up people's identities and how other's perceptions can influence identity. (RR)

To explore how perceptions of gender amongst peers and the media affect identity, emotions, friendships, behaviour and choices. (RR)

To explore the variety of origins, national identities, religious beliefs, cultural traditions and lifestyles locally and in the UK. (RR)

To understand why people should show respect for those with different lifestyles, beliefs and traditions and explore ways to demonstrate respect. (RR)

To recognise the negative effects of stereotyping and how they might lead to prejudice. (RR)

### LGBT+, LANGUAGE AND SEX EDUCATION

Sex Education is defined as 'how a baby is conceived and born' (DfE Guidance, para 67). In primary schools, sex education is about human conception and birth, not about adult sexual activity for purposes other than reproduction. Mention of LGBT+ relationships and identities is not part of sex education at primary school. Answers to questions asked in whole class settings concerning LGBT+ relationships should remain non-sexual in nature. (Please see below for sample answers to questions.) Even though LGBT+ identities are not mentioned specifically in the outcomes, issues about anti-bullying, respecting difference and understanding different families should be covered and it will be necessary to explain some language concerning LGBT+ families, relationships and identities.

### OFSTED

Whilst recognising that children should learn about diversity and respect because these topics should be covered for their own sake, it should be noted that Ofsted are likely to ask questions of children relating to equality issues and so it is essential that the children understand the importance of positive attitudes towards equality, which must, of course, involve LGBT+ relationships and identities. One year six, Muslim boy responded to an Ofsted inspector, when asked about what he thought about the teaching of LGBT+ in his school, by saying:

[I know that my religion says that LGBT is not OK, but I know that in Britain the law says that it is OK, so we have to respect that.](#)

This child demonstrated a practical understanding of equality, his own view of the teaching of his religion and demonstrated a respect for difference. (It should be noted that many Muslims recognise and respect people in same-sex relationships. As with all faiths there are many ways of interpreting teachings and doctrine and there are many different views.)

## RESPONDING TO NEGATIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS LGBT+ RELATIONSHIPS AND IDENTITIES FROM PARENTS, STAFF AND PUPILS

Some parents and staff may hold strong views on LGBT+ families, relationships and identities and these sentiments may become evident in the classroom, at play time or during interactions between parents.

The charity Liberty in their advice to head teachers (2019) made a clear statement concerning the balance between freedom of speech and what can be seen as discrimination. It is worth bearing this statement in mind when dealing with incidents that could be seen as homophobic, biphobic or transphobic in schools.

Parents who object to same-sex relationships or who do not accept non-conformist gender identities are, of course, free to make this clear to their children - whether those views are the product of religion or not. Indeed, that is their right and it is protected under the [European Convention on Human Rights] ECHR. But the existence of LGBT+ people and same-sex parents is not a "belief". It is a fact, and it may be a fact which pupils, their friends, relatives and/or parents are living with. As such, parents' ECHR and [Equality Act] EA rights do not give them the right to impose their views on others, much less to discriminate against or otherwise harm people because of their protected characteristics. This is of particular relevance when they seek to do so via a public body, such as a school (Liberty, 2019).

British law, in The Equality Act 2010, makes it clear that there is no place for discrimination in 21st Century Britain. The nine protected characteristics mentioned in The Act are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

People with one or more of these characteristics can, at times, disagree. e.g. those who believe their religious teaching says that same-sex relationships are wrong and those who are in a same-sex relationship.

There are ways to traverse these tricky confrontations, but it takes respect on all sides and an understanding of the equal value of each person, together with an acknowledgement of their views. Sometimes trying to 'walk in each other's shoes' helps. Scenarios used in the classroom or training for adults might help create spaces of understanding. See appendix 2.

## ANSWERING CHILDREN'S QUESTIONS ABOUT LGBT+ FAMILIES, RELATIONSHIPS AND IDENTITIES

When considering ways to answer children's questions, adults in school must be aware that although the question may be difficult to answer, the child rarely asks in order to 'be difficult'. When a child asks a school adult about a sensitive topic, they may have been carefully selecting the adult they wish to ask, thinking about who they trust to give them a reliable answer and waiting for the right time to ask their chosen adult. Therefore adults should do their best to give a reliable, age appropriate answer which meets the needs of the child.

Questions that are tricky for some people may be easy for others. A wide understanding of the issues concerning LGBT+ relationships and identities, especially the complexities that become evident when discussing LGBT+ matters in a diverse school, gives confidence to those teaching PSHE. A nuanced approach is needed. Below are some suggestions for age and background sensitive answers to questions often asked in schools. If a child is asking about being gay, it is important to establish their understanding of the meaning of the term and the context behind their questions as it may not be appropriate to discuss the meanings of the whole range of LGBT+ identities in your answer. Generally, when answering questions only reuse the words the child has used. Make sure that the boundaries of the school, in what is thought appropriate to be discussed, are clear to staff and any agencies coming into school.

Refer to [6B Answering Children's Questions](#) for further support with principle for answering questions and further examples.

Question	Possible Context/Notes	Foundation and KS1	KS2
<b>Why are some people gay?</b>	Always check what a child understands by the term 'gay' before answering. Some children may have heard the word in a pejorative context and will need to be told it is not appropriate to use the word in this way.	People often call themselves 'gay' if they love someone of the same sex as them. So a gay man loves another man and a gay woman loves another woman.	People often call themselves 'gay' if they love someone of the same sex as them. So a gay man loves another man and a gay woman (or lesbian) loves another woman. Some people use the word homosexual, but the term 'gay' is preferable as the word 'homosexual' was used negatively when being gay was against the law. We don't know why some people are gay and some people are straight (heterosexual), it's just the way they are. It isn't right to use the word gay to insult someone or to mean 'rubbish'. Being gay is just the way some people are and we should respect everyone, whoever they are and whoever they love.
<b>Why are some people bisexual?</b>	Check what the child knows about the term bi or bisexual, before answering. Bi and bisexual are less likely to be used in a pejorative sense, but do be aware of this.	People might call themselves bi or bisexual if they love people who are male or female.	People might call themselves bisexual if they are attracted to men and women. Some people call themselves 'pansexual' and are attracted to people of all genders, including non-binary people. We don't know why some people are straight, some people are gay and some people are bisexual, but we must respect everyone, whoever they are and whoever they love.
<b>Why did I get called 'gay'?</b>	Such incidents should be primarily dealt with as behaviour issues, as any other incidence of prejudice-related name calling. There are explicit references to sexual and homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in the Anti-bullying Policy. An incidence of name calling is not the time to go into the details of the meaning of particular words, but instead to focus on the feelings of the person who is called the name. You might say 'Some people use the word 'gay' to mean 'rubbish'. It is wrong to use the word 'gay' in this way as it hurts people's feelings.' You might then explain how you will follow up with the 'name caller'. The 'name caller' will be told that any sort of name calling is wrong. At a later time you might address the issue that many people call themselves gay and are proud to do so. You might explain that any language or actions which put people down because they are gay is called homophobia. You might add that homophobic biphobic and transphobic behaviour, along with racism, are offences in this country.		
<b>What does it mean to be gay?</b>	Ascertain whether child has been called 'gay', as this will affect what they need from your response.		Someone who is gay loves, is attracted to or fancies someone of the same sex. 'Gay' describes men who love other men and women who love other women. Some women prefer to call themselves lesbians.
<b>How do LGBT people have sex?</b>	It is not appropriate to describe adult sexual activity beyond sexual reproduction in any great detail.		Lots of adults, including people who are LGBT+ find different ways to show their love for each other when they have sex.
<b>I really love my friend and we are both</b>	Check whether the child has been teased	People can have friends who are boys or girls.	No, good friendships are really important to everyone. Loving someone as a friend does not make you gay. People who are



<b>boys, does that mean I am gay?</b>	or bullied for his friendship.	Friendships are really important to us. We can love different people in different ways.	gay love someone of the same sex in a romantic way. That is different to friendship.
<b>I like playing football with the boys and hate dolls, should I really be a boy?/ I like playing with the girls and I love dance, should I be a girl?</b>	Consider whether the child understands what a stereotype is.	Children of all genders like football and dancing. There are no rules which stop anyone doing the things they enjoy. Carry on being yourself.	No, people have lots of different interests and everyone is different. Wouldn't it be boring if everyone liked doing the same things? Sometimes people judge others by stereotypes and may say hurtful things to them because they challenge stereotypes. It is important to follow your interests and do what you enjoy, not to fit in what other people think. If you feel awkward about any of this, talk to someone you trust about it. Do you know who you would talk to?
<b>Maryam has a Mummy and a Mammy, how come?</b>		Some children have two mums or two dads. They love their children just as much and care about their children just like families with a mum and a dad or with one parent. Families are all different, but every family should care for their children in and look after them.	

## RESPONDING TO PARENTS

### Why are you teaching my child gay lessons?

We are not teaching gay lessons, **we are teaching about different families**. Some children in our school have same-sex parents, two mums or dads. It is important that all our children understand that families come in different shapes and sizes, so that every child's family and background is respected.

Maybe show the parents *'The Great Big Book of Families'* or *'We Are Family'* to demonstrate how the school is including families led by same sex couples alongside all types of families.

Or

We have had a number of cases where pupils have been bullied and called gay/lesbian as an insult. **It is important that all children and their backgrounds are respected in our school, so we have explained what the word 'gay' really means and told children it is not to use it in a negative way. Differences are valued here, and diversity celebrated, we all have things to learn from each other.**

### Why are you promoting being gay?

We recognise all the different family types reflected in our school community and we want to make sure that every child, whatever background they come from, sees themselves reflected back in what they learn and in the school environment.

When we read a book which includes a same-sex family, we don't just give this one example of a family structure, we also share many other examples of different families through other books over time. Reading picture books about different views and experiences enables children to understand things from other people's points of view, to recognise their shared humanity and to treat others respectfully. In the same way we do not encourage children to go to balls in magic carriages when we read them the story of Cinderella, we are not promoting same-sex families by reading stories about them.

## THE USE OF OUTSIDE AGENCIES

Before inviting any external agency to speak with children in your school, ensure that you know the values of the organisation and consider whether the provision they offer is better delivered by school staff, who know the children and their families and backgrounds.

There are no organisations (or resources) which are ‘banned’. Each school must ensure that any resource used or organisation which works in their school has values and aims which are consistent with the values of the school and with the DfE guidance.

Where an organisation approaches a school, offering provision or resources, the school should investigate the organisation’s raison d’être and, if in doubt, may ask for guidance from a trusted source (such as the PSHE Service) before using resources or inviting the organisation into school.

There follows an extract from **3A Relationships Education Policy**, which describe the way a school should work with external agencies. You should check that your policy reflects this, or identify differences.

We believe that all aspects of Relationships Education are most effectively taught by those who know our pupils well and are aware of their needs. We encourage visitors to our school, who may enhance, but never replace, our planned provision. We will work closely with visitors to ensure that the needs of our pupils are met.

We will follow this Code of Practice when working with visitors:

- The care and management of pupils is the responsibility of the school at all times.
- In class teaching situations, visitors will not be asked to work alone with pupils, but will be supported by a member of staff.
- The school will know whether visitors are DBS checked and arrangements will be made to accompany them as appropriate.
- All visitors will be made aware of the content and principles of this Policy, prior to their visit.
- All lessons will be planned in direct liaison with the PSHCE Co-ordinator/Class teacher, taking account of the age and needs of the group and the context of the work within the Relationships Education programme.
- Visitors will be reminded that, whilst contributing to Relationships Education in a classroom setting, they must adhere to the same confidentiality code as staff members. Class teaching must be seen as separate from health or other targeted interventions to support wellbeing.
- Any resources which a visitor wishes to use or distribute will be discussed and agreed with the PSHCE Co-ordinator/Class Teacher beforehand.
- The contributions of visitors will be regularly monitored and evaluated.

## LGBT+ ISSUES AND RELIGION

Some schools with pupils with a high level of religious observance may be concerned about including LGBT+ families, identities and relationships in the PSHE curriculum. However, this need not be the case as most religions have, as a central tenant of their faith, the idea that all people should be treated respectfully. This is often called the golden rule, and talks about treating others the way you would want to be treated:

‘Do to all people as you wish to have done to you; and reject for others what you would reject for yourself’  
 Islam: Hadith of Abu Dawud

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your strength and with all your mind. And, Lord your neighbour as you love yourself' Christianity: Luke 10:28

'I am a stranger to no one, and no one is a stranger to me. Indeed, I am a friend to all' Sikh: Guru Granth Sahib 1299

'What is hateful to you, so not do to your fellow human.' Jewish Talmud Shabbat 31a

'No one of you is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.' Islam: Forty Hadith of on-Nawawi 13

'This is the sum of duty: do naught unto others what you would not have them to do unto you.' Hindu: Mahabharata 5,1517

'Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.' Buddhist: Udana-Varga 5,1

'Do not do to others what you would not like for yourself.' Humanist: Confucius, Analects

From these quotations you can see religion seeks to act well towards others and from this it can be seen that no form of bullying is acceptable.

Many religions teach about sexual activity and what is or is not appropriate or sinful. In all religions, believers strive to lead lives which most closely follow their teachings or scriptures. But no religion passes the responsibility of judging the wrong doing of others to fellow adherents. The responsibility of judging whether a life has been led in accordance with religious teachings is God's alone. License is not given to maltreat others, because they do not behave in a way seen as 'right'.

For example, a well-known Muslim text, *Al-Kafirun* 109:6 says, 'For you it is your way of life and for me it is my way of life, and you choose to live your life differently and I should respect that, just as I might live my life differently and you should respect that.'

Or the Christian text, 'Let him who is without sin, cast the first stone' John 8v7

Schools are in a position to further relations between groups and to develop understanding, both for children and parents/carers.

WITH THANKS

Newham RSHE Partnership

Kite Trust, [www.kitetrust.org.uk](http://www.kitetrust.org.uk)

## Appendix 1.

### SEXUAL AND GENDER IDENTITIES – KEY TERMS

These terms are for your information, but must only be used in an age appropriate, and culturally and faith-sensitive way in the classroom.

There are many terms used when referring to sexual and gender identities. In addition to heterosexual or 'straight', the terms LGBT, LGBTQI, LGBTQ, LGBT+ and Queer are increasingly used in society and the media. The acronym 'LGBT+' stands for the sexual identities of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, which describes gender identity. The plus '+' denotes 'other related identities' and may represent sexual identities such as, but not only, queer, asexual and pansexual, gender identities such as, but not confined to, non-binary, genderqueer, agender and the 'biological' term intersex. These individual terms are explained below, but as the language concerning LGBT+ relationships and identities is constantly evolving and changing, it will not be an exhaustive list.

**Agender:** This term describes people who do not identify with having a gender at all, they don't identify with the construct of gender. The prefix 'a' means 'lack of'. 'Agender' comes under the non-binary umbrella – see below.

**Ally:** This term is used for people who do not identify as LGBT+ themselves but see themselves as supporters of those who may be LGBT+.

**Asexual:** Those who don't feel sexual urges or feelings in the same way as others, who are not motivated by sex in a relationship, but may still enjoy close and loving relationships.

**Biological sex:** Indicates the sex someone is assigned or identified as having at birth. This is based on their observed genitalia, and their assumed chromosomal and hormonal characteristics. Often referred to as simply 'the sex of the baby' – it is worth noting that intersex cannot be the assigned sex in UK law. 'Sex assigned at birth' is the most accurate description.

**Bisexual:** A person of any gender who is attracted to people of their own gender and other genders

**Cisgender:** Someone whose gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth.

**Cisnormative:** The assumption that being cisgender is 'normal' and therefore that being transgender is not.

**Gay:** A term used to refer to a man who is attracted to other men and who may or may not be in a relationship with another man. Gay is also often used as an umbrella term for anyone who is attracted to people of the same gender and is increasingly adopted by gay women

**Gender fluid:** Someone whose gender identity changes over time and/or in different contexts. They may also identify as non-binary (see below).

**Heteronormativity:** The assumption of heterosexuality as being 'normal' and, possibly, superior to all other sexualities e.g. when finding out a man is married asking what his wife's name is, when he may actually have a husband.

**Heterosexual:** A person who identifies with binary gender identities of 'man' and 'woman' and who is attracted to people of the 'opposite' gender. Synonymous with the term 'straight'.

**Homosexual:** Someone who is attracted to people of the same gender as them. This term is seen as stigmatizing because of its historical link to illegality and a mental illness diagnosis. Gay or lesbian are preferred, and more common, terms.

**Lesbian:** A woman who is attracted to other women and may or may not be in a relationship with another woman.

**Non-binary:** An umbrella term for people who do not identify as man or woman, boy or girl. They may describe themselves using any number of non-binary gender terms, such as genderfluid, genderqueer or agender. They generally take the gender neutral pronouns 'they/them' (for example), rather than 'he/him' or 'she/her'.

**Intersex:** People born with indeterminate genitals, chromosomes, or hormones. They will be assigned either male or female sex at birth (intersex is not currently a recognised sex in UK law) and brought up as either a boy or a girl. There are over 100 different intersex conditions and people may never know they are intersex, nor would they necessarily identify as transgender.

**Pansexual:** A person of any gender who is attracted to people of all genders. This sexual identity is similar to bisexuality but makes no assumption that gender is binary and may be more fluid in attraction.

**Queer:** Someone who falls outside the traditional boundaries of sexual and/or gender identity. This word has been reclaimed and can act as an umbrella for the entire LGBTQ+ community. It is often used by academics (queer theory) and is linked to activism, politics and the arts and using the word in this context is totally acceptable. The term was used as a derogatory term, primarily against gay men, in the Seventies and Eighties, and can still come across as prejudicial if it's used in the wrong context.

**Questioning:** A person who is questioning or exploring their sexual and/or gender identities.

**Straight:** Heterosexual. Individuals who subscribe to the binary construct of gender and are attracted to people of the 'opposite' gender to themselves,

**Trans\*:** or '**transgender**' is the adjective that describes someone who doesn't identify with the sex and gender they were assigned at birth. It is an umbrella term for any number of identities that cross society's gender boundaries; as a prefix to a word it means 'on the opposite side of'. Some trans people may identify as man, woman, a combination of the 2, or as non-binary (neither genders). These can be either fluid or fixed identities. The use of the asterisk denotes that it is being used as an umbrella term.

**(Trans) man:** A man who was assigned female at birth (AFAB). They may prefer to describe themselves just as a man, in which case the term 'trans man' shouldn't be used to describe the individual. Nevertheless, it can be a useful term, along with 'AFAB' when talking generally about and developing understanding around gender identities.

**(Trans) woman:** A woman who was assigned male at birth (AMAB). See Trans man above.

## APPENDIX 2 SCENARIOS FOR TRAINING

Scenarios that may help staff or older students to understand how to be sociable with, and helpful to, people with differing gender and sexual identities:

Marvin is studious, mixed race, has ginger hair and glasses. Although he is different in some ways to many of the young people around him, he has far more similarities than differences to his peers. He still gets asked lots of questions like: So what countries do your parents come from? Is your dad still around? Why are you short sighted? How come you are ginger even though one of your parents is black?

Marvin finds all the questions annoying and he is also called names. As well as feeling like the questions accentuate his differences, they also make him feel excluded and 'other', when he just wants to feel part of the group.

- a. Why do people ask him questions?
- b. What assumptions are being made by them?
- c. Why does he find all the questions annoying and possibly upsetting?
- d. What could be done to make him feel more part of the group?

Having answered the questions concerning Marvin's situation, think about Oliver/Olivia.

Oliver has come back to school following the summer holidays and now wears the girls' school uniform and has changed their name to Olivia. Olivia, although different in some ways to many of the young people around her, has far more similarities than differences to her peers, but gets asked lots of questions.

Olivia finds all the questions annoying and she is also called names. As well as feeling like the questions accentuate her differences, they also make her feel excluded and 'other', when she just wants to feel part of the group.

- a. What kinds of questions do you think that Olivia might be asked?
- b. Why do people ask her questions?
- c. What assumptions are being made?
- d. Why does she find all the questions annoying and possibly upsetting?
- e. What could be done to make her feel more part of the group?

Are these two scenarios very different, what are the similarities and what are the differences?

What can staff learn from working through these different scenarios?