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# THEM & US

*A guide to anti-homophobia  
policies & practice in secondary schools*

# THEM & US

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# 1. Why do we need this resource pack?

The most conservative research estimates that 4% of the population are lesbian, gay or bisexual. This means that over 2,200,000 people in this country are lesbian, gay or bisexual. Therefore, in a secondary school of 1500 students, at least 60 students are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

More research has indicated that the figure could be as high as 10% (Hite Report, 1988). This would mean 5,500,000 lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the country as a whole, and 150 in a secondary school of 1500 students.

The significant numbers of lesbian, gay and bisexuals pupils in secondary schools means:

**1. A school should not assume that all its students will become heterosexual adults.**

Every school has a responsibility to prepare all of its pupils for the challenges and responsibilities of adult life.

**2. A school should have policies and procedures that place homophobic behaviour on an equal footing with other forms of discrimination.**

Every school has a responsibility to create a safe learning environment for a significant proportion of its pupils.

**3. A school should recognise that there will be staff, parents, partners, siblings and other relatives of pupils who are lesbian, gay or bisexual.**

Every school has a responsibility to acknowledge and respond to the reality of its pupils' lives.

*"I found that at school I didn't know what gay was, and I felt very alone. When I did eventually get to know what the feeling I had was I was frightened because those who were gay or supposed to look like they were, picked on. Jokes about gay people were very frequent and people were very hostile about gay people."*

*David, gay secondary school pupil<sup>1</sup>*

In 1996, the Terrence Higgins Trust (THT) and Stonewall surveyed<sup>2</sup> more than 300 schools in England and Wales. They found:

- 82% were aware of verbal homophobic bullying in their school
- 99% had an anti-bullying policy in school
- only 6% recognised homophobic bullying within their policy

As part of the same report, the THT found that:

- 48% of respondents aged under 18 had experienced violence towards them
- 40% of violent attacks took place at school
- 50% of violent attacks involved fellow students
- 79% had been called names by fellow students

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<sup>1</sup> "Talking about school ". Gay Teenage Research Project. All students' names have been changed.  
<sup>2</sup> "Playing It Safe: Responses of Secondary Schools' Teachers to LESBIAN, GAY and BISEXUAL pupils, Bullying, HIV & AIDS Education and Section 28." Institute of Education, University of London.

*"Every boy at school calls me a 'poof' a 'queer' and some say things like, 'How's your bum, love?' I feel like throwing myself under a bus."*

*Stephen, 15<sup>3</sup>*

*"No-one talked to me a for a year. I nearly got beaten up and the girls thought I'd jump them."*

*Joanne, 17<sup>4</sup>*

The Lesbian and Gay Teenage Project conducted a piece of research, and found that as many as one in five lesbian and gay teenagers had attempted suicide. In another survey carried out in 1992, by the Lesbian Youth Support and Information Service, 70% of young lesbians questioned had attempted suicide. Research also indicates that there are other problems that lesbian, gay and bisexual teenagers frequently face including:

- Alcohol and drug misuse
- Truancy, as students seek to escape from homophobia within their school
- The stress of a hostile school environment impacting on student academic performance
- Eating disorders, mental health and physical problems
- Young people leaving home at a young age, moving into dangerous accommodation or rendering them homeless, due to hostile home environment.

All this research indicates that lesbian, gay and bisexual students need support and understanding. But this work extends far beyond their individual needs to include their friends and families who often need assurance and accurate information.

*"I heard nothing about homosexuality when I was at school so that when my brother told me he was gay I was confused. I couldn't talk about it at home and so I told my form tutor. She said that he should go and see a doctor. It was a long time before I could accept him as he was."*

*Sarah, 15, sister of young gay man.<sup>5</sup>*

In order for schools to successfully fulfil the tasks with which society has charged them, it is vital that all young people are enabled to appreciate their own self worth and develop respect for others who may be different from themselves or come from different communities or backgrounds.

**It is important that all schools address homophobia and lesbian, gay and bisexual issues because:**

- Lesbian, gay and bisexual people exist in all walks of life, in families, in schools & colleges, in workplaces, in churches, mosques and temples, in youth clubs and other leisure venues.
- All of us, whether we know it or not, have lesbian and gay children, friends, relatives or colleagues.
- Lesbian, gay and bisexual young people are frequently isolated, unable to talk to friends or family. They have often been given misinformation about what it is to be lesbian, gay or bisexual, which makes them fearful and can induce guilt.

<sup>3</sup> "Living magazine". April 1991.

<sup>4</sup> "Talking about school" Gay teenage research project.

<sup>5</sup> "Something to tell you" Gay teenage research project.

## 2. What support is there from the DfEE?

Most teachers recognise the importance of challenging homophobia and delivering a comprehensive sex education programme, but feel that curriculum constraints and a general lack of support from the DfEE and local education authorities prevent much of it from being carried out.

This is beginning to change however, along with a general recognition of how important sexuality related issues are in relation to pupils' academic achievement and personal well being and safety.

This section details the support from the DfEE, Greenwich and Bexley Education and Health Promotion Units and from a Greenwich Secondary School in order that this work can be carried out.

- **Support from the DfEE**

### **DfEE Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, July 2000.**

*"The object of sex and relationship education is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. A successful programme, fully embedded in PSHE (Personal, Social & Health Education), will help young people learn to respect themselves and move with confidence from childhood into adulthood."*

*"As a part of sex and relationship education, pupils should be taught about the nature and importance of family life and bringing up children. But the Government recognises - as in the Home Office, Ministerial Group on the Family consultation document "Supporting Families" - that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside of marriage. Therefore pupils should learn the significance of marriage and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society. Care should be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances".*

*"Pupils need also to be given accurate information and helped to develop skills to enable them to understand difference and respect themselves and others and for the purpose also of preventing and removing prejudice."*

*"It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity - this would be inappropriate teaching."*

### **DfEE Circular Social Inclusion: Pupil Support Oct. 1999**

*"The emotional distress caused by bullying in whatever form - be it racial, or as a result of a child's appearance, behaviour or special educational needs, or related to sexual orientation - can prejudice school achievement, lead to lateness and truancy and, in extreme cases, end with suicide."*

In the Summer of 2003, the government was successful in repealing Section 28 of the Local Government Act (1988). In the past, Section 28 has often been quoted as a law which prevents work around lesbian, gay and bisexual issues taking place, especially in relation to schools & what is taught to children. There was a lot misinformation about Section 28, and so it needs to be clarified.

**It is very important to clarify & reassure all staff that Section 28 has been repealed and that it never did apply to teachers or school activities.**

**The DfEE Circular 5/94 Sex Education and Schools Act states that:**

*(Clause 28 prohibited) . . . "local authorities from intentionally promoting homosexuality or publishing material with that intention, and from promoting the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship. This prohibition applies to the activities of local authorities themselves, as distinct from the activities of the governing bodies and staff of schools on their own behalf."*

It is becoming increasingly clear that schools have a moral duty to provide a safe place for all their students and staff. There is a significant increase in the number of pupils taking their local education authority to court due to bullying which is being ignored by other pupils & staff.

- Shirley Pearce is a teacher who is currently involved in a protracted legal battle with her school, as they failed to protect her against homophobic bullying from students
- James Hudson is a student who is taking his school to court because he was assaulted in a homophobic attack.

**• Support from local education and health authorities**

This work was initiated as a result of young lesbian, gay and bisexual people and local schools expressing a need for support for schools on dealing with sexuality related incidents. This resource has been funded by Greenwich Council and Bexley Health Promotion, and Greenwich Health Promotion has been an active partner in undertaking this work. Both Bexley and Greenwich Health Promotion Units have been consulted and have supported its development through attending its steering group. The resource has been examined and discussed by PSHE Inspectorate and Community Education and Equality Officers. The objective was to create a document that all schools could easily adopt into their practise that would effectively manage homophobia and sexuality related incidents.

**• Support from local schools**

This pack has been developed and piloted with Thomas Tallis Secondary School In Greenwich. The school had already undertaken work to address a range of equality issues including homophobia but wanted to work with The Metro Centre (a centre for lesbians, bisexual and gay men and those questioning their sexuality.) to create a specific Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) programme. With the Metro Centre, the school worked with Year 7 to Year 12 pupil representatives from the school council to explore the level of homophobia within the school and its impact on pupils' lives. It also facilitated them devising two lesson plans that have been piloted and incorporated into this pack.

Although all schools may not have the time to do this kind of development work, the need for this kind of PSHE programme is not just an issue for one local school. All schools need to address homophobia and sexuality related issues. It is in response to this need that this pack has been developed.

### 3. What to do with this resource pack

This pack aims to enable schools to improve the quality of personal and social support they provide for students, specifically in relation to the issues of sexuality and sexual orientation.

Some schools will already have addressed many of the issues described within the pack.

- Your school may have considered the issue of homophobia within their anti-bullying policy, and within their equal opportunities policy.
- Your school may include sexuality, identity and diversity within your personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, and through your sex education program.
- Your school may have developed good links with local lesbian, gay and bisexual organizations, and is therefore prepared, if a young person asks for outside support regarding their sexual orientation.
- Or your school may be at an earlier stage, and may be responding to issues as and when they arise.

It does not matter which stage your school is at, as this pack is designed to help all schools to be proactive about lesbian, gay and bisexual issues. It will provide clear advice and guidance on:

1. Dealing consistently with homophobic bullying within an overall anti-bullying framework
2. Introducing sexuality and diversity into the curriculum sensitively and appropriately
3. Supporting individual teachers by clarifying their role in relation to these issues
4. Understanding government guidance and the legal framework in relation to the teaching of lesbian, gay and bisexual issues.

A step-by-step guide to introducing this document to your school:

#### Key Points

- The information in this pack needs to be shared with colleagues. This work has implications for all areas of school policy and practice and therefore needs to be circulated widely.
- A lot of school policy & practice development begins with informal discussions in the staff room or school office. A useful first step may be to share this document or at least **Why do we need this resource pack?** and **What support is there from the DfEE?** with a few colleagues in order to exchange views on how to take it further.
- It is important to remember that work around sexuality and homophobia needs to be supported by revising a number of existing school policies. This ensures that these issues are addressed throughout the school and not marginalised, or seen as an individual member of the staff's hobbyhorse.
- Schools vary in their structures and so what follows is a general guide to raising the issues in various areas of the school.

## **Introducing the issues through the Pastoral Curriculum**

1. Ask that the issue be put on the agenda of a Year/House meeting.
2. Circulate members with appropriate papers beforehand. (Why do we need this resource pack? and What support is there from the DfEE? from this pack offer a broad overview.)
3. After the initial Year/House meeting, the issues should be taken to the appropriate middle management meeting.
4. Involvement at this stage of a school nurse or counsellor could prove very useful.  
[If you receive this document in your position of school nurse or counsellor it should first be discussed with whoever your line manager in school may be and then forwarded to the appropriate committee.]
5. From there the issues will need to be discussed by the Senior Management Team and may be taken there by those members of the SMT that attend that particular Middle Management Team.
6. It may well be that this document begins with the Senior Management Team. In which case the above model would effectively be reversed.

## **Introducing the issues through the Academic Curriculum**

1. The same basic structure should be used for raising the issues in the academic curriculum.
2. If you are a classroom teacher putting it on the agenda of a department meeting, circulate the appropriate appendix or perhaps a suggested lesson plan or two to members in advance.
3. The route then outlined for the pastoral curriculum may be followed.

## **Introducing the issues through the Equal Opportunities Committee**

1. If your school has such a committee, it may be a very useful place to start.
2. If you yourself are not a member of that committee, share the information from this pack with one or two of the committee members, so that they may raise it at the next meeting.
3. Again circulating information in advance is very useful.





## **Introducing the issues to the Governors**

1. School governors have overall responsibility for the running of a school, the curriculum in general and the sex education curriculum in particular.
2. It is vitally important that the Governing Body at the earliest opportunity discusses these issues.
3. These issues may arrive on the governors' agenda through one of several routes. Any member of the Governing Body, including teacher governors may place them there. It may be useful to involve teacher governors in some initial discussion.
4. An issue such as this may also be presented to the Governing Body for discussion by the Head-teacher or an appropriate invited staff member introducing the topic on her/his behalf.
5. Governors' meetings are notoriously busy affairs and therefore circulation of the issues in advance would be important.

## **Introducing the issues to the Parent/Teacher Association**

1. The involvement of parents/guardians in all aspects of school life is vitally important and the issues discussed in this pack often concern parents.
2. Discussion of these issues should be seen as part of the ongoing discussion the school has with its parents/guardians on all matters relating to school policy and practice.
3. To single this issue out as special or particularly controversial gives out a wrong message that may prevent proper informed discussion. It may be more appropriate for the issue to be raised in discussions relating to bullying or general sex education.
4. It would be impractical to circulate all parents/guardians with a summary of the issues and therefore a simple presentation by appropriate staff at the beginning of the session would be important.

All schools are different and most teachers will know the appropriate route for their school. The above suggestions may need to be adapted to your current circumstances.



## 4. A step-by-step guide to implementation.

The following is a list of key objectives for schools in addressing sexuality and the needs of young lesbian, gay and bisexual students. Some schools may agree to meet some but not all of the objectives. Some objectives are much simpler to achieve and may take a shorter time-scale, whilst others may take much longer and involve more people.

### 1. Have a clear anti-bullying policy that includes homophobic bullying

Review Current Policy & consider:

- Does the policy protect pupils and staff from acts of homophobia?
- Are the sanctions for homophobic acts equal to those of other bullying activities such as racism?
- Are teachers given the necessary training and support to implement the policy?
- Are homophobic acts recorded and monitored in the same way as other bullying activities such as racism?

The following example has been adapted from the Bullying Policy from Thomas Tallis Secondary School in Greenwich:

*"Some potential victims are identifiable as individuals; some are identifiable as members of a group. For example, there are boys who because of their background and received attitudes towards women, bully girls. There are also people who bully so-called 'swots' or 'toffs' or 'poofs' or 'dykes'. These victims are not necessarily members of an identifiable group of pupils. They might not be more academically successful or identify as lesbian, bisexual or gay. It is the accusation behind such name-calling that is often the excuse to justify the bullying as acceptable, as a means to dislike the victims. This behaviour is totally unacceptable and will be dealt with as severely as all other kinds of bullying."*

Responsibility of:

Consultation with:

Deadline:

## 2. Ensure that the Equal Opportunities Policy addresses sexual orientation

Review current policy and consider:

- Is sexual orientation included in the policy's 'Statement of Intent'?
- Does the policy protect pupils and staff from acts of homophobia?
- Does the policy outline effective means of monitoring and recording homophobic behaviour?
- Does the policy outline the need for pupils and staff to be given appropriate information and training where necessary on sexuality issues?

Here is an excerpt taken from the Statement of Intent from Thomas Tallis Secondary School in Greenwich:

*"we are opposed to any form of abuse whether on the basis of race, gender, class, sexual orientation or disability. Such abusive behaviour can range from name-calling and mimicry to open verbal and physical abuse. Behaviour of this kind belittles, hurts and threatens and is therefore unacceptable."*

Responsibility of:

Consultation with:

Deadline:

## 3. Ensure that training is available for to all staff to enable them to have the skills, confidence and techniques to deal with sexuality issues.

- Has there been some discussion or skills audit around sexuality issues?

Here are some questions to ask staff:

*Do you think this school has lesbian/gay/bisexual staff and/or pupils?*

*Do you think that lesbian, gay or bisexual staff & pupils would feel safe and supported in the school environment?*

*Do you feel it is appropriate for teachers to challenge homophobia in the classroom?*

*Do you feel you have the confidence to challenge homophobia in the classroom?*

*Do you think sexuality should be included within the school's Equal Opportunities Policy?*

*How confident would you feel to deliver a PSHE lesson addressing sexuality issues?*

*How easy or difficult would you find it to talk to a parent who is known to be lesbian, gay or bisexual?*

*How confident do you feel about talking to a pupil about lesbian, gay or bisexual issues?*

*Can you name an agency that you could use as a referral point for a pupil who was 'Coming Out'?*

- Are there the skills from inside the school to deliver training on these issues?
- Can an outside agency be identified to help deliver training?

Responsibility of:

Consultation with:

Deadline:

#### 4. Ensure the inclusion of lesbian, gay and bisexual issues across curriculum areas.

- How can sexuality issues be incorporated into the spiralling Personal, Social, Health Education Curriculum?
- Are there other subject areas that could also benefit by exploring sexuality e.g. English, History, Humanities, Government and Politics, Religious Education?
- Will teachers need extra training or support to deliver these changes in the classroom?

The following example has been adapted from the Sex Education Policy from Thomas Tallis Secondary School in Greenwich:

*"Although the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) Programme is designed to deliver the bulk of sex education, it is reinforced particularly in drama, English, home economics, humanities, science and social and religious education. Care is taken to avoid unnecessary duplication and to ensure that a balanced and comprehensive programme is offered.*

*This programme takes into account of the pupils' levels of maturity by being reinforced and moved forward year by year (spiral curriculum). Generally speaking, the emphasis is on factual information for the younger ages, moving into moral and personal issues later. We depend very much on the involvement of the pupils; young people are constantly making decisions about their sexuality, which reflect how they express themselves as males and females, and how they relate to others.*

*While they do need information on sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy and other issues, this information does not provide them with the skills necessary to resolve day to day pressures, concerns and conflicts. They want assurance about body image, behaviour, and relationships and to respect and empathise with notions of others. Sexual relationships are placed in context along with other types of human relationships such as friendship, parenthood and other family relationships."*

Responsibility of:

Consultation with:

Deadline:

Here follows two sample lesson plans, each lasting 45 minutes, developed by teachers and pupils from Thomas Tallis Secondary School in Greenwich. For more lesson plans, we recommend reading the 'Colours of the Rainbow' Resource Pack, published by Camden & Islington Health Authority.

# **Lesson 1. Acknowledging differences and similarities.**

## **Defining sexuality.**

- Objective:** To give the students the opportunity to explore individuality and to inform them of differing sexualities.
- Equipment:** i] Large A3 poster photo-copy of Section 6: A glossary of related terms and language.  
ii] 15 definition packs. (Each definition pack is one A4 copy of Section 6: A glossary of sexuality related terms and language, which has been cut up into individual terms and definitions. The task is to match each term with the correct definition.)
- Preparation:** Do not give an introduction to this lesson. Instead recap on previous PSHE lessons.

### **Instructions:**

1. Arrange the pupils in a circle. Pass around the circle asking each pupil for three descriptions of themselves. e.g. I am Welsh, I have brown eyes, I play the guitar.  
Offer pupils the opportunity to pass if they have difficulty.  
(5 mins.)
2. Pass around the circle again asking pupils to look at the person sitting on their left and give one word to describe how they are similar to them. e.g. Hair, Eyes, Humour  
(3 mins.)
3. Pass around the circle again asking pupils to look at the person sitting on their right and give one word to describe how they are different to them.  
(2 mins.)
4. Pass around the circle one last time asking each pupil to describe in one sentence why they are unique to their class. e.g. I speak Spanish, I hate football, I play street hockey.  
(5 mins.)
5. Working in the circle, divide pupils into pairs. Give out the definition packs and instruct pairs to work together to match each term with the correct definition. Allow plenty of time for discussion in pairs. Once pairs are finished feedback on the process before displaying the poster of correct terms and definitions. Discuss confusing or hard to remember terms & definitions.  
(25 mins.)
6. Starting with a volunteer, pass around the circle asking for one sentence about what they have learned in the lesson.  
(5 mins.)

End the lesson by explaining that while they have explored differences, you are particularly focusing on the differences of sexuality. In the next lesson you will be continuing this theme with more emphasis on tolerance of other sexualities.

## **Lesson 2.**

### **Acknowledging the consequences of homophobia.**

**Objective:** To give the students the opportunity to explore tolerance of sexual identities.

**Equipment:** Large A3 poster photo-copy of Section 6: A glossary of sexuality related terms and language. (from Lesson 1.)  
Large A3 poster photo-copy of Facts about Sexuality (Included).

**Instruction:**

1. Arrange the pupils in a circle. Pass around the circle reminding the pupils about last week's lesson. Ask each pupil for one word to describe differences in people. Offer pupils the opportunity to pass if they have difficulty.

(3 mins.)

2. The Car Park Activity  
Privately give each pupil a role from the following list:

- a single heterosexual man
- a sixteen year old lesbian
- a sixteen year old heterosexual woman
- a bisexual man
- a female sex worker
- a heterosexual married man
- a male to female transgendered person (transsexual)
- a sixteen year old gay man
- a heterosexual married woman
- a male sex worker
- a sixteen year old heterosexual man
- a married a single 30 year old heterosexual woman
- a black gay man
- a black lesbian woman
- a man who has sex with other men in secret

#### **You may need to clarify roles using the poster from lesson one.**

Select 10-15 statements from the following list. If pupils feel in their role that they can do what you read out, then they award themselves one mark. They will need to keep their own scores. At the end of the activity ask for highest/lowest scores. Ask pupils to reveal their roles. Allow discussion.



# Questions:

If your sexuality was known about, would you be able to:

- hold your lovers hand in public without fear
- feel safe to walk the streets after dark
- give blood
- obtain private medical insurance
- become a judge
- obtain life insurance
- adopt a child
- work in a children's nursery
- get support from society
- inherit your partner's estate after their death
- kiss your lover in public
- expect support from your family
- marry your partner
- be honest with your colleagues
- be entitled to your partner's pension
- have the sex you want when you want it
- expect to be helped by sex education at school
- have access to affordable social meeting places
- expect to be fairly treated by the police
- have sex legally at sixteen
- join the army
- have your relationship supported by the church
- expect promotion at work
- expect to gain custody of your children in the event of a dispute
- be represented positively on television
- expect justice
- have security in your employment
- ask your partner to family parties / weddings etc.
- expect positive role models at school
- see your sexual experience mirrored in television / books etc.
- go on holiday to the USA
- buy your own home
- have access to adequate health care
- have a wide circle of friends

(25 mins.)

## 1. Silent statements

In the circle, pupils get up and move places if they agree with any of the following statements. These statements have come from the school council.

- Homophobia is based on fear
- Homophobia is often used unconsciously and is not meant to be hurtful
- You cannot change people's opinions about homosexuality
- Boys are more offended by homosexuality – they find it a threat to their manhood
- Homophobia is not as important as racism or sexism
- Sexuality is a private matter and should not be discussed in school
- Anti-gay name-calling is only an issue for Years 7-9.

Give the pupils the opportunity to make some statements.

(2 mins.)

## 2. Display Facts about Sexuality poster.

Read all the statements. Allow time for discussion. As a group they need to think of a few statements to add to the poster. These could be based on any of the work they have done over the last two lessons.

# Facts About Sexuality

## Did you know?

- There are between 2 and 6 million lesbian, gay or bisexual people in Britain?
- There could be between 100 and 120 lesbian, gay or bisexual students in this school?
- Lesbian, gay and bisexuals men are: daughters, mothers, fathers, sons, sisters, brothers, cousins, grandparents, uncles, aunts, in-laws, foster-parents, carers, friends, work-mates?

# Facts About Homophobia

## Did you know?

- 1 in 5 lesbian and gay teenagers attempt suicide?
- 1 in 4 attempted suicides are a direct result of homophobic name calling and bullying at school?
- Gays and lesbians were persecuted and murdered in the concentration camps along with Jews, communists, gypsies etc.?

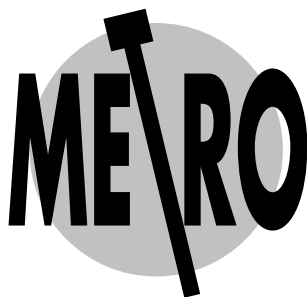
We believe that homophobia is unacceptable at our school because. . . .

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CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_



The Metro Centre is a centre for lesbian, bisexual and gay men and those who are questioning their sexuality.

The Metro runs a number of youth groups for young people under 25. For more information please contact our administrator.

**Tel: 020 8265 3311**

**Fax: 020 8265 1645**

**E-mail: [info@t-metro.co.uk](mailto:info@t-metro.co.uk)**

**Web: <http://www.themetro.dircon.co.uk>**





**5. Provide an ongoing review of the school environment to ensure inclusion of lesbian, gay and bisexual people. This could include:**

- Language and images used in school communications

Are parents addressed as 'parent and carers'?

- Images used around the school

Are posters and leaflets available on local lesbian, gay and bisexual services?

- Resources used in lessons

Is sexuality explored in literature and other media forms?

Responsibility of:

Consultation with:

Deadline:

**6. Ensure fast and effective removal of offensive graffiti.**

- Is there a designated worker to do this job?

- Do they understand the importance of removing offensive & homophobic graffiti as quickly as possible?

- Does the occurrence of graffiti in the school need to be monitored or recorded?

Responsibility of:

Consultation with:

Deadline:

**7. Designate an experienced individual for young people to talk to in confidence about sexuality (in addition to their form tutor).**

- Are the boundaries of confidentiality clear to staff and pupils around sexuality issues?

See Section 5. 'A procedural guide for dealing with homophobic & sexuality related incidents' for more information.

- Do all staff and pupils know the designated individual?

- Does the designated individual require any resources or outside supervision to carry out this role effectively?

Responsibility of:

Consultation with:

Deadline:

**8. Ensure that behaviour guidelines are regularly debated and agreed on by students and that there is an election of student safety officers to help implement them.**

- Is there an appropriate structure for students to discuss these issues?

Some schools have a School Council that meets regularly to a prepared agenda, made up of pupil representatives from all the different year groups. A School Council can be an excellent way to raise these issues in a safe & structured manner. It can also help gain vital support against homophobia from pupils themselves. The lesson plans detailed in this pack were developed in conjunction with the School Council from Thomas Tallis Secondary School in Greenwich.

Responsibility of:

Consultation with:

Deadline:

**9. Ensure that models of good practise are translated into real situations, be it classroom, corridor or canteen. This might include:**

- Dealing with homophobic harassment of teachers
- Dealing with young people needing support around sexuality
- Dealing with complaints.

See Section 5. 'A procedural guide for dealing with homophobic & sexuality related incidents' for more information.

Responsibility of:

Consultation with:

Deadline:



# A procedural guide for dealing with homophobic & sexuality related incidents

What to do if	Legal Considerations	Individual pastoral response	Pastoral response to school
<p><b>1.</b> A pupil discloses that they are lesbian/gay/bisexual</p> <p><b>2.</b> A pupil discloses that they are feeling suicidal or at danger of seriously harming themselves.</p>	<p>1. There are no legal obligations to inform parents.</p> <p>2. Schools have in loco parentis responsibilities to individual pupils and the whole school community &amp; have an obligation to protect all pupils from bullying or harassment.</p> <p>1. Schools have 'in loco parentis responsibilities to individual pupils and the whole school community.</p> <p>2. Are there child protection issues? Are they at risk of significant harm (i.e. suicide, self-harm or sexual abuse)? If so, Head teachers should contact the Education Social Work Team for advice</p> <p>3. Contact area Social Services to make formal referral.</p>	<p><b>1. ONE TO ONE RESPONSE</b> Inform pupil that as long as they are not at significant harm this information will remain confidential. Check your school policy to be sure.</p> <p>2. Discuss with the pupil how the parents/carers would respond to their child's sexuality. There are no legal obligations to inform parents.</p> <p>3. Ask pupil if they are being bullied or teased over his/her sexuality?</p> <p>4. If necessary, remind pupil that the age of consent is 16 and that as a teacher you might have to break the confidentiality of the pupil if this law was broken.</p> <p>5. Ask pupil if they would like to talk to someone else (i.e. not a teacher) who could be totally confidential.</p> <p>See ONE TO ONE RESPONSE above.</p>	<p>1. Is sexuality included in the school's Equal Opportunities Policy and in any Bullying or Behaviour Policy?</p> <p>2. Are sexuality issues fully explored though the PSHE curriculum?</p> <p><b>3. INTERNAL RESPONSE</b> Is there a need for the issue to be addressed through: a) an assembly                      b) tutor groups c) school assembly</p> <p>1. Ensure the head teacher is informed and decide: What are the safety/well-being implications for pupils &amp; others? Does the pupil need a medical assessment or counselling? Does the educational social worker need to be consulted? If, when and how parents/carers are to be informed.</p> <p>2. See INTERNAL RESPONSE above.</p>

### 3.

A lesbian/gay/bisexual pupil discloses they are sexually active.

1. Are there any child protection issues? (See above).

1. Are they above the age of consent for sexual intercourse? This is now 16 for heterosexual & gay male intercourse. If they are under the age of consent, can you apply the 'Gillick Principle'? Are they mature enough to understand the physical and emotional consequences of their actions?  
If so, then parents do not have to be informed.
2. See ONE TO ONE RESPONSE above

1. The head teacher needs to decide:  
Are there any child protection/educational welfare issues? (See above)  
Is there a procedure for such disclosures?  
Whether to inform parents/carers?

### 4.

A pupil discloses that a parent is lesbian/gay/bisexual

1. There are no legal obligations to inform anybody.

1. Ask pupil if they would like this information to remain confidential.
2. Ask pupil if they would like to speak to a counsellor or someone from an outside agency.

1. How can the school provide support for the pupil either internally or from an outside agency?

### 5.

A teacher becomes aware of homophobic remarks or bullying within the school environment

1. Schools have in loco parentis responsibilities to individual pupils and the whole school community & have an obligation to protect all pupils from bullying or harassment.

1. Encourage all pupils to report all types of bullying and graffiti to teachers.

1. See INTERNAL RESPONSE above.

### 6.

A teacher is victim to homophobic comments from pupils or staff

1. Does the school have an Equal Opportunities Policy that includes sexual orientation?

1. Inform the Line Manager and seek a response.
2. If not satisfied, keep a diary of events and inform Board of Governors.

1. Contact your Union Representative for further support.
2. Contact LAGER (Lesbian & Gay Employment Rights) for more information on: 020 7704 8066 (women)  
030 7704 6066 (men + minicom)

### 7.

A teacher is using homophobic language in front of pupils

1. Does the school have an Equal Opportunities Policy that includes sexual orientation?

1. Inform the Line Manager and seek a response.
2. If not satisfied, keep a diary of events and inform Board of Governors.

1. Contact your Union Representative for further support.

## 6. A glossary of related terms and language.

Language and terms of reference are changing & developing all the time, but here are some basic definitions:

**Bisexual** . . . . . Someone who is sexually attracted to people of the opposite gender and to people of his or her own gender.

**Celibate** . . . . . Someone who has chosen not to be in a sexual relationship.

**Coming Out** . . . . . When someone accepts that they are lesbian, bisexual or gay and chooses to be open to others about it.

**Gay** . . . . . A man who finds other men sexually attractive. (Some lesbians also use this term to describe themselves.)

**Heterosexual** . . . . . Someone who is sexually attracted to people of the opposite gender.

**Heterosexism** . . . . . When a set of beliefs, attitudes or practices exclusively promotes heterosexuality & ignores lesbian, bisexual and gay beliefs, attitudes or practices.

**Homophobia** . . . . . The irrational fear of lesbians, bisexuals and gay men.

**Homosexual** . . . . . A medical term to describe lesbians, bisexuals and gay men, which a lot of people now find inappropriate.

**Lesbian** . . . . . A woman who finds other women sexually attractive.

**Queer** . . . . . An old derogatory slang word for describing lesbians, bisexuals & gay men that has recently been reclaimed and is now used by members of the 'queer' community, often for a political purpose.

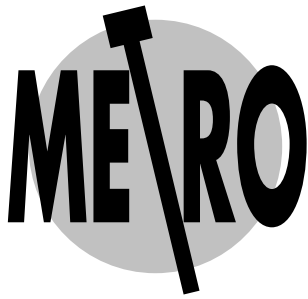
**Sexuality** . . . . . An individual's feelings, imagination, values, beliefs and practices regarding sex.

**Sexual Orientation** . . . . . How some choose to define their sexuality, commonly; lesbian, bisexual, gay or heterosexual.

**Transsexual** . . . . . Someone who feels that they were born in the wrong gender.

**Transvestite** . . . . . A person who likes to wear the opposite gender's clothing.

# Acknowledgments



## The Metro Centre

is a community centre for lesbian, gay & bisexual people and those questioning their sexuality in S.E. London.

Based in Greenwich, the centre offers counselling, HIV prevention work, mental health drop-ins, youth groups & volunteering opportunities.

For more information please contact our administrator.

Tel: 020 8265 3311

Fax: 020 8265 1645

E-mail: [info@t-metro.co.uk](mailto:info@t-metro.co.uk)

Web Page: <http://www.themetro.dircon.co.uk>



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For more information on our current programmes, please contact our administrator.

Tel/Fax: 020 8692 8172

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