



Supporting Transgender Students

Lister Community School

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1. Equality and legal requirements

- 1.1. The law is clear that schools must meet the needs of all trans young people and tackle transphobic bullying. The Public Sector Equality Duty requires all schools in England, Scotland and Wales - including academies and Free Schools - to:
 - Eliminate discrimination, including discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender reassignment;
 - Advance equality of opportunity;
 - Foster good relations between different groups of students.

- 1.2. Gender reassignment refers to anyone who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. This means schools are required to tackle transphobic bullying and support any students taking steps to 'reassign their sex' (or transition), whether those steps are 'social' (e.g. changing their name and pronoun, the way they look or dress) or 'medical' (e.g. hormone treatment, surgery).

- 1.3. Schools need to tackle all forms of transphobic bullying and take proactive steps to promote respect and understanding of trans people and the issues that affect them. Schools should also set specific and measurable age appropriate equality objectives, for example reducing levels of transphobic language and bullying.

2. Purpose

2.1. Lister Community School will use this guidance to inform staff, Governors and the school community and enable them to support and protect pupils who are questioning their identity and to help them to achieve their full potential whilst in our school. Gender is often an important part of an individual's identity and developing a positive sense of gender identity is part of growing up. However, gender identity is often complex and there is a spectrum of gender which is wider than just boy/ man or girl/ woman. This guidance aims to minimise distress and disruption to pupils and embed good practice by;

- Promoting inclusion for all students within our school by improving services for transgender pupils.
- Ensuring that governors and teachers are able to deal with trans matters inclusively.
- Provide practical guidance on specific issues.

3. Principles

3.1. In developing practice to support trans children, Lister will aim to follow these principles:

- Listen to the young person, their parents, carers and siblings. Wherever possible follow their lead and preferences.
- No young person should be made to feel that they are the ones who are causing problems or that they owe anything to their school in return for being treated with the equality they deserve and are legally entitled to.
- Avoid seeing the young person as a problem and instead see an opportunity to enrich the school community and to challenge gender stereotypes and norms on a wider scale.
- Avoid where possible gender segregated activities and where this cannot be avoided, allow the young person to access the activity that corresponds to their gender identity.

- Challenge bullying and discrimination.
- Promote positive attitudes to gender diversity by including trans issues within activities relating to discrimination, hate crime, diversity, inclusion, SRE and PSHE.

4. Safeguarding

4.1. The very fact that a young person may be transgender is in itself **not** a safeguarding issue. However, the school recognises that young people who are trans are more likely to face emotional challenges. More than half of all trans young people have deliberately harmed themselves at some point and more than one in four have attempted to take their own life. Lister school therefore considers it important that young people and their families are signposted to the appropriate support services and made aware that such support is available. This *might* be:

- The in school counselling service - Place2Be
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) / CFCS (Child and Family Consultation Service)

4.2. Any support offered to a transgender child or young person starts with identifying their individual needs. This will be done by an allocated member of staff, whom the young person feels safest and most comfortable talking to (see section 8 for guidance on identifying needs). It must be understood that some trans people may not want any treatment. Some may choose to be known by a different name or to wear different clothes. However, most or all young trans people (and their families) will need some expert/ specialist support as they grow up and develop.

5. Practicalities

Assessment

- 5.1. A trans child or young person would benefit from an early assessment conversation to identify any additional needs arising from transgender issues and allow the young person to express their preferences for how they would like to move forward. With permission from the young person this information can be shared with the appropriate staff or agencies and therefore avoid the young person having to repeat themselves. When completing the assessment particular attention should be paid to emotional health and wellbeing and family and social relationships. An action plan must be the outcome of this assessment to address these issues and ensure the young person has a robust support plan. The allocated member of staff should always be someone who knows and gets on well with the child / young person. (See section 8 for the assessment form).

Adjustments to be considered

- 5.2. **Terminology and language** The correct terminology and language should be used and in order to do this there may need to be some education in lessons around sexual orientation and gender so that staff and pupils have a clear understanding that sexual orientation and gender identity are two completely different things. For the matter of fairness and inclusion it is extremely important that the correct gender, name and pronouns are used correctly to address transgender pupils.
- 5.3. **Names and pronoun change** Respecting a child or young person's request to change name and pronoun is crucial in supporting and validating that young

person's identity. Some transgender children and young people may wish to change their name to make it in line with their chosen identity. Although they may not have changed their name legally, individuals have the right to choose the name by which they are known by staff and fellow pupils. More information on changing names on birth certificates can be found at www.deedpoll.org.uk/CanABirthCertificateBeChanged.html. Some young people may wish to change their gender on SIMS and the school register. [The School Census guidance](#), in the section titled 'Pupil Characteristics' states the following:

- *The gender of the pupil in the format of 'M' (Male) or 'F' (Female). In exceptional circumstances, a school may be unsure as to which gender should be recorded for a particular pupil. Where this occurs, gender is recorded according to the wishes of the pupil and / or parent.*

Written consent should be sought from the parent before proceeding with this.

5.4. **School Uniform** Transgender students will be expected to follow the School Uniform Policy, which covers uniform, makeup and jewellery and hairstyles. There is a generally broad range of uniform available for both genders (i.e. girls and boys can wear trousers and all students must wear a blazer, shirt and tie etc.). Students may wear the uniform of the gender they identify with if they wish.

5.5. **Letters Home**

Consideration should be given to using the preferred pronoun in letters that are sent home, the school should also give thought to the child's preferred name being used in correspondence home if this is what the young person chooses. The school should be aware that some parents may not know of their child's preferred name and be sensitive to this.

5.6. **School Toilet Facilities** The school makes gender neutral toilets available to all young people to avoid embarrassment or having to 'come out' to peers or staff. However, if a young person identifies as male or female they are permitted to use the facilities that fit with their gender.

5.7. Physical Education Sports and Physical Education is a key aspect of the national curriculum and the physical and mental well-being of young people. Physical Education develops pupil's competence and confidence to take part in a range of physical activities that become a central part of their lives, both in and out of school. A Transgender student has the same right to Physical Education as other young people. With regard to Transgender students, there should be reasonably few, if any, issues regarding participation within the sports of their true gender. There may be sports where, as puberty develops, transgender girl participants may have a physical advantage over other girls but this should not present a problem within a carefully and sensitively managed lesson context. The issue of physical risk within certain sports should also be managed properly within the lesson context rather than preventing young Transgender people from participating (which would be discriminatory). The physical implications for a young person should be considered on a case by case basis.

- **Changing Room Facilities** - The use of changing room facilities will also be carefully considered. Facilities for Transgender pupils will be sensitive to their needs and also recognise the needs and sensitivities of other students. When competing at another school or outside venue, school staff must ensure there is appropriate sensitive provision available.
- **Swimming lessons** - The pupil should be given the choice as to whether they wish to partake in swimming lessons or not. If the trans pupil wishes to partake in swimming lessons then a risk assessment of the changing facilities should be completed. There must be careful consideration, in consultation with the pupil and in line with the health and safety policy of the leisure centre or swimming pools health and safety procedures. For example, it may be against health and safety regulations to wear a t-shirt in the swimming pool and therefore would be more appropriate for a transgender boy pupil to wear an all in one wetsuit or similar.
- **Competitions** - If a young person wishes to participate in sporting competitions this will need to be managed on a case by case basis and through seeking advice from the regulatory national governing body.

- Curriculum lessons - This should involve the young person meeting with their key member of staff and the Head of PE to agree a plan for their PE curriculum for the term or year ahead. The young person should be encouraged to engage in as wide a variety of sport as possible but may not wish to engage in contact sports for example. In such instances adaptations will be made to the curriculum pathway being followed by the young person to support their needs.

5.8. School Attendance Less favourable treatment relating to absences arising from gender reassignment is unlawful if: the treatment is less favourable than if it had been due to sickness or injury. Lister Community School will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate absence requests for any treatment or appointments with external sources in line with their absence policy. It is possible that the young person may be accessing support from outside of school so provision must be made in order for the student to be absent from school but confidentiality must be maintained at all times when complying with absence procedures. Sensitive care will be taken when recording the reason for absence. The young person may need time off for a medical appointment and it should be recorded as an M code rather than being off sick.

5.9. Vaccinations Lister Community School will allow any gender specific vaccinations to be carried out at the GP's surgery in order to eliminate any embarrassment.

5.10. Residential Trips Careful consideration and preparation is needed where a transgender pupil is taking part in a residential trip – to exclude a transgender pupil would be contravening the Equality Act. The sleeping arrangements will need to be thought about carefully before the trip takes place Risk assessments should be carried out prior to residential trips so that reasonable adjustments can be made to allow the pupil to participate.

5.11. Bullying This Policy seeks to provide a broad overview of the needs of transgender children / young people and their families. Lister Community School has a robust anti-bullying policy. In line with this policy, transphobia incidents will be recorded

and dealt with in the same manner as other incidents that are motivated by prejudice, e.g. racist or homophobic incidents.

6. Confidentiality

General Data Protection Regulation 2016

6.1. Information about a person's Transgender status is considered 'sensitive personal data' and is subject to tighter controls than other personal data. Explicit consent is required before it can be processed.

- Personal data must be looked after properly following the eight data protection principles, which include ensuring personal data is accurate, secure and processed fairly and lawfully.
- Failure to change a person's title, name and gender when requested could lead to the following offences under the Act.
 - Disclosure of personal information that is used, held or disclosed unfairly, or without proper security
 - Failure to ensure personal information is accurate and up-to-date

6.2. All people have a right to privacy. This includes the right to keep private one's trans status or gender non-conforming presentation at school. Information about a child, 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 child or young person's transgender status or gender non-conforming presentation to others, including parents/carers and other members of the school community unless legally required to do so or because the child or parent/carer has given permission for them to do so.

6.3. Staff need to be careful about discussing the trans gender child/young person beyond the confines of the school. Trans children/young people and staff have the right to discuss and express their gender identity openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much to share information. When contacting the parent or carer of a trans child or young person, school personnel should use the child or young person's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to their gender assigned at birth unless the child, young person, parent, or carer has specified otherwise.

7. Dealing with the questions of staff, children, families and the wider community

7.1. There may be many questions that are asked by various people and it is important to be as clear and informative as possible. However, every circumstance is different, due to the unique experience of individual children and their families. The Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIRES) have produced some helpful training tools which can be used in school. Staff and governors can also use the materials as part of their Continuing Professional Development. The resources can be found at


<https://www.gires.org.uk/what-we-do/>

7.2. Resources and further support:

- Tavistock and Portman Clinic- Gender Identity Development Service
www.tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/childrenyoungpeoplegenderidentityissues
- Mermaids- Family and Individual Support for Teenagers and Children with Gender Identity Issues www.mermaidsuk.org.uk
- Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIRES) www.gires.org.uk
- Press for Change- The UK's Leading Expert in Transgender Law
www.pfc.org.uk
- NHS- Live Well. Support for Young People
www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Transhealth/Pages/Transyoungpeople.aspx
- Equality Advisory Service www.equalityadvisoryservice.com
- Stonewall - Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People - A guide for schools

7.3. Useful government guidance regarding [gender separation in mixed schools](#).

8. MEETING TEMPLATE

	DATE	
	TIME	
	STAFF MEMBER	
	STUDENT	
Considerations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Has the young person shared this with their family / peers? ● Do they feel supported? ● Do they want to share this with others? ● Would they like support in sharing this information with others? ● How would they like to be known? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do they have a preferred name? ○ Which pronouns would they like to use? ○ How would they like this communicated? ○ Do they wish these changes to be made to the register? ● School Uniform - are they aware that they can wear the uniform for the gender that they identify with? Discuss that there are gender neutral options if they prefer. ● Toilet facilities - are they aware that there are gender neutral toilets? They may also use the toilet facilities for the gender that they most identify with. ● PE Lessons* - how would the young person like to participate? Which group would they most like to attend? Are there any sports they need to avoid? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Changing facilities - where would they feel most comfortable changing? ○ Which group would they prefer to attend when engaging in swimming lessons? <p><i>*A follow up meeting should be arranged with the Head of PE, the young person and the supporting member of staff to ensure that this is put in place.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are they being supported by external agencies? Do they feel that this would be helpful? ● Are they undergoing treatment that will require absence or support (reasonable adjustments) from the school? ● Do they know who to approach in school if they become the subject of bullying? 		

ACTIONS FROM SUPPORTIVE CONVERSATION

Date	Action	Person	Notes