



Freedom Of Information Request

Date of receipt: 3rd April 2023

Freedom Of Information request regarding Gender and Safeguarding in Schools

Request:

Following the publication of a comprehensive report by the UK-based Policy Exchange think tank entitled 'Asleep at the Wheel - An Examination of Gender and Safeguarding in Schools'[i], we are requesting data from each States primary and secondary school, as set out in the following questions.

In the questions, 'sex' refers to a child's biological sex; gender refers to a perceived gender identity that a person may consider they have, that may or may not match their biological sex.

<https://policyexchange.org.uk/publication/asleep-at-the-wheel/>

1. Does the school inform parents or guardians as soon as a child expresses that he or she might be a different gender to their sex, or expresses a wish to change gender?
2. Does the school operate a policy of self-ID for gender identity; in other words, do they consider the gender of a child to be the gender that that child declares it to be, irrespective of the child's sex?
3. Who, if anyone, does the school consult before allowing a child to socially transition (i.e. identify as a different gender to their sex). Please give the roles of those consulted.
4. Does the school allow a child who identifies as a different gender to their sex to:
 - a) Use toilets according to their new gender, rather than their biological sex?
 - b) Use changing rooms according to their new gender, rather than their biological sex?
 - c) Take part in sporting activities according to their new gender, rather than their biological sex in circumstances where sports are separated into boys and girls?

5. Does the school require other children to refer to children who have socially transitioned by their new name and preferred pronouns?

6. Which of the following ideas does the school either teach or support?

- a) That people have a gender identity that may be different from their biological sex.
- b) That it is possible for people or children to be 'born in the wrong body'.
- c) That a person who self-identifies as a man or a woman should be treated as they identify in all circumstances, even when this does not match their biological sex.

7. In the last 36 months, has the school worked with any external provider (either charity or commercial organisation) to provide lessons or resources that include gender identity? If so, please give the name of the provider.

8. Please provide copies of all presentations, leaflets, worksheets and other materials that are used in the school, as well as a list of library books that reference gender identity.

Response provided by the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture:

Unless otherwise stated, the following responses apply to all States-maintained schools.

1. Does the school inform parents or guardians as soon as a child expresses that he or she might be a different gender to their sex, or expresses a wish to change gender?

Our guidance on gender identity for schools states that staff should engage with the student and their parents/carers regarding any proposed change in name and/or pronoun. This engagement includes discussions around how this information will be relayed to staff and students and how the student will be known on the school systems that support registers, letters, and reports.

If a young person is referred to an outside agency for support, the referral process requires that parents/carers are made aware of the referral.

2. Does the school operate a policy of self-ID for gender identity; in other words, do they consider the gender of a child to be the gender that that child declares it to be, irrespective of the child's sex?

Our guidance on gender identity supports students who self-identify, but please see the response to Question 1.

3. Who, if anyone, does the school consult before allowing a child to socially transition (i.e. identify as a different gender to their sex). Please give the roles of those consulted.

Our schools are not the decision-makers about whether or not a young person is 'socially transitioning'. Schools will work alongside the young person and their parents/carers and other support services. Usually, the school staff involved will be those holding responsibility for pastoral support and inclusion. Specialist support might be provided by, for example, Education Mental Health Practitioners.

4. Does the school allow a child who identifies as a different gender to their sex to:

a) Use toilets according to their new gender, rather than their biological sex?

Our schools have either not encountered such a request or, where a student has expressed a preference against using toilet facilities that accord with their biological sex, they are asked to use facilities that are specifically non-gendered. There is one exception to this where one primary-aged child has been permitted to use the facilities according to their preferred gender.

b) Use changing rooms according to their new gender, rather than their biological sex?

In the primary phase, other than for swimming lessons, students do not use changing rooms; however, separate accessible spaces are available, and staff encourage students to use them if necessary.

When changing for swimming lessons, sea spaces are provided for students who, for various reasons, prefer not to change alongside peers of the same biological sex.

In the secondary phase, separate spaces are provided for students who, for various reasons, prefer not to change alongside peers of the same biological sex. In one school, students do not change for PE in school as they arrive in and wear their kit for the whole day so the question does not arise.

c) Take part in sporting activities according to their new gender, rather than their biological sex in circumstances where sports are separated into boys and girls?

In the primary phase, during PE/Games lessons students are taught in whole class groups and are not separated into boys and girls, so the question does not arise.

In the secondary phase, schools operate an element of student choice over the types of activities undertaken. Schools also operate at least some mixed groupings for Sports/PE lessons.

Where students are taking part in competitions, schools consult the individual sport's governing body guidelines.

5. Does the school require other children to refer to children who have socially transitioned by their new name and preferred pronouns?

We do not have a policy 'requiring' students to affirm a student's new identity, but students are asked to respect diversity including any requests from their peers about using their preferred name or pronouns. Generally, students are supportive of their peers' requests should the situation arise.

6. Which of the following ideas does the school either teach or support?

- a) That people have a gender identity that may be different from their biological sex.

We follow the guidance from the PSHE Association in the UK which incorporates the statutory guidance from the UK Government's Department for Education on relationships (primary phase), sex and relationships (secondary phase) and health. By year 7 (the first year of secondary school) students learn the meaning of LGBT+ and that 'trans' means a person whose gender identity differs from their biological sex.

- b) That it is possible for people or children to be 'born in the wrong body'.

When learning about LGBT+ in Secondary schools (specifically in years 7, 9 and 11), it is explained to students that some 'trans' people describe their experience as feeling like they were 'born in the wrong body'.

- c) That a person who self-identifies as a man or a woman should be treated as they identify in all circumstances, even when this does not match their biological sex.

Students are taught and encouraged to respect diverse identities - please see the response to Question 5.

7. In the last 36 months, has the school worked with any external provider (either charity or commercial organisation) to provide lessons or resources that include gender identity? If so, please give the name of the provider.

In the secondary phase, schools partner with the Youth Commission to deliver lessons where students learn about the LGBT+ community as part of the PSHCE curriculum.

8. Please provide copies of all presentations, leaflets, worksheets and other materials that are used in the school, as well as a list of library books that reference gender identity.

Our partner, the Youth Commission, delivers 3 different lessons in our secondary schools. The PSHCE adviser has checked these lessons to ensure they are appropriate and aligned with our curriculum. The PSHCE adviser also carries out annual lesson observations.

The Year 7 lesson is called 'Different families and diverse people'. The learning intentions are: to be aware and respectful of different kinds of families and relationships; and to understand that words can hurt and what sort of language is and isn't acceptable.

The Year 9 lesson is called 'Diverse identities'. The learning intentions are: to understand the difference between gender identity and sexual orientation; to understand the importance of showing respect for diversity in gender; and to recognise that questioning sexual / gender identity is OK.

The Year 11 lesson is also called 'Diverse identities'. The learning intentions are: to understand the difference between gender, biological sex and sexual orientation; to understand the importance of being respectful about diversity in gender, biological sex and sexual orientation; and to recognise how harmful homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic language can be.'

Attached to this reply are:

Appendix 1 – PSHE Association's Programme Builders for PSHE Education – Key Stages 1-5

Appendix 2 - Bailiwick Primary PSHE Programme Builder – Key Stages 1-2

Appendix 3 - Bailiwick Secondary PSHE Programme Builder – Key Stages 3-4

Appendix 4 – LGBT Year 7 Presentation

Appendix 5 – LGBT Year 9 Presentation

Appendix 6 – LGBT Year 9 Presentation

Appendix 7 – Support Agency Booklet

Appendix 8 – Learning about Sex and Relationships leaflet for Primary Schools

Three of our primary school libraries include combinations of the following titles:

- Julian is a Mermaid (Jessica Love)
- Julian at the Wedding (Jessica Love)
- Jamie (Olly Pike)

Our secondary schools have expansive libraries and we ensure that all books within them are age-appropriate. We consider that to review the content of all books within our school libraries (fact and fiction) in order to ascertain whether they contain any reference to gender identity amounts to a 'voluminous request' under section 2.9 of the States of Guernsey Freedom of Information Code. We would be happy to provide lists of all books in our secondary school libraries should that be helpful to your enquiry.

Please note that our policies and processes will be reviewed in light of guidance from the UK Government's Department for Education which is due to be published before the end of the current academic year.