

# STONEWALL SCHOOLS GUIDANCE: A CRITICAL REVIEW

# Stonewall Schools Guidance: A Critical Review

## Summary of Key Findings

We have analysed all Stonewall guidance for schools from 2015 onwards. We looked for evidence of:

1. Biological inaccuracies and misinformation likely to confuse children
2. Legal inaccuracies including information likely to mislead schools
3. Promotion of ideology and reinforcement of sex stereotypes
4. Serious safeguarding concerns
5. Compelled speech and belief

We found that Stonewall guidance eschews biological and scientific facts in favour of a message to children that their inner feelings override their biological sex and that being a boy or a girl is a matter of personal choice. The guidance presents the idea that everyone is born with an innate, internal 'gender identity' as fact, that it is this feeling which defines human beings as either men or women, and that biological sex is merely 'assigned' at birth and may be 'reassigned' at will. Stonewall does not offer any scientific evidence to back this claim.

We found legal inaccuracies and information about legal duties which would potentially be misleading for schools, including misinformation and misrepresentation of protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 (EA2010) which could confuse schools about the legal rights of different groups. Conflicts of rights, for example the right of girls to single-sex facilities, are hidden, so schools would be in breach of their Public Sector Equality Duty by failing to show 'due regard' if they implemented Stonewall policies without considering the impact on other protected groups.

Stonewall guidance fails to inform schools that women and girls (including lesbians) are legally defined and protected as the female sex in the EA2010 under the protected characteristic 'sex.' Under the banner of 'LGBT' Stonewall changes the legal meaning of same-sex orientation and extends legal protection to the concept of 'gender identity.' Lesbians have their legal status as same-sex oriented females removed by the redefinition of same-sex attraction as 'same gender' orientation, allowing men to demand recognition both as 'women' and as 'lesbians'.

Stonewall guidance advises schools to adopt 'affirmation' and social transition as the only approach towards children with gender dysphoria without including information that this approach is new and experimental, and without including evidence to support their advice. The guidance advises the encouragement of children towards transition and normalises medical

transition. It offers no alternative approach and no alternative explanation of a child's distress or confusion about being a girl or being a boy other than that the child is 'transgender.' This means that a boy who thinks he is a girl is told by teachers that he really is a girl.

Stonewall guidance advises withholding information from parents about the transition of their child at school, and secrecy from other children about a child's sex, allowing boys to access girls' toilets, changing-rooms and overnight accommodation without the girls' knowledge or consent. This advice also extends to male teachers whose sex will not be disclosed to girls or their parents.

Stonewall school guidance, if followed, would establish a 'self-ID of sex' system applied to children in schools. There is no such system in wider society. Under the claim of promoting several laudable aims – 'LGBT inclusion', 'anti-LGBT bullying' and 'challenging gender stereotypes' - what the Stonewall guidance actually teaches children is a controversial political idea: "transwomen are women". This idea – "you are the sex you say you are" - is presented as fact. The guidance compels every child to believe it and change their language to reflect that belief, or be accused of 'transphobic bullying.' The Education Act 1996 specifically forbids this kind of political indoctrination of children in schools.

The latest guide (March 2020) shows the development of Stonewall's language over the five year period. From changing 'same-sex' orientation to 'same-gender' orientation, Stonewall in their new guide repeatedly cuts out the word 'sexual' altogether, and uses only the term 'orientation' throughout the guide. For example: "Encourage open discussions about orientation and gender identity with learners." (p. 31)

From changing the meaning of the words 'man' and 'woman' to 'identities' held by either sex, in the latest guide Stonewall also changes the meaning of 'sexual orientation' to an 'identity': "SEXUAL ORIENTATION is a person's sexual attraction to other people, or lack thereof. Along with romantic orientation, this forms a person's orientation identity." (p. 68)

The new guide also adds to previous definitions of 'transphobia' to include "refusing to accept" someone's 'gender identity', in other words refusing to accept that a man is a woman.

The latest guide also goes much further than previous guides in giving advice that raises serious safeguarding concerns. It gives unqualified extensive advice about the most vulnerable children: children with SEND, including autism. It also emphasises and extends the encouragement of children to transition; repeatedly stresses the importance of keeping secrets from parents and other children; dedicates much more space to advice on the direction of children towards Stonewall-approved external support groups and online sources of information; and provides information to teachers that they can refer a child to the Tavistock GIDS where over the age of 16 they do not need parental consent. The guide provides this advice while stressing the duty of a school to withhold all this information from parents if the child requests it.

We have reviewed the following guidance documents:

An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People: A Guide for Schools (2015)

Getting Started: A toolkit for preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in secondary schools (2015)

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/resources/getting-started-toolkit-secondary-schools>

Getting Started: A toolkit for preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in primary schools (2016)

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/resources/getting-started-toolkit-primary-schools>

Getting Started: Celebrating difference and challenging gender stereotypes in the Early Years Foundation Stage (0 – 5yrs) (2017)

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/resources/getting-started-toolkit-early-years>

Stonewall School Report (2017)

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/school-report-2017>

Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum: A Guide for Secondary Schools (2018)

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/resources/creating-lgbt-inclusive-secondary-curriculum>

Primary best practice guide (2018)

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/resources/primary-best-practice-guide-2018>

10 Steps to tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language in your school (2018)

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/resources/tens-steps-tackling-homophobic-biphobic-and-transphobic-language-your-school>

Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum for Primary Schools (2019)

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/about-us/news/lgbt-inclusive-curriculum-guide-launched-uk-primary-schools>

An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People (2020)

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/resources/introduction-supporting-lgbt-children-and-young-people>

Note: An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People: A Guide for Schools (2015) has been replaced with the new version (2020) and is no longer available on the website. Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum for Primary Schools (2019) is now available only to Stonewall members.

## Biological inaccuracies

*The following information is factually incorrect and likely to mislead and confuse children. Sex is not 'assigned' at birth, it is observed and recorded. 'Male' and 'female' are not the 'main' sexes but the only ones. There is no scientific evidence to support the idea that all human beings have a 'gender identity' meaning an innate internal sense of being male or female.*

*There is no basis for the claim that this feeling overrides biological sex in determining whether a child is a girl or a boy, words that have legally and biologically defined meanings. The words 'male', 'female', 'boy' and 'girl' refer to a child's sex (an immutable reality) not their 'gender' (a subjective concept). Stonewall fails to define how it 'feels' to be a boy or a girl and does not explain that feelings are subjective and do not change material reality. Stonewall guidance consistently uses the term 'gender' when the correct word is 'sex'.*

"Gender: Babies are given a gender when they are born, for example 'male' or 'female', 'boy' or 'girl.'"

*(Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum for Primary Schools, 2019, p. 37)*

*(Getting Started, Primary Schools, 2016, p. 4)*

"Everyone has a gender identity. This is the gender that someone feels they are. This might be the same as the gender they were given as a baby, but it might not. They might feel like they are a different gender, or they might not feel like a boy or a girl."

*(Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum for Primary Schools, 2019, p. 37)*

"Gender Identity: a person's internal sense of their own gender, whether male, female, non-binary, or something else"

"Sex: either of the two main categories (male and female) assigned to a person on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions."

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 42)*

"Explain that everyone has a sexual orientation and gender identity"

*(Getting Started, Secondary Schools, 2015, p. 34)*

"Gender identity: Everyone has a gender identity"

*(Getting Started, Primary Schools, 2016, p. 4)*

"Babies are given a gender when they are born. Trans is a word that describes people who feel the gender they were given as a baby doesn't match the gender they feel themselves to be, for example someone who is given the gender 'boy' but doesn't feel that way."

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p.5)*

“We are all assigned a sex at birth (male or female), but our gender identity is our internal sense of gender.”

*(Getting Started, Early Years, 2017, p. 38)*

“Whether it’s when you make your PSHE sessions trans inclusive by referring to ‘most girls’ or ‘most boys’ when learning about body parts and puberty or when you learn about celebrating differences, your PSHE curriculum is full of opportunities to make links with LGBT themes.”

*(Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum for Primary Schools, 2019, p. 35)*

“GENDER IDENTITY is a person’s innate sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else (see non-binary below), which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 67)*

“SEX is assigned to a person on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p.68)*

“When they are born, babies are labelled as a boy or a girl. When some people get older, they realise that the label they were given was wrong.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p.12)*

## Legal Inaccuracies

*The following guidance gives incorrect information about a school’s legal duties under the EA2010.*

### 1. Single-sex protections and rights

*Single sex facilities and services are lawful under EA2010 exemptions. Stonewall gives inaccurate and misleading guidance about single-sex toilets, changing-rooms and residential accommodation. EA2010, Sch 3, Part 7, s28, makes clear that the provision of single-sex services does not equate to gender reassignment discrimination, provided the provision is a proportionate means to achieve a legitimate aim.*

*Single-sex sports are protected in both EA2010 and the Gender Recognition Act (GRA2004), 19, (1) which states that (2) restriction is lawful if it is necessary to secure (a) fair competition, or (b)*

*safety of competitors. It may not be justifiable only in primary schools before children have reached puberty.*

*The latest guide goes further in suggesting that single-sex schools are no longer allowed. This is legally incorrect; schools may lawfully restrict admissions to one sex only under EA2010 exemptions. This has not changed.*

“Staff should work together with each trans young person to ask them what would make them feel comfortable and discuss levels of confidentiality, and ensure they have access to uniforms, activities and facilities they feel most comfortable in.”

*(Stonewall School Report, 2017, p. 39)*

#### Toilets and changing-rooms

“A trans young person may wish to use the toilets and changing rooms of their self-identified gender rather than of their assigned sex. Schools should make sure that a trans student is supported to do so and be aware that this is a legal requirement under the Equality Act.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 21)*

“It is important to ask a trans child or young person which facilities they would feel most comfortable using.

Schools, colleges and settings should ensure that a trans child or young person is supported to use the toilets and changing rooms they feel most comfortable with, including the facilities matching their gender.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 45)*

“Under the Equality Act a trans child or young person can use the toilets and changing rooms that match their gender.

Under the Act, a school can only prevent a trans child or young person from using the facilities matching their gender if they can demonstrate that doing so is a ‘proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim’, which is a high legal bar to clear.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 46)*

#### Residential trips

“Ensure trans young people are able to sleep in the room of their self-identified gender.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 21)*

“Ensure that trans children and young people are able to access residential or boarding accommodation they feel most comfortable in, which could be accommodation aligned with their gender identity, or gender-neutral or private space.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 46)*

### Sports

“It is important a trans young person is able to participate in sports teams consistent with their gender identity, unless there are reasonable safety concerns. This is unlikely for most sports and age groups under 18.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 21)*

“It is important a trans young person is able to fully participate in sports teams consistent with their gender identity, unless there are reasonable safety concerns. This is unlikely for most sports and age groups under 18.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 46)*

### Single-sex schools

Under the Equality Act 2010, a trans child or young person is also able to attend a single-sex school, college or setting that matches their gender identity (unless the school, college or setting demonstrates that denying them access is a ‘proportionate means to achieve a legitimate aim’, which is a high legal bar to clear). This means that a trans boy can attend a boys’ school, and a trans girl can attend a girls’ school.

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 47)*

### “Social transitioning at school/college/setting

The child or young person wears uniform that they feel comfortable in and that they feel reflects their gender identity, and is able to use the facilities they have asked to use. If single-sex groups are used, either within a lesson for PE, the child or young person is included in the group that most closely reflects their gender identity or that they feel most comfortable with. Talk to them about which group they might want to be a part of.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 51)*

## 2. Protected characteristic ‘gender reassignment’

*In the following examples Stonewall changes the protected characteristic ‘gender reassignment’ to ‘gender identity’ which is not a protected characteristic in the EA2010.*

“Single equality policy: Include a statement on ‘promoting respect and equality across all protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender identity’”

*(Getting Started, Secondary Schools, 2015, p. 14)*

“THE EQUALITY ACT 2010 requires schools to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.”

*(10 Steps to Tackling HBT Language in your School, 2018, p. 7)*



“Your policy should define bullying and outline the grounds on which it can take place, including on the grounds of the protected characteristics (sexual orientation, gender identity) under the Equality Act 2010”

*(10 Steps to Tackling HBT Language in your School, 2018, p. 9)*

### 3. Protected characteristic ‘sexual orientation’

*The protected characteristic ‘sexual orientation’ refers specifically to ‘sex’ and is defined in the EA2010 as sexual attraction towards people of the same sex, the opposite sex, or both sexes. Stonewall guidance fails to correctly define this protected characteristic by replacing the legal term ‘sex’ with the word ‘gender’ which is not a protected characteristic and which is, by Stonewall’s definition, a person’s identity, unrelated to their biological sex. This allows a man to define himself as a ‘lesbian’ and makes lesbians ‘transphobic’ if they don’t accept this.*

*In 2020 the guidance introduces a new umbrella term ‘orientation’, a characteristic that is “not limited to lesbian, gay, bi, ace and straight”, and characterises sexual orientation as a part of a person’s “orientation identity.” According to Stonewall’s latest guidance men and women are identities and a person’s sexual orientation is now also a (limitless) identity.*

“Homosexual: this might be considered a more medical term used to describe someone who has an emotional romantic and/or sexual attraction towards someone of the same gender.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 42)*

*(Getting Started, Primary Schools, 2016, p. 4)*

*(Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum for Primary Schools, 2019, p. 40)*

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 67)*

“Gay: The word gay refers to someone who falls in love with, or wants to have a relationship or partnership with, people who are the same gender as them.”

*(Getting Started, Primary Schools, 2016, p. 4)*

“A person is bi (bisexual) if they are attracted to more than one gender.”

*(Getting Started, Early Years, 2017, p. 38)*

“A straight or heterosexual person is someone who falls in love with, or wants to have a relationship with, people who are a different gender to them but not people who are the same gender as them.”

*(Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum for Primary Schools, 2019, p. 37)*

“Sexual orientation refers to a person’s emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to another person.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 9)*

*(Getting Started, Primary Schools, 2016, p. 4)*

*(Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum for Primary Schools, 2019, p. 40)*

“DEFINITIONS IN THE EQUALITY ACT:

Sexual orientation refers to a person’s emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to another person.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 19)*

“BI is an umbrella term used to describe a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender. Bi people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including, but not limited to, bisexual, pan, queer, and some other non-monosexual and non-monoromantic identities.”

“GAY refers to a man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. It is also a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality – some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.”

“LESBIAN refers to a woman who has a romantic and/ or sexual orientation towards women. Some non-binary people may also identify with this term.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 67)*

“PAN is a word which refers to a person whose romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited by sex or gender.”

“ORIENTATION is an umbrella term describing a person’s attraction to other people. This attraction may be sexual (sexual orientation) and/or romantic (romantic orientation).

These terms refers [sic] to a person’s sense of identity based on their attractions, or lack thereof.

Orientations include, but are not limited to, lesbian, gay, bi, ace and straight.”

“SEXUAL ORIENTATION is a person’s sexual attraction to other people, or lack thereof. Along with romantic orientation, this forms a person’s orientation identity.

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 68)*

## 4. Protected characteristics ‘sex’ and ‘gender reassignment’: misleading information

*Stonewall sometimes lists the EA2010 protected characteristics correctly but subsequently misrepresents them in anti-discrimination and anti-bullying guidance. The first example here, having initially listed the protected characteristic ‘sex’, fails to define this characteristic as meaning discrimination against boys or girls on the basis of being male or female. The second example substitutes the protected characteristics ‘sex’ and ‘gender reassignment’ with ‘gender’ and ‘gender identity.’*

“The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society based on several characteristics, including their sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. This means that settings are breaking the law if they discriminate against:

- Children with LGBT family members, including same-sex or trans parents
- Children who don’t conform to gender norms
- Children who are trans or who are questioning their gender identity”

*(Getting Started, Early Years, 2017, p. 6)*

Gender (sexist bullying)

Gender identity (transphobic bullying)

*(Getting Started, Secondary Schools, 2015, p. 10, p. 15 & p. 18)*

*(Getting Started, Primary Schools, 2016, p. 10 & p. 28)*

“Ofsted inspectors are explicitly directed to look at a school’s efforts to tackle bullying based on sexual orientation and gender identity.”

*(Getting Started, Secondary Schools, 2015, p. 5)*

*(Getting Started, Primary Schools, 2016, p. 5)*

“Ensure their staff policies explicitly prohibit bullying, harassment and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.”

*(Getting Started, Early Years, 2017, p. 26)*

## 5. Extension of Equality Act protections

*The protected characteristic ‘gender reassignment’ is defined in the EA2010 as relating to ‘transsexual persons.’ It does not refer to a range of people with various ‘gender identities.’ Cross-dressers and people who identify themselves as ‘non-binary’, ‘gender queer’, ‘gender fluid’ or any other gender identity are not protected or defined in the EA2010. ‘Gender identity’ is not*

referenced or defined in either the EA2010 or the GRA2004. Stonewall guidance does not make this clear.

*Reading Stonewall school guidance would potentially mislead teachers into believing that, as these categories are defined and included under the banner of 'trans', all are protected characteristics in the EA2010. Schools have no legal duty to include a range of individual 'gender identities' in their Equalities policy.*

“Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) transgender, cross dresser, non-binary, gender queer.”  
*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 42)*  
*(Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum for Primary Schools, 2019, p. 40)*  
*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 68)*

“Gender fluid describes a person who does not identify as solely a man/ boy or a woman/girl, but may feel more like a combination of, or move between or beyond either/or. They may feel like neither, both, or move between the two as they feel comfortable.”  
*(Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum for Primary Schools, 2019, p. 39)*

“Not everyone identifies as ‘male’ or ‘female’ Sometimes, people assume that being trans is about feeling you are the ‘opposite’ gender. This is true for some trans people, but not for others. This assumption makes things difficult for those who identify outside of ‘male’ or ‘female’, for example non-binary young people. A non-binary young person may need some different things to feel comfortable at school to, for example, a trans young person who identifies as ‘male’”  
*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 18)*

“Remember to teach children that ‘they’, ‘them’ and ‘their’ can be singular as well as plural. You could use it as an opportunity to learn that a lot of non-binary people prefer not to be referred to as ‘he’ or ‘she.’”  
*(Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum for Primary Schools, 2019, p. 15)*

“NON-BINARY is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn’t sit comfortably with ‘man’ or ‘woman’. Non-binary identities are varied and can include people who identify with some aspects of binary identities, while others reject them entirely.”  
*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 68)*

“Trans identities are diverse. Trans children and young people may identify in lots of different ways.

Each child or young person's transition is different and unique. Staff should be led by them and avoid making assumptions."

"Not everyone identifies as 'male' or 'female'. Sometimes, people assume that being trans is about feeling you are the 'opposite' gender. This is true for some trans people, but not for others. This assumption makes things difficult for those who identify outside of 'male' or 'female', for example non-binary people. A non-binary child or young person may need different support to help them feel comfortable than, for example, a trans boy."  
(*An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 43*)

## Promotion of ideology and sex stereotyping

### 1. Conflation of the words 'sex' and 'gender.'

*The words 'sex' and 'gender' mean very different things. In guidance for schools it is critical that these two words are correctly defined and used accurately. 'Sex' is a protected characteristic which legally defines and protects girls as the female sex. Stonewall guidance consistently uses the term 'gender' in place of 'sex.'*

*Conflating the two terms makes it impossible to distinguish between girls, and boys whose 'gender identity' is 'female', and therefore impossible to separate the protected characteristics 'sex' and 'gender reassignment' and correctly identify discrimination against women and girls, or their sex-based rights. By conflating the two terms Stonewall conflates two separate issues: distinctions between girls and boys based on gender stereotypes (eg. dress codes, curriculum choices, personal interests) and distinctions based on sex (eg. toilets, changing-rooms, sexism and discrimination).*

Lots of things in schools are often separated by gender, including toilets, changing rooms and, sometimes, uniforms."

(*An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 13*)

(*An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 47*)

"Sometimes the terms 'sex' and 'gender' are used interchangeably to mean 'male' or 'female'"

(*An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 42*)

(*An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 68*)

"For example, when discussing pronouns, highlight their importance and what they tell us about a person's gender, linking to respecting people's choice of pronouns (including gender-neutral pronouns such as they/them)."

(*Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum for Secondary Schools, 2018, p. 7*)

“SEXISM is the belief that one sex or gender is superior to another, or actions or attitudes that stereotype, prejudice or discriminate against people based solely on their perceived sex or gender.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 68)*

## 2. Teaching ‘gender identity’ as fact

*The idea that everyone is born with an innate, internal ‘gender identity’ is a belief, not a fact. Stonewall guidance teaches the youngest children that ‘gender identity’ is an established fact and a defined reality synonymous with sexual orientation. Stonewall guidance uses the term ‘gender identity’ in place of sex to differentiate between girls and boys.*

“Make it clear that sex and relationship education is designed to prepare all students for the future, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.”

*(Getting Started, Secondary Schools, 2015, p. 14)*

“Do you celebrate difference, diversity and encourage pupils to be themselves in any of your lessons? For example, looking at families with same-sex parents, exploring the meaning of gender identity or looking at how we are all different with pupils.”

*(Getting Started, Primary Schools, 2016, p. 27)*

“Don’t make assumptions about sexual orientation and gender identity, either about pupils or in lesson topics. For example, don’t assume the gender identity of characters in a book”

“Schools should set specific and measurable equality objectives e.g. raising awareness of gender identity”

*(Primary Best Practice guide, 2018, p. 6)*

Discuss different sexual, emotional and romantic orientations, gender identities and issues that affect LGBT people in RSHE and PSHE (in a manner appropriate to their age and levels of understanding).

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 31)*

## 3. Sexism and stereotypes

*Stonewall guidance presents ‘gender identity’ as your ‘true self’ while sex is merely ‘assigned’ to you at birth. Minimising the importance and immutable reality of biological sex, and hiding the biological distinction between boys and girls harms girls more than boys. Hiding sex erases the possibility of sexual boundaries and means sexism is also hidden. In the first example below it is*

*noted that calling a boy 'gay' may be intended as derogatory, but not that calling a boy a 'girl' as an insult is misogynistic and sexist.*

*The idea of 'gender identity' stereotypes boys and girls by suggesting that a child who does not conform to gender stereotypes is 'transgender' or 'non-binary' and that everyone else conforms to gender stereotypes ("cisgender"). 'Stonewall's material suggests that challenging gender stereotypes equates to changing 'gender identity', and being bullied for being gender non-conforming is 'transphobic bullying.' The guidance reinforces sex stereotypes under the banner of challenging them. It suggests that schools should not distinguish between boys and girls (the two sexes) but make sure they represent "all genders."*

"Tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language and bullying

'You're such a girl.'

'That's so gay.'

But the use of gay in a derogatory manner in particular still equates being gay with something bad. Such negative connotations can have a long-term impact on children's self-esteem, so a consistent, zero-tolerance approach to the misuse of terminology is vital."

*(Primary Best Practice guide, 2018, p. 6)*

"When a young person comes out it is important to reinforce that they can be themselves and encourage them to feel positive about who they are."

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 12)*

"Research shows that some groups of people, including those who don't conform to gender stereotypes, are more likely to experience homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying."

*(10 Steps to Tackling HBT Language in your School, 2018, p. 24)*

"Start by addressing gender stereotypes using the ideas above. Then link to the ideas in this box.

Define a few key terms (e.g. gender identity, trans and non-binary) using glossaries in Stonewall guides"

*(10 Steps to Tackling HBT Language in your School, 2018, p. 25)*

"GENDER STEREOTYPES are the ways that people are commonly expected to behave in society according to their gender."

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 67)*

"Try to avoid making distinctions between boys and girls. For example, don't separate boys and girls for activities or use language such as 'boys and girls'"

*(Getting Started, Primary Schools, 2016, p. 33)*

“Cisgender refers to a person whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 42)*

*(Creating an LGBT Inclusive Curriculum for Primary Schools, 2019, p. 39)*

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 67)*

“In class, ask children and young people to discuss stereotypes of boys or girls and talk about how there is no such thing as a ‘typical girl’ or ‘typical boy’.

- Use these discussions as a starting point to explore the different ways we express our gender (for example through our clothes, hair, or the way we walk), what ‘gender identity’ means and that not everyone identifies as a boy or a girl.”

“Use your curriculum and displays to provide children and young people with visible role models who challenge gender stereotypes. Ensure that people of all genders are represented.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 29)*

## Serious Safeguarding Concerns

### 1. Withholding information from parents

*The first rule of safeguarding is never to promise confidentiality to a child, or ‘keep secrets.’ Statutory school guidance stresses the importance of working together with parents. Stonewall guidance encourages teachers to act alone and to encourage a child down a path which may have serious life-long medical consequences, without informing parents and even actively deceiving parents by hiding the fact that the school is treating the child as the opposite sex. The guidance advises an approach and actions which may be professionally dangerous.*

*The latest guide informs schools that they may refer a child to the Tavistock clinic without informing parents and that parental consent is not needed for ‘treatment’ for children over the age of 16. This could mean puberty blockers or cross-sex hormones.*

“Not all young people will want their parents/carers to know they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans, and for staff to discuss this with parents/carers without the young person’s consent would be a breach of confidentiality.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 13)*



“Not all children and young people will want their parents or carers to know they are LGBT. For staff to discuss this with parents or carers without the child or young person’s consent would be a breach of confidentiality.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 36)*

“Make sure all parents and carers know that LGBT issues are covered in school, but only discuss a child or young person’s identity with their parents or carers with the child or young person’s permission. A child or young person might not yet be ready for their parents or carers to know that they’re trans, be afraid about how they will react, or feel that they will not receive the support they need.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 25)*

“Children and young people should know that they can talk to staff in confidence if, for example:

They’re LGBT or unsure of their orientation or gender identity

They would like to, or have started to, take steps as part of their transition in school.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020 p. 35)*

“You should always maintain a child or young person’s confidentiality relating to their LGBT identity, unless there is a safeguarding concern. Some children or young people will already have ‘come out’ to their parents or carers, or the parent or carer might have raised their child’s identity with you. Other children or young people may not be ready to ‘come out’ to their parents or carers and it is important to respect this wish.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020 p. 35)*

“Respecting a trans young person’s confidentiality may require staff to use their assigned name and gender when contacting parents/carers or others.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 22)*

“Respecting a trans child or young person’s confidentiality may require staff to use their legal name and their sex assigned at birth when contacting parents, carers or others. It is important to discuss this with the learner so that they understand why this is the case.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020 p. 48)*

“If they want access to it, the Gender Identity Development Service (GIDS) offers social and medical support to trans children and young people. GIDS accept referrals from education professionals, health and social care professionals, and from support groups for any child or young person under 17 who is experiencing difficulties relating to their gender identity. Parental consent for any treatment is needed for under 16s.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 43)*

## 2. Keeping secrets about a person's sex from children and the school community

*The guidance also advises that as well as keeping parents in the dark, schools should keep a child's or a teacher's sex a secret from other children in the school. This would enable boys to access girls' private spaces without the girls' knowledge or consent. It would also enable adult males to work with young girls in sensitive or private situations without the knowledge or consent of girls or their parents.*

*Stonewall guidance uses the term 'outed' to suggest that the right to know a person's sex is synonymous with revealing that a person is gay. If a child or a teacher is being treated in school according to their 'gender identity', clearly their gender identity has already been disclosed. What the guidance means in reality is that a school must hide a person's sex, which constitutes a serious safeguarding risk for girls. Schools should not be hiding the sex of adults working with girls, or of pupils using girls' facilities, denying girls and their parents the right to give or withhold their consent to this. It would be a serious safeguarding risk for a school to pretend that a man is a woman and, by doing so, deceive girls and their parents.*

*"Explicitly state that disclosing someone's sexual orientation or gender identity, whether they are staff or students, without their consent is a breach of confidentiality."  
(Getting Started, Secondary Schools, 2015, p. 14)*

*"Make it clear that a pupil coming out as lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans does not constitute a safeguarding risk and the information should be treated as confidential."  
"Explicitly state that disclosing someone's sexual orientation or gender identity, whether they are staff or pupils, without their consent is a breach of confidentiality. This includes disclosures to a pupil's parents or carers."  
(Getting Started, Primary Schools, 2016, p. 14)*

*"Regardless of their age, a person's status as trans is private. Schools and colleges should not disclose information – such as details about a transition – that could reveal somebody's trans status to others, including parents or carers, staff, and anyone outside the school, college or setting."  
(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020 p. 47)*

*"OUTED is when a lesbian, gay, bi or trans person's sexual orientation or gender identity is disclosed to someone else without their consent."  
(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020 p. 48)*

“If a trans child or young person has already transitioned – perhaps at a previous school, college or setting – they might not feel a need to ‘come out’ as trans. For some people, being trans is a part of their history rather than part of who they are now. It’s important to respect and protect the confidentiality of a child or young person who does not want to be identified as trans to others.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020 p. 48)*

“For trans children and young people, concerns might include whether they’ll have access to toilets and changing rooms they feel comfortable in, or that staff or their peers might use the wrong pronouns for them. Some trans children and young people might wish to be ‘stealth’ at their new school, college or setting, meaning that they don’t want anyone to know that they’re trans.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020 p. 53)*

“Remember to maintain confidentiality about a new child or young person’s orientation or gender identity. Don’t assume that they want other members of staff to know, and ask before sharing any information.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020 p. 55)*

### 3. Inappropriate advice and diagnosis of children

*Stonewall are not medical or clinical professionals and are thus unqualified to provide guidance on an approach towards children who are experiencing confusion or unhappiness about being a girl or being a boy. They have no authority to advise on the best course of action for individual children with unique circumstances and histories. It is not appropriate or safe to advise a one-size-fits-all approach towards individual children.*

*Stonewall are not child psychologists or experts in the field of child and adolescent development and their interpretation of children’s words or behaviour is viewed through the lens of an ideological belief. Schools are instructed to interpret children’s actions and preferences through the same lens as Stonewall. In the latest guidance teachers are encouraged to consider a child may be ‘transgender’ by the clothes they wear, meaning that if a boy comes to school in a dress staff must consider whether he is really a girl. Schools have a duty to eliminate gender stereotypes and should not be encouraged to stereotype children by their clothing preferences.*

“Explain that, by contrast, a small minority of young people will truly and strongly feel that they are a different gender than the sex they were assigned at birth. If a child consistently, persistently and insistentlly identifies as a different gender to the sex they were assigned at birth, they can be directed to support.”

*(Getting Started, Early Years, 2017, p. 34)*

“Being trans isn’t a mental health issue. However, worries about discrimination or difficult feelings relating to their gender identity mean that some trans children and young people may experience mental distress.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 48)*

“Some children realise they are LGBT at primary school, and may come out then. We generally develop a sense of our gender early in our lives, so it is not uncommon for children to question their gender identity or realise they are trans when they are young.”

“Coming out: Younger pupils may tell you they are LGBT differently. Often, but not always, it will be their parents or carers that raise their child’s identity with you. A trans child may say ‘I feel like a girl’ or ‘I don’t feel like a boy’ rather than using the word ‘trans’. They may come to school wearing clothes not typically associated with their assigned sex.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 11)*

“A trans child or young person may want to talk to someone if they have started to transition, or if they feel confused or unhappy about their gender identity.”

“Some children or young people might not feel able to volunteer this information or be able to articulate it, so it is important to be aware of signs of distress. Staff can help by providing pastoral support or counselling within the school, college or setting, or signposting to external counselling or therapy services. It’s important to find a mental health professional equipped to understand and talk about gender identity, and with some knowledge about the experiences of trans children and young people.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 48)*

“A trans child or young person may make changes so they can look and feel the way that makes them comfortable and helps them be understood by others in their correct gender. The initial steps a trans person takes to live in the gender they identify as are often referred to as their ‘social transition’. These steps may include changing names and pronouns, telling friends and family, dressing differently, or changing official documents.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 57)*

## 4. Encouragement of children to transition

*Stonewall guidance advises schools to go much further than their duty to prevent discrimination, and into areas way beyond a teacher’s professional competence and expertise. A teacher is not a clinical psychologist and therefore not qualified to decide that it would be beneficial for an individual child to ‘socially transition’. Stonewall suggests that the only legitimate approach in schools is to encourage the child towards transition, including medical transition. Full social*

*transition is not advised by clinical professionals. It is not a school's role to encourage a child to believe they can change sex when this is impossible.*

“The public sector Equality Duty requires schools to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment. This includes supporting a child to socially transition or to be treated in their self-identified gender”

*(Primary Best Practice guide, 2018, p. 6)*

“There is no ‘best time’ for a trans child or young person to transition – they should be supported to do so if and when they are ready. They may take steps to transition gradually over a period of time, or choose a specific time to make several changes at once (for example to coincide with moving to a new school, college, or setting). All schools, colleges and settings (including single-sex schools) have a responsibility to support trans children or young people through a transition.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 57)*

“I think I want to take steps to live as the gender I know I am but I’m worried about how it will work at school.”

“The school is here to make sure things feel right for you. We can arrange a time to sit down and talk through all the options and different ways a transition might work at school. What do you think? There are lots of people who have transitioned at school – it is possible!”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 40)*

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 42)*

“As you’ve begun to make some changes it might be a good idea at some point for us to have a chat about anything else you would like to happen so we can make sure you have the support you need from us and others. What do you think?”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 41)*

“I’m glad you’ve come to talk to me. Most people feel much better when they feel they can be open about their sexual orientation/gender identity. How you feel about your sexual orientation/gender identity is a really important part of who you are. We will support you to be you.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 42)*

“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).”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 9)*

“A trans young person will transition so as to be understood by others in their self-identified gender and to look and feel the way that makes them comfortable. Most trans young people will want to take social steps to transition. A young person wanting to access hormone treatment as part of their transition will need to be referred to the gender identity development service.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 19)*

“For staff to consider:

- Is the young person seeking medical intervention and will they need time off for this?”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 25)*

“Children and young people may need support from school, college or setting staff while waiting for their initial appointment with GIDS, as there is a long waiting list. After the initial appointment, children and young people need to attend a number of assessment appointments with a multi-agency team. If appropriate, puberty blockers may then be offered to some trans young people. It is important to note that cross-sex hormone treatment is not offered until the age of 16, and gender reassignment surgery is not available to under 18s.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 43)*

## 5. Directing children towards external support groups

*The latest guide in particular stresses the importance of getting children to external trans support groups, access to online or telephone advice and Stonewall-approved information they can access anonymously. Stonewall’s approved list of resources, including Mermaids and Gendered Intelligence, will only further reinforce and affirm a girl as a boy, or a boy as a girl. There is no neutral support offered.*

*In place of professional help for issues of body-hatred, gender dysphoria or the confusions of adolescence, children are directed to social justice lobby groups with an ideological agenda. The people leading and working in these groups tend to be trans people, parents of ‘trans kids’ or youth workers, not mental health professionals. All will reinforce the idea that ‘some girls have penises’ and encourage young people to believe that their ‘gender identity’ is their ‘authentic self.’*

*If schools are directing children to external support groups they must ensure that all staff are DBS-checked and have appropriate training, including up-to-date safeguarding training.*

“I don’t know what I want to do – I need to think some more. I just know that I don’t feel happy and right the way I am at the moment.”

“That’s okay and it’s good to take some time to think things over. I will point you in the direction of some information that might be useful. Why don’t you come and talk to me once you’ve had a look?”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 40)*

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 42)*

“For staff to consider:

- Does the young person have the right support around them? Are they experiencing any problems with peers?
- Would they like to access a youth group or contact any organisations that could be helpful?”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 19)*

“Use local networks and Stonewall’s *What’s in my area?* database and *Info Service* to find out what’s running in the local community. You could also support your children and young people to set up diversity, equality or peer support groups in your school, college or setting.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 24)*

“Ensure that learners are able to access information in an anonymous or confidential way, for example with displays in corridors, leaflets in common rooms or on the school website.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020 p. 25)*

“A child or young person who has come out, or who is unsure of their orientation or gender identity, may like a space outside school, college or your setting to socialise with other children and young people with similar experiences. Youth services for LGBT children and young people – such as groups, volunteer schemes and youth-led projects – can be a great way for LGBT children and young people to meet others.”

“Staff can search for local services for LGBT children and young people by using Stonewall’s *What’s in my area?* Database”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 36)*

“Make sure that your computer network’s firewall settings ensure that children and young people are able to access age-appropriate websites which could offer support. In particular you should check that the terms ‘lesbian’, ‘gay’, ‘bi’ and ‘trans’ are not blocked.

Make sure all children and young people know how they can access services offering face-to-face, phone or online counselling and/or support in the local area.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 37)*

“Well there may be a local youth group for other LGBT young people, or young people who feel unsure - I can find out for you. There are some good youth sites and forums. I’ll give you the details and some tips to stay safe online.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 42)*

“You may discuss with a child or young person whether they: are happy with how things are at the moment or whether [sic] they would like to [sic] talk about taking steps to live in their self-identified gender. would like any information [sic] about what a social transition might involve, or like to access any support outside of the school/ college/setting.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 49)*

*Schools are also advised to direct ‘unsupportive’ parents towards Stonewall-approved support services:*

“Sometimes parents or carers can be unsupportive because of misconceptions about what it means to be LGBT. They may benefit from accessing support – if possible, direct them towards relevant organisations, local groups, or family services (suggestions are listed on p67).”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 64)*

## 6. Targeting the most vulnerable children: the very young and children with SEND, including autism

*Stonewall’s latest guide includes a section on the most vulnerable children; those with SEND including children on the autism spectrum. Over 35% of children referred to the Tavistock GIDS show moderate to severe autistic traits. Many autistic children automatically fit the Stonewall definition of the ‘trans’ child - “insistent, persistent and consistent”- as these children may be prone to developing obsessions that can sometimes last for years.*

*There is as yet no understanding of why children on the spectrum are so susceptible to the idea that they are really the opposite sex. Teachers should be aware that autistic children and young people are especially vulnerable to peer pressure, due to a strong desire to fit in. For girls especially this may involve mimicking their peers and adopting a range of identities in a bid to secure a sense of belonging. This ability to ‘mask’ can lead teachers to assume a greater level of social understanding than they may actually have.*

*The following undifferentiated advice from Stonewall applies to a wide range of the most vulnerable children of all ages, with individual complex needs and disabilities. Stonewall’s*



*guidance advises teaching these children the 'Gender Unicorn' to learn about "gender identity, gender expression, sex, and orientation" and to understand "gender as a spectrum."*

*Young children are not developmentally equipped to understand such ideological concepts and this is especially true for children with SEND or neurobiological differences. The Gender Unicorn also teaches them a lie: that being a boy or a girl is defined by several subjective states, all inevitably based on gender stereotypes, and not by the reality of biological sex.*

*It is essential for pupils who may have learning difficulties or have a differentiated theory of mind that teaching should be clear, unambiguous and fact-based. Children with physical disabilities are especially vulnerable to the message that they were born in the 'wrong' body.*

"Definition of trans for younger children: When they are born, babies are labelled as a boy or a girl. When some people get older, they realise that the label they were given was wrong. They might say 'I'm actually a girl', 'I'm actually a boy' or 'I'm not a boy or a girl'. Trans is the word used to describe people who feel like this."

"Definition of non-binary for younger children: Non-binary is a word that people use about themselves if they don't feel like they are a boy or a girl.

These definitions may also be more suitable for some children and young people with SEND, depending on their levels of understanding."

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 11)*

"Ensure that you offer support to all staff who are trying to increase LGBT inclusion. The Gender Unicorn is a useful tool for aiding conversation and understanding, and for challenging stereotypes and misconceptions. It may be useful when working directly with some families and/or some children and young people with SEND and could help them understand the differences between gender identity, gender expression, sex, and orientation."

"Alternatively, or additionally, you could ask them to label a blank outline (or a photograph) of a person with information about orientation and gender identity to reinforce that the discussion is about real people. These approaches have proved especially useful with some autistic children and young people and their families. If they already have some understanding of autism as a spectrum, it can help them to understand gender as a spectrum too."

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 59)*

"LGBT children and young people should be encouraged to understand that there are different ways to be any gender or orientation."

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 60)*

*The guidance suggests that everything possible must be done to influence children with SEND to understand their feelings through the prescribed lens of 'gender identity', while also claiming that these children will be immune to outside influence as they know their own minds. Youth services will not be experts in understanding the complexities of autism and the ways it can present, nor have the knowledge or experience to deal with any pre-existing or co-morbid issues. Schools should be aware of the dangers of over-sharing information, naivety, possible inability to judge the motives of others, and impulsivity resulting in bad decision making.*

“Some children and young people with SEND, including those who have neurodivergent learning styles, may need additional support in understanding their own identity.”  
*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 57)*

“It may be useful for an LGBT child or young person with SEND to talk to someone else who is LGBT. Local LGBT youth groups are a great starting point. The child or young person might find it easier to email or speak on the phone at first, rather than meeting face-to-face with a representative from the external organisation.”  
*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 59)*

“Youth services can be particularly beneficial for trans children and young people, who are less likely to have trans peers at school. Some children and young people, for example those who are autistic, might prefer to get in touch with a group by email first.”  
*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 36)*

“It is important to be aware that some LGBT children and young people with SEND may have a fragile sense of self and a limited understanding of who they are in relation to other people. Ensure the child or young person has opportunities for regular one-to-one time with a trusted adult who will listen empathetically and help them explore their developing identity. It can be useful to use a blank outline of a person to help visually build up aspects of their orientation, gender identity and/or how they choose to express themselves.”  
*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 57)*

“Some children and young people with SEND, especially those who are autistic, may not see the need to communicate about their feelings, or may not understand that others don't already see them in the same way they see or know themselves to be. If the people around them don't understand their LGBT identity, this could lead to increased frustration, and impact negatively on their mental health and wellbeing.”  
*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 57)*

“Arguments may be presented around the LGBT child or young person lacking capacity, especially if members of their family are struggling to accept their identity.”  
*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 62)*

“Your school, college or setting should try to enable the child or young person to choose the most appropriate person to support them with their gender identity or orientation, rather than assuming a personal assistant can provide all their support needs. It is important that anybody supporting the child or young person is included in training around LGBT awareness.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 58)*

“Some individuals may not accept that a child or young person with SEND knows their own mind when it comes to orientation or gender identity. Children and young people with SEND are more likely to experience others thinking their gender identity or orientation is a phase or confusion, or that they are too susceptible to outside influences. If staff truly listen to both the words and actions of the child or young person, often they demonstrate a very clear understanding and sense of self.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 62)*

*The guidance suggests that teachers and professionals reinterpret behaviour characteristics typically associated with autism as evidence that a child might really be ‘transgender’. Teachers are invited to stereotype these children by observing their “preferences for clothing types or hair length” and interpret this as a sign that, for example, a girl might really be a boy, rather than a girl on the spectrum who has failed to notice or obey society’s rules about ‘appropriate’ feminine clothing choices. Fear of change is common in autistic children and girls in particular can find the changes of puberty distressing. To suggest that these girls might really be boys is an offensive and sexist view that should not be tolerated in schools.*

“It is important to listen to what children and young people are saying – with their actions as well as their words. Observe, listen to and understand how each child or young person expresses themselves. This is especially important for pre- or non-verbal children or young people. Make sure that each child or young person has opportunities to express their gender identity and orientation and feel ‘heard’.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 57)*

“Often a child or young person’s words or actions are automatically attributed to their SEND without considerations of other factors, such as their orientation or gender identity. This might include: preferences for clothing types or hair length being seen as a sensory need; fear of change at puberty; behaviours described as a new special interest, fascination, curiosity or phase.

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 62)*

You can support staff, parents, carers, families and wider professionals to understand that a child or young person with SEND is just as likely to be LGBT as any other person. It is essential that the child or young person is accepted for who they communicate they are, and that support is given (if needed) for them to explore what they are experiencing.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 62)*

*Girls with SEND are at a higher risk of exploitation and abuse, including sexual abuse. To advise teachers to help these girls undo the rules they have already learned about who can use which public toilet raises very serious safeguarding concerns. To allow a girl with learning difficulties or physical disabilities to use the men's public toilets, or encourage her to believe that it is normal for a man to use her toilets, puts her at serious risk. This advice should never be followed in a school or in any setting responsible for the care and safeguarding of children and young people with SEND.*

*The fact that this guide includes advice about the underwear preferences of children with SEND within this context suggests the use of binders and packers. Teachers should be aware that children may be directed online to sites selling rubber penises for girls to put in their pants, or binders which flatten their breasts and restrict their breathing, and that sometimes these are sold on sex sites. Use of prosthetic penises for children and the self-harming practice of breast-binding are both normalised by transgender lobby groups such as Gendered Intelligence and Mermaids. Sexualisation of children and self-harming practices should not be normalised in schools.*

*“Trans children and young people with SEND should be supported to use the toilets and changing rooms of their choice – whether this is a single-sex or gender-neutral facility.”  
(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 58)*

*“Some LGBT children or young people with SEND might need explicit teaching around hidden social rules. They may benefit from scripts to explore what is safe/OK or unsafe/not OK to say or do in different contexts. You could roleplay different scenarios if needed. Bear in mind that these rules or expectations may be different for different genders or orientations, depending on the context. Some things that had to be taught to the child or young person originally – for example, the unwritten rules of using public toilets – may need to be taught again to help them as they transition.”  
(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 60)*

*“Children and young people should have access to underwear choices, changes of clothes and toiletry products in line with their preferences. Be sensitive to the fact that puberty can be a particularly challenging time for both trans children and young people, and those with SEND.”  
(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 59)*

## Compelled speech and belief

*The Stonewall guidance compels everyone in the school, including other pupils, to use a pupil's 'preferred pronouns' whatever they are, advises that not to do so is 'misgendering' and defines this as 'transphobic' and therefore an example of 'prejudice-based bullying.' Everyone in the school is encouraged to police each other's language, correct each other and report 'incidents.'*

*This goes beyond a school's duty to tackle bullying and encourage children to be thoughtful and kind towards a child with gender dysphoria and infringes on the rights of others to freedom of belief and freedom of speech. A policy of not 'misgendering' children who may be inventing their own pronouns would be unworkable in a school.*

*The latest guide goes further in its definition of 'transphobia', to include "denying" someone's gender identity or "refusing to accept it." No-one else has the right to compel others to 'accept' their personal self-identity. This definition makes every child transphobic if they understand the correct biological definitions of men and women, and the grammatically correct use of pronouns. It takes away the right of girls to recognise a person as male, which is vital for girls' privacy, self-protection and the right to give or withhold consent. Suppression of their own recognition that a person is a man puts girls at risk. A school should not be teaching girls to ignore their own instincts out of fear of causing offence.*

"Some may wish to change their pronoun from 'he' to 'she' or vice versa, while others, for example a non-binary young person, may prefer a pronoun that doesn't relate to male or female gender, such as 'they' or 'zir'."

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 20)*

One of the steps a trans child or young person may take is to change their name and the pronouns. Some may wish to change their pronoun from 'he' to 'she' or vice versa, while others, for example a non-binary young person, may prefer a pronoun that doesn't relate to being male or female, such as 'they' or 'zir'.

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 46)*

"A young person may want to be known by this preferred name and pronoun at school, in which case both will need to be clearly communicated to, and used consistently by, others."

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 20)*

"Prejudice-based incidents: It is important to record, monitor and report all incidents that are motivated by a prejudice, including those that fall below the definition of bullying."

"Make it clear that homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language and online bullying both on school computers and outside of school will not be tolerated and that the same sanctions apply to online homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying as in the classroom

- Include details on online and anonymous reporting mechanisms"

"Whistleblowing policy

- Include sexual orientation and gender identity on the list of concerns that staff may raise so that they feel confident to do so"

*(Getting Started, Secondary Schools, 2015, p. 14)*

“It is important to acknowledge if mistakes are made by staff and peers, such as using the wrong name or pronoun of a trans young person without thinking. The best thing to do is apologise to the young person, and anybody else present, correct yourself and move on.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 23)*

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 48)*

“It is also important to support colleagues by correcting them too, so that everyone can work together to make the changes. If all staff use the preferred name and pronoun of the trans young person all of the time, rather than only when in the presence of the trans young person, that will help get into a new routine.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2015, p. 23)*

“It is also important to gently correct colleagues if they make a mistake. If all staff use the preferred name and pronoun of the trans child or young person all the time, rather than only when in the presence of the trans child or young person, it will help everyone get into a new routine.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 48)*

“It is important to record, monitor and report all incidents that are motivated by a prejudice, including those that fall below the definition of bullying. A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitudes, beliefs or views towards a protected characteristic or minority group.”

*(Getting Started, Primary Schools, 2016, p. 14)*

“TRANSPHOBIC LANGUAGE EXAMPLES:

Terms of abuse, including ‘tranny’, ‘he-she’, referring to a trans person as ‘it’ or deliberately misnaming or misgendering them (using the wrong pronoun when referring to them in conversation)”

*(10 Steps to Tackling HBT Language in your School, 2018, p. 5)*

“TRANSPHOBIA is the fear or dislike of someone based on the fact they are trans, including denying their gender identity or refusing to accept it. Transphobia may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, trans.”

*(An Introduction to Supporting LGBT Young People, 2020, p. 68)*