STAYING SAFE ONLINE

Practical strategies to best support all children and young people online, including those who identify as LGBT

Stonewall
Acceptance without exception

Childnet
International

The internet is an incredibly powerful tool. It gives young people unprecedented opportunities to engage with the world around them and plays an increasingly important part in their education and learning. For some young people, and in particular those who are lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT), the internet also provides a way to reach out to others having similar experiences to them. Nine in ten LGBT young people (**90 per cent**) say they can be themselves online, and nearly all LGBT young people (**95 per cent**) say the internet has helped them find positive role models. In this sense, it can be a great source of hope for those who have few LGBT peers around them at school, college, at work or in their community.

Unfortunately, as we're increasingly aware, the internet also poses risks. It can provide opportunities for unsafe behaviour, with two in five (**39 per cent**) young people aged 13-19 having met up with someone they met and talked to online. Of those, nearly one in five (**18 per cent**) did not tell anyone they were meeting up. For those who are LGBT, the risks are often even more pronounced – either because the information they're given around internet safety doesn't specifically address LGBT issues, or because they're afraid they will be judged or outed for their sexual orientation or gender identity if they ask for advice. Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic abuse is rife online, with nearly all LGBT pupils being exposed to offensive content about LGBT people.

This guide is for teachers, educators and parents wanting to ensure the LGBT young people they know feel able to speak openly about their experiences online, and to make safer and more informed choices in their digital lives. Here you'll discover simple changes you can make in your school or college, and you'll hear from young people themselves about life online.

We hope you find this a useful resource that improves the lives of the LGBT young people around you. Together, we can move towards a world where all children and young people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, are accepted without exception.

Paul Twocock

Interim Chief Executive, Stonewall
(All statistics taken from Stonewall's School Report, 2017).

The way technology has impacted on all our day-to-day lives is profound and this is especially true for children and young people. Our work with children shows the many opportunities technology offers whether that is connecting with others, learning, playing or simply having fun. It's important these opportunities are there for all children and that they can access the internet in a safe and positive way.

That's why we are really pleased to have partnered with Stonewall to produce this resource for professionals to support LGBT children online. The internet offers LGBT children and young people a sense of belonging, community and support as well as providing new ways to create, entertain, express themselves, find allies and be activists. All young people's experiences are unique, and it's important that as professionals supporting children, we also understand and appreciate the specific risks and challenges that may arise. LGBT children have the right to feel safe, protected and happy online, and schools play an important role in supporting and safeguarding them.

We hope that this guide will support professionals to develop practical strategies to best support all their pupils online, including those who identify as LGBT. We want schools to be proactive and help foster an inclusive and welcome space where all young people are treated equally, respected and celebrated. We also hope that this guide will help professionals understand the barriers that LGBT children and young people may have in speaking up about their worries and will help schools develop effective policies and procedures. It's key that all children know that they have a safe and non-judgmental place to turn to when they have problems or challenges online. That's why, alongside this guide, we hope schools will listen and consult their student community to help all their pupils thrive online.

Will Gardner

CEO Childnet

The Childnet Digital Leaders Programme is a fun, educational online platform which empowers and trains children and young people to educate their peers, parents and teachers about staying safe online. The Digital Champions are youth ambassadors for the Childnet Digital Leaders Programme aged 13-18 years old.

CHILDNET DIGITAL CHAMPIONS FOREWORD

As Digital Champions for the Childnet Digital Leaders' Programme we are big believers in the power of the internet and the amazing experiences it can offer all children and young people.

We know that:

- Being online gives us spaces to explore our identities, to meet other people going through similar experiences and to be part of communities that can help us learn and grow.

- Being online gives us a voice and the opportunity to speak up when we need to be heard.

- Being online brings us all together – the feeling of being connected, of being part of something and of being able to affect change is something that unites us all.

For us, the positives firmly outweigh the negatives, but we acknowledge that there are risks online, especially when difference is used as an excuse to attack or abuse others. We want to see an internet where everyone feels represented, safe and free to be themselves. Seeing other people online who have overcome adversity gives us a sense that we can to. Seeing other people who are happy and comfortable just being themselves helps normalise difference and move society forward. It helps us feel part of something much bigger. We want everyone to be able to learn from online representation, to communicate peacefully and to not feel so lost.

We hope this guide helps parents, teachers and all adults to better support young people online, whatever challenges they are facing. We want anyone reading this guide to know that it's the smallest things which can make the biggest difference.

Please be open-minded when young people tell you about their lives online.

Listen and be supportive whatever we tell you.

Keep trying to understand our online experiences and to learn more about the platforms we use.

Support all young people to be themselves, online and offline.

The Childnet Digital Champions.

Childnet
Digital Leaders
Programme

WHO IS THIS GUIDANCE FOR?

This guidance is for teachers, educators and other professionals working directly with young people in schools and colleges. From teaching and office staff, to leadership, management and governors with safeguarding responsibilities – all adults working and contributing to school and college life have a duty of care to the children and young people they interact with.

While some parts of this document focus on specific guidance for schools and other educational settings, there are some parts which parents may also find useful. If you are a parent reading this guidance, you may like to start by reading page 39, which outlines top tips for parents and carers.

WHY IS THIS GUIDANCE IMPORTANT?

The internet and technology have had a profound impact on all of our day-to-day lives, but particularly on the experiences of children and young people. While technology offers many positive opportunities to connect, learn and communicate, it also involves inherent risks – and these are risks to which children and young people may be especially vulnerable.

For most lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) children and young people, the internet will be an exciting and inspiring part of their day-to-day lives. However, it's vital that school and college staff are equipped with practical strategies to best support all their pupils online, including those who identify as LGBT. When staff understand how children and young people's online experiences are shaped by their identity, and can foster an inclusive and welcoming space where difference is understood, respected and celebrated, this benefits all pupils – regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

ABOUT THIS GUIDANCE

This guidance will give an overview of what all school staff need to know about the lives and experiences of LGBT children and young people online, as well as advice and strategies on how to respond when things go wrong.

The first part of the guidance explores the different ways in which LGBT young people use the internet, and how this might be similar or different to their non-LGBT peers. The first part of the guidance also looks at the risks and challenges for LGBT young people as they go online, as well as exploring some of the positives.

The second part of the guidance has lots of advice, resources and best practice guidance to help educators, parents and carers manage risks and empower LGBT young people to stay safe and enjoy all the internet has to offer. To get the most out of this document, you may find it useful to familiarise yourself with the key terms listed in the glossary at the back of this resource.

WHAT DO LGBT YOUNG PEOPLE EXPERIENCE ONLINE?

LIFE ONLINE

This chapter will cover:

✓ An overview of what children and young people are experiencing online

✓ How being LGBT might shape a child or young person's online experiences

✓ Key areas of online activity and the risks they pose

WHAT ARE YOUNG PEOPLE EXPERIENCING ONLINE?

For most young people, the internet is very much a part of their day-to-day lives. As adults we may talk about 'life online' and 'life offline', but for children and young people these are likely to be one and the same. From social media sites to games, videos and mobile apps, the internet offers a world of exciting opportunities to create, share, communicate and more.

Young people are often at the forefront of change online – popularising new trends, using new apps and services, and finding innovative ways to communicate and share. For this reason, it can be a challenge for adults working with children and young people to stay on top of the latest developments. However, research has shown that regardless of the latest online trends, the things children and young people like and dislike about their online experiences tend to remain the same.

GENERALLY, THE THINGS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ENJOY ABOUT LIFE ONLINE ARE:

THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY

CHATTING WITH FRIENDS

PLAYING GAMES

SHARING PHOTOS AND OTHER CONTENT

GIVING AND RECEIVING SUPPORT

LISTENING TO MUSIC

WATCHING TV SHOWS, FILMS AND ONLINE VIDEO

HAVING FUN

MAKING FRIENDS

SOME OF THE THINGS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FIND UPSETTING ABOUT LIFE ONLINE ARE:

BULLYING

PORNOGRAPHY

ABUSIVE COMMENTS AND LANGUAGE

VIOLENT OR OBSCENE VIDEOS

SOME NEWS STORIES AND MEDIA

ANIMAL ABUSE

SELF-HARM AND SUICIDE CONTENT

BEING ASKED FOR EXPLICIT PHOTOS

HATE SPEECH

HOW DOES BEING LGBT SHAPE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S ONLINE EXPERIENCES?

It's important to recognise that there is no 'standard' experience for any young person or child online. Their online life will be shaped by countless factors including gender identity and sexual orientation, race, religion and ethnicity, being disabled or differently abled, being fostered or adopted, and more. When staff recognise this, they are better placed to provide personalised support which reflects the actual needs and experiences of students. That said, while it is useful to be aware of the common experiences of LGBT children and young people online, staff should also bear in mind that their pupils will not necessarily have had some or any of these experiences.

'The internet and social media sites have helped me accept and embrace my sexuality.'
Amelia, 16, sixth form college (Wales)

'Being on the internet has allowed me to be myself completely, unlike in real life. At school I feel like I'm not myself at all, but on the internet I have many friends and they're all supportive.'
Courtney, 15, secondary school (Scotland)

'We were only taught about LGBT stuff if we asked a specific question about it in PSHE lessons. Other than that, school hasn't talked to us about LGBT stuff – me and my friends learnt everything we know from the internet or from other LGBT people.'
Lewis, 16, sixth form college (East of England)

Broadly, LGBT children and young people use the internet for many of the same reasons as their non-LGBT peers. However, for most LGBT children and young people the internet is also: a vital source of support and information that they aren't getting in school; a sanctuary where they feel free to be themselves; and a place where they can meet like-minded individuals or feel part of a worldwide community.

Nearly all LGBT young people (**96 per cent**) say the internet has helped them understand more about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. **95 per cent** of LGBT young people say the internet has helped them find positive role models, and **90 per cent** say they can be themselves online (*Stonewall School Report*, 2017).

'I think it gives you an opportunity to see yourself represented somewhere because, especially when we're talking about LGBT issues, in a lot of maybe more old-fashioned places, towns or certain cultures, it's just not spoken about and just to see that - to see another person out and proud and just who they are, it normalises it. It just brings you a sense of peace that you can't quite get in real life, but that then you can start to put in your real life and I think that's why it's so important.'
Childnet Digital Champion

Unfortunately, the online world is not always a safe space for LGBT children and young people, and both gender identity and sexual orientation can shape the ways in which young people encounter risk and harm online. For example, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) language is endemic on the internet, with **97 per cent** of LGBT young people having seen HBT content online and **40 per cent** having been targeted with HBT abuse (Stonewall *School Report*, 2017). Additionally, in their day-to-day online activity, LGBT children and

young people may find themselves presented with opportunities to engage in behaviours such as meeting up with someone they've met online, sharing nude or partially nude images, or using apps and services intended for over-18s (e.g. dating apps).

'I don't have any social media – it is a place where hate can be freely expressed and not be controlled and I am scared to use it. People think they can do and say anything online.'

Joseph, 13, secondary school (South West)

KEY AREAS OF ONLINE ACTIVITY

The information given below offers an overview of different areas of online activity, considering the positive experiences for young people online along with some of the harms they may be vulnerable to. It does not refer to specific apps or services which children and young people may be using online, because the services most popular with children and young people vary both geographically and over time.

For advice and guidance on specific apps or services, please visit Common Sense Media **or** NetAware.

SHARING ONLINE

For nearly all young people, sharing is an integral part of life on the internet. This might involve featuring stories from celebrities on their own accounts, or sharing photos or videos they took themselves. It is clear that young people are creating their own content as much as sharing what already exists. The wide spectrum of what they are sharing, as well as the platforms and services they use to do so, demonstrates the vital role sharing plays for young people wanting to learn new things, connect with each other, harness their creativity and inspire others. For LGBT children and young people, sharing is also a way to form connections and participate in communities with similar people.

'I have an Instagram profile that I use to post positive things for fellow LGBT people.'
Niamh, 13, secondary school (Yorkshire and the Humber)

It's important for all children and young people to recognise the risks involved with over-sharing online. For example, sharing personal information (including phone numbers, email addresses, passwords or their school or college) can put young people at risk, especially if these details are shared publicly. It can also be very difficult to take something back once it has been shared online, and as young people are often less shy online than they would be in real life, this can leave them vulnerable. New technology and trends (such as livestreaming and content which disappears after a certain amount of time) pose further challenges, and make it even more vital for children and young people to recognise how the content they share can have unforeseen consequences in the future.

SEXTING AND NUDES

'Sexting' is taking a nude, partially nude or sexually explicit image or video. This imagery can then be shared with partners and friends, through messages and online. Many young people will not use the term 'sexting' to describe this behaviour, and are more likely to describe it as sending or taking 'nudes'.

Sexting often takes place between young people who know each other, particularly those who are in a relationship and want to begin a sexual relationship. In this situation, children and young people may feel they can trust the other person and that their actions are a normal or expected part of being in a relationship. Sexting can also occur for other reasons – maybe as a joke, part of a dare, or as a result of pressure from peers or online 'friends', including adults.

Research suggests over a third (**34 per cent**) of young people have sent a 'sexual or nude' image of themselves to someone, and over half (**52 per cent**) have received an image of this type (*Digital Romance*, CEOP & Brook, 2017). Sexting also occurs among LGBT young people. In 2017, Stonewall's School Report found that more than two in five (**45 per cent**) LGBT young people had sent or received sexual, naked or semi-naked photos to or from a person they were talking to online.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

It is important that all children and young people recognise that creating and sending sexually explicit images under the age of 18 is against the law and can have deeply upsetting and damaging consequences.

Once a young person has sent a sexual image, it is entirely out of their control and can be passed on to others, either deliberately or accidentally. This leaves them at risk of bullying or blackmail from peers and strangers. For LGBT young people, if an image they have sent becomes public, they may be 'outed', blackmailed or experience homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying, along with the humiliation of the image being shared. Furthermore, on some occasions, the distress and anxiety caused when a sexual image becomes public can trigger or exacerbate mental health issues.

THE LAW

If a young person under the age of 18 engages in sexting by creating a sexually explicit photo or video of themselves then, by law, they have created an indecent image of a child. By sending this content to another person, they have distributed it. By having it on their device, any person would then be in possession of an indecent image of a child.

The National Police Chiefs' Council of England, Wales and Northern Ireland have stated that young people engaging in sexting should be treated as victims in the first instance and not face prosecution as first time offenders, but the situation will be investigated to ensure the young people involved are not at further risk. The police's priority is those who profit from sexual images and exploit children. Repeat offenders and more extreme cases are reviewed differently, still with a focus on avoiding prosecution unless absolutely necessary.

ONLINE CAMPAIGNING

'Online campaigning' is a term used to describe people using the internet to engage with and advocate for a particular cause. The internet is uniquely suited to sharing content and ideas with large audiences and connecting like-minded people across the world, and there have been several very successful examples of the online world being used to mobilise and effect change offline.

> *'I think what's important [about social media] is that it gives us a voice and even if we don't want to use it, it gives us that option. We have a voice – even if we're just spectating – we can jump in whenever we want. Whenever we feel that something needs to be shared.'*
>
> *Childnet Digital Champion*

Something as simple as a tweet to a politician about a particular issue may be considered a small or informal example of online campaigning, while more extensive campaigns may incorporate whole networks of people sharing specific content or planning offline activities such as protests. Historic and continued discrimination against the LGBT community has seen people of all ages take to the internet as a space to voice their opinions and exercise their rights. For some LGBT children and young people, campaigning and speaking out against anti-LGBT discrimination is an important part of expressing their identity online and building an offline world where they feel represented, safe and free.

> *'Online campaigning to me is being a positive, visible online presence and using your platform to engage with issues you feel passionate about. I feel online campaigning plays an important role in my life, as it's where I share posts about activist projects that I'm working on and communicate with other activists and campaigners.'*
>
> *Ben Saunders,*
> *Stonewall Young Campaigner of the Year 2019*

Typically, the advice given to children and young people about sharing online stresses the importance of using privacy settings to protect the information and content they wish to share. However, the nature of online campaigning means it requires an element of publicity to maximise impact and engagement. While it can be an incredibly positive force in many LGBT young people's lives, in some cases LGBT children and young people can be exposed to harm, prejudice and discrimination from other internet users when campaigning online.

In these situations, it is important for adults supporting young online campaigners to recognise that these consequences are not the fault of the child and that withdrawing from the public sphere may not be possible. Instead, adults should work together with LGBT children and young people to make best use of reporting and blocking tools, which can limit negative or abusive online communication. A strong support network and robust self-care strategies can also help LGBT children and young people cope with online abuse and ensure they feel resilient enough to continue with their campaigning.

'I think online activism can be important for LGBT young people, but it's important to remember that as an LGBT person you shouldn't feel as if you always have to be visible if you don't want to or don't feel able to be. It's just as important to look after yourself and monitor when you may need to take a step back from social media and take some time for yourself.

Adults should check up on young LGBT activists, particularly if they have received a negative response from a piece of online activism. It can be incredibly overwhelming if you receive a bad response to your activism – it can feel quite isolating and personal, so you need to surround yourself with supportive people when you engage in online activism.

Remember, too, that if you receive a negative response then your activism must have reached enough people to make an impact, and it will have helped at least one person!'

Ben Saunders

GENDER IDENTITY AND ONLINE SHARING

Sharing content online creates what might be referred to as an 'online identity' – a record of who someone is and how they behave online. For trans children and young people in particular, this online identity can be a source of both positive and negative experiences. For many trans children and young people, the internet is a place where they can express their gender identity freely, communicate with other trans people, and find positive role models.

However, for some trans children and young people, there may be significant challenges or trauma resulting from the existence of historical content about them online. If a child or young person created online profiles prior to transitioning then there is a risk that old photos, videos or details such as former names could resurface post-transition. This may be uncomfortable or distressing for a trans young person or may even 'out' them as trans. 'Sharenting', which refers to parents sharing content about their children online, is another area where this kind of risk could emerge.

While all children and young people are at risk of harm as a result of what they have shared or what others have shared about them, for trans children and young people the additional emotional and psychological trauma involved can be substantial. Behaviours like sexting and sharing nude images pose a risk to all children and young people, but for a trans young person even a non-nude image may be the subject of criticism or curiosity from people who are unfamiliar with what it means to be trans or who are transphobic.

CONTENT

With news articles, video content, blogs, encyclopaedias and more, the internet is an invaluable source of information about almost any topic in the world. Since two in five LGBT pupils are not taught about LGBT issues in school or college, the role the internet has to play in providing information, advice and support in this area is even more valuable.
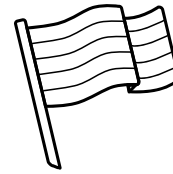
Almost all LGBT young people (**96 per cent**) say the internet has helped them **understand more about their sexual orientation** and/or gender identity, and **93 per cent** say the internet has helped them **find advice and support** about this.

However, when young people search for information online, the sites they access aren't always age-appropriate or reliable. Furthermore, some content is discriminatory, extreme or harmful, possibly exposing vulnerable LGBT children and young people who were seeking support to end up feeling confused, scared or upset about their sexual orientation/gender identity. Being aware of the kinds of harmful content LGBT young people might encounter online can help you plan an effective whole-school or college approach to online safety. The second half of this guide has advice and support to help you develop policies, plan your curriculum and provide support for pupils.

> *'I truly believe that the lack of education on LGBT issues is not only wrong but also dangerous, as we have to turn to the internet to educate ourselves on topics relevant to us.'*
>
> *Sam, 15, sixth form college (North West)*
> *Stonewall School Report 2017*

PORNOGRAPHY

While most LGBT children and young people have been taught in school about heathy relationships and practicing safe sex, very few have learnt about these issues in relation to same-sex relationships. The ease with which online pornography and explicit sexual material is now accessible means that for some young people, their first exposure to LGBT relationships and sexual activity may come via explicit material, and sometimes this happens at a very young age. Being curious about sex and relationships is a natural part of growing up for most people, but viewing pornography can have a negative impact on young people. For example, it can lead to:

- Unrealistic expectations of body image and performance, which could leave young people questioning their own shape, size and overall appearance

- More risky or violent sexual behaviour, which if seen without appropriate Relationships and Sex Education might leave a young person with a warped attitude towards the sexual behaviour they expect to experience

- Unrealistic attitudes towards gender roles and identities in relationships

- Adult, violent or discriminatory language about sexual behaviour, relationships, sexual orientation, gender and gender identity

Additionally, it is typical for most mainstream pornography to be produced to appeal to a straight male audience. This means content is not always reflective of the diverse

and varied forms that sexual relationships can take. Even where pornographic content is created specifically to be more inclusive and diverse, it can still gloss over important aspects of healthy, sexual relationships such as conversations around consent or safe sex.

EXTREME CONTENT

This is an umbrella term which encompasses different types of content, but especially content which promotes extreme beliefs or harmful behaviours. Examples include: content presenting extreme political or religious perspectives; content which promotes self-harm, suicide or eating disorders; and content which seeks to radicalise children and young people. This type of content can be found across multiple online platforms – websites, forums, discussion pages, social media services, and video services.

For all children and young people, exposure to this kind of content can pose a risk to both their mental and physical wellbeing, especially in instances where the content is not easily recognisable as extreme and where children and young people may believe themselves to be engaging with a reasonable or trustworthy source.

For LGBT children and young people, there are some specific areas of extreme content which pose an additional risk.

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic abuse online

LGBT young people may encounter homophobic, biphobic or transphobic language online, including hate speech and abuse directed at them personally. In 2017, one in ten LGBT adults (**10 per cent**) reported that they'd experienced homophobic, biphobic or transphobic abuse online directed towards them personally in the last month. This number increases to one in four for trans people (**26 per cent**) directly experiencing transphobic abuse online in the last month (Stonewall, *LGBT in Britain: Hate Crime*). Stonewall's 2017 *School Report* found that **40 per cent** of LGBT young people have experienced HBT abuse online.

'I'd been bullied in the past so it was just part of my existence. I started getting death threats online after I came out. I told my head of year, but they just told me to come off the internet. It carried on for years.'
Amy, 18, single-sex secondary school (South East),
Stonewall School Report 2017

'I've constantly been the victim of online abuse and it's always anonymous. It made me feel violated and awful – it created an overwhelming sense of guilt towards being trans, and increased the hatred I had for myself.'
Christopher, 17, sixth form college (Yorkshire and the Humber),
Stonewall School Report 2017

Experiencing or witnessing this kind of targeted hate speech or abuse can be extremely upsetting for any young person and may make LGBT young people feel unsafe when using the internet. LGBT young people who aren't out might find hate speech and HBT abuse particularly distressing – hearing or witnessing it might make them feel they can't tell anyone about their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Some people who use HBT language online don't mean to be discriminatory and aren't targeting this language at an individual person. However, casual use of this language can still be offensive, and seeing derogatory phrases about LGBT people constantly used online can have a real impact on children and young people's self-esteem.

'It was quite difficult to come out because you see a lot of negative reactions on social media and I wasn't sure how people were going to react.'
Chelsea, 14, secondary school (North East),
Stonewall School Report 2017

Conversion therapy

Conversion therapy is the practice of trying to change or suppress an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity through psychological or spiritual means. The leading bodies responsible for providing and accrediting therapy, counselling and related services have signed a Memorandum of Understanding, the purpose of which is 'the protection of the public through commitment to ending the practice of conversion therapy in the UK'. The memorandum describes conversion therapies as 'unethical and potentially harmful'.

We know that conversion therapies are still a problem in Britain. Stonewall's *LGBT in Britain* report on health found that one in twenty (**five per cent**) of LGBT people have been pressured to access services to question or change their sexual orientation when accessing healthcare services. This number rises to **nine per cent** of LGBT people aged 18-24, **nine per cent** of Black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT people, and **eight per cent** of LGBT disabled people. One in five trans people (**20 per cent**) have been pressured to access services to suppress their gender identity when accessing healthcare services.

'My ex-girlfriend who had self-harmed tried to look for support and counselling. However, she was directed to a Christian counsellor funded by the church, and the general consensus was that being gay is making you self-harm so you can be healed by returning straight.'
Ezmae, 40 (Wales),
LGBT in Britain: Health report

There is less research into how and whether providers of conversion therapy use online spaces to promote their services. However, there is a risk that LGBT young people or their parents/carers may see content referring to conversion therapy, or produced by providers of conversion therapy, online. Crucially, it may not be immediately obvious that this content has been produced by conversion therapy providers. Seeing this kind of content may be distressing and might lead an LGBT young person to believe there is something 'wrong' with them. It could also potentially lead to LGBT young people accessing, or being referred to, these services.

COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS

ONLINE BULLYING

'People took pictures of us and turned us into memes. It made me really upset, to the point I felt physically sick to come to college.'
Craig, 16, sixth form college (Yorkshire and the Humber)
*(School Report, 2017)*

'People on my bus took pictures and videos of me and put them on social media without my permission. They also sent abusive texts to me. '
Joseph, 13, secondary school (South West)

Online bullying, sometimes referred to as cyberbullying, is repeated, deliberate behaviour which targets an individual or group of people with the intention of causing hurt, upset or humiliation. It can include anything from sending abusive messages or comments, to impersonating somebody or sharing their personal details online. Unlike with other types of bullying, online bullies can remain anonymous and often deliberately target others when they're in their own home, making their victims feel there is no escape.
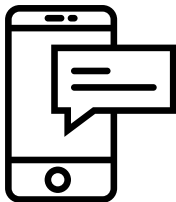
Three in ten LGBT young people (30 per cent) have been bullied with comments, messages, videos or pictures that were mean, untrue, secret or embarrassing.
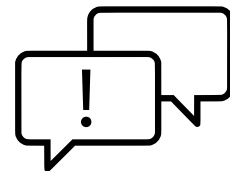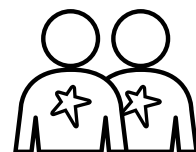
More than one in ten (11 per cent) have received threatening messages or abuse.

Six per cent have been filmed or photographed without their consent.

Three per cent say that sexually suggestive pictures or messages about them have been shared without their consent.

Three per cent say that others have pretended to be them or someone else using a fake account.

Any young person can become a victim of online bullying. However, LGBT young people often find themselves targeted because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Two in five LGBT young people (**40 per cent**) have been the target of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic abuse online. In particular, nearly three in five trans young people (**58 per cent**) have received this abuse online (*Stonewall School Report*, 2017). It's not just LGBT young people who are affected by HBT abuse online. Any young person who is different can be a victim of HBT bullying, for example as a result of peers starting rumours online.

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, whether online or in person, impacts on LGBT young people's self-esteem and their achievement and attainment at school and college. This bullying can lead to more serious consequences including mental health issues, self-harm and suicide. Young people can also be reluctant to report HBT bullying because they don't want to be 'labelled' as LGBT, or because they haven't yet come out.

ONLINE SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Online sexual harassment can be defined as unwanted sexual behaviour on any digital platform. It can happen to anyone online, but it is important to recognise it also happens specifically in a peer-to-peer context – between young people in their own communities. Online sexual harassment can include a wide range of behaviours that use digital content (images, videos, posts, messages, pages) on a variety of different online platforms (private or public). It can make a person feel threatened, exploited, coerced, humiliated, upset, sexualised or discriminated against.

Online sexual harassment often crosses over with other forms of discrimination, so it is experienced differently by different people. For LGBT children and young people, their sexual orientation and/or gender identity could be the reason, or part of the reason, they are targeted.

> *'Outing'* someone is where the individual's sexuality or gender identity is publicly announced online without their consent – a type of online sexual harassment identified in Project deSHAME, Young people's experiences of online sexual harassment (2017)

ONLINE DATING AND RELATIONSHIPS

Exploring friendships and relationships, flirting and starting to date are a natural part of growing up. All young people have the right to make friends, explore relationships and find people they enjoy spending time with.

It's really important for LGBT young people to be able to meet, talk, and share experiences with other LGBT young people. However, there may be significant barriers for them to be able to do so. This could be due to social or community spaces not being LGBT inclusive, or safe for them to be out in. This may stop LGBT young people being aware of other LGBT young people in their area, or from being out themselves. The internet provides LGBT young people the opportunity to meet others who also identify as LGBT, and to talk about their shared experiences. Whilst there are risks associated with making friends and communicating with people solely through the internet, there are also lots of positives for LGBT young people if managed safely. The online world can be a place for LGBT young people to:

- Learn more about the LGBT community;

- See LGBT people represented;

- Explore their LGBT identity;

- Talk openly about their sexuality or gender identity, particularly if they are not out to the people who know them offline;

- Make friends they would not have made otherwise.

Any app or service that has a communication element has the potential to provide these opportunities for LGBT young people, whether it is via a messaging app, an online forum or chats within online games.

There are also a number of specific apps and services that are designed for users to meet online, communicate with other people and potentially arrange an offline meet up, particularly for a romantic or sexual relationships. These are known as dating apps. Dating apps and online dating services require users to be over 18 years old. There are also dating apps and online dating services for LGBT people specifically. These also require users to be over 18 years old.

LGBT young people might sign up to dating apps underage, in order to meet and chat with other LGBT people, particularly if they are facing barriers to doing this offline, due to the reasons mentioned earlier. Whilst the desire and wish to do so is understandable, there can be a number of significant risks associated with using dating apps underage. Apps for over 18s are geared towards adults and therefore:

- Content is not moderated – underage users may encounter language and images that are adult in nature. As these apps are designed for adults, the safety features found on apps used by under 18s are not as commonplace.

- Contact with adults is very likely – the majority of users are over 18. Underage users may be pressured into engaging in online behaviour outside of their comfort zone by adults.

'In Liverpool it's difficult to come out as gay. At least for me anyway. The LGBT community isn't large, well-known or accessible. Tinder is sadly the only way to meet other gay people my age.'
Dylan, 17, sixth form college (North West)

All children and young people need to be aware of the age restrictions placed on different online services, and the significant risks involved with signing up to something underage. Support the young people you work with to approach all their online communication safely, reinforcing key online safety advice such as keeping personal information private, not to send images of themselves to contacts they only know online, and to seek advice if anyone they are talking to online asks to meet up. Acknowledge why LGBT young people may have used a dating app to meet other people they relate to, and support them to find other, safer ways to meet other LGBT young people, for example, through LGBT youth groups, safe online spaces and communities or local events. Let them know where they can go for support if anything concerns or worries them.

'Because in some communities it's not that easy to find other people who are like you so going online and meeting other people who have similar life experiences, it's really wonderful. Just to express yourself and discover yourself as a person.'

Childnet Digital Champion

GROOMING AND CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Online grooming is the process by which an adult will approach a child or young person online, with the intention usually being to develop a relationship with them, meet them in person, and deliberately cause them harm. The motivation behind this is most likely to be sexual. However, not all adults who seek to groom children and young people online have an intention of meeting up with them. Instead, their intention may be to coerce the child or young person into sending them sexually explicit photos or videos. Alternatively, their motivation could be financial gain from the child or their family.

Groomers are very skilled at what they do and can often befriend a child by appearing to have the same hobbies and interests as them. Using fake accounts and stock photos, they may also appear to be the same age as the child, although they will not always take this approach. Some groomers will be honest about their own age, wishing to appear as a mentor or similar figure for the child they are targeting. Children and young people can be flattered at first by the attention given to them by this new 'online friend'. If they engage, they are often asked to speak 'more privately' with the groomer, whether that is away from a public forum or on a different online service.

Often children may not be aware that they are being groomed. All children and young people are vulnerable to the risks posed by grooming and child sexual exploitation, including LGBT children and young people. In the absence of other role models, if an LGBT young person is struggling to come out or is looking for support, an online friend may offer a welcome reprieve. Additionally, some LGBT children and young people deliberately use adult sites because they think it's an easier way to meet people, explore their sexuality, or feel accepted.
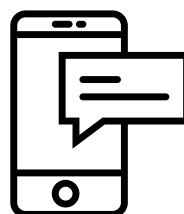
Two in three LGBT young people (65 per cent) talk to other LGBT people using public social media feeds, **two in three** LGBT young people (64 per cent) use private messaging, and **one in four** LGBT young people (27 per cent) use websites or forums for young people.

LGBT children and young people may struggle to make friends in other ways, perhaps because they have been bullied or because they do not know of any other LGBT people in their local community. In some cases, this could mean that, in new or established online friendships they are more susceptible to peer pressure and risk-taking, including sexting or meeting up with online friends. Sexting can be used to trap young people in exploitative relationships – adults may threaten to share images or tell a young person's friends and family what they have done if they don't carry on talking and meeting up.

For any young person who is a victim of sexual exploitation, seeking help can be difficult – they may feel ashamed or worried that they'll get into trouble. For LGBT young people, having to explain their sexual orientation is often an additional barrier to reporting the problem. For more information on barriers to reporting and how to support pupils in overcoming them, see page 44. It's important to remember that grooming is also a safeguarding and child protection issue: for advice on what to do when a young person makes a disclosure about a safeguarding issue online, see the section on safeguarding on page 43.

DIGITAL WELLBEING

'Seeing healthy and positive LGBT people on the internet saved my life. Seeing people being genuinely happy with their life and being LGBT gave me hope.'
Zach, 16, secondary school (Scotland)

The number of LGBT children and young people suffering from mental health issues is disproportionate compared to young people in general. For many LGBT children and young people, the internet is a vital support system, with **93 per cent** saying it has helped them find advice and support about their sexual orientation and gender identity.

Nine in ten trans young people (92 per cent) have thought about suicide. For lesbian, gay and bi pupils who are not trans, seven in ten (70 per cent) have thought about this. This is far higher than for young people in general: Young Minds estimates that one in four young people have had these thoughts. *(School Report, 2017)*

However, it's important to recognise that if not used safely and positively, the internet can also contribute to wider pressures experienced by a young person and exacerbate existing mental health struggles. As important as the internet may be to many LGBT children and young people, it should never be seen as a replacement for offline support. The strongest support systems will give LGBT children and young people multiple avenues to seek help, including parents/carers or other trusted adults they can speak to in person, and LGBT people with experience and understanding of LGBT issues, in addition to online sources.

SELF-ESTEEM AND BODY IMAGE

High levels of social media use, and the millions of photos and videos shared online every day, have led some to voice concerns about the pressure placed on young people to look a particular way. The internet is often used as a platform for individuals to share content which may have been heavily edited or which may offer an unrealistic idea of what is 'normal'. For all children and young people, hormonal and physical changes while growing up can impact their self-esteem and emotional state, but the portrayal of idealised bodies and beauty online may also factor into their own feelings of self-worth.

For LGBT children and young people, this risk could be exacerbated if the internet plays a heightened role in exploring their identity. For example, a lack of known LGBT adults at school or in their local community could lead to LGBT children and young people finding role models online. If content shared online by these role models showcases only the highlights of their daily life (in which they, for example, appear wealthy, attractive, happily 'out' as LGBT, and have many friends and/or partners) this could lead to unfair and upsetting comparison by LGBT children and young people with their own lives and experiences.

It's important that LGBT children and young people, like all children and young people, see a range of body types, gender identities, sexual orientations, ethnicities, disabilities and more represented wherever possible.

BEST PRACTICE IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

CHAMPIONING A WHOLE-SETTING APPROACH TO POSITIVE AND HEALTHY ONLINE LIFE

This chapter will include:

✓ An overview of statutory requirements for all schools and colleges in relation to online safety

✓ Best practice examples from schools and colleges supporting all pupils to live a positive and healthy online life

✓ Areas where particular care and attention is required for LGBT pupils

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

There are some key statutory requirements, as well as guidance and advice, for all schools and colleges in relation to online safety. All school and college staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn, and this includes online as well as physical spaces. All schools and colleges are required to follow anti-discrimination laws, and staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school under the *Human Rights Act* 1998.

Schools and colleges should also be aware of their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 – see advice for schools and advice for further and higher education. For further details about other laws that may be relevant to online safety, with specific reference to online sexual harassment, see Childnet's guidance from the Step Up Speak Up Toolkit.

The statutory requirements will differ in the four nations and more detailed advice on safeguarding in each nation can be found here.

ENGLAND

- **Working Together to Safeguard Children** – statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (DofE 2018)

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education** – Statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment (DofE 2019)

- **Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Statutory Guidance** – The new curriculum will be mandatory from September 2020. Schools are encouraged to adopt the new curriculum early from September 2019 (DofE 2019)

- **National curriculum in England: computing programmes of study** – Statutory guidance on computing programmes of study (DofE 2013)

- **National curriculum in England: citizenship programmes of study** – Statutory programmes of study and attainment targets for citizenship at key stages 3 and 4 (DofE 2013)

- **Behaviour and discipline in schools** – Guidance for school leaders and staff on developing a school behaviour policy, and a checklist of actions to take to encourage good behaviour (DofE 2016)

- **Searching, screening and confiscation at school** – Guidance explaining the powers schools have to screen and search pupils, and to confiscate items they find (DofE 2018)

- **Teaching online safety in schools** (DofE 2019)

- **Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners** (DofE 2017)

NORTHERN IRELAND

- Safeguarding and child protection in schools: a guide for schools (Department of Education, 2017)

- Co-operating to safeguard children and young people in Northern Ireland (Department of Health, 2016)

SCOTLAND

- National guidance for child protection in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2014)

WALES

- Keeping learners safe: the role of local authorities, governing bodies and proprietors of independent schools under the Education Act 2002 (Welsh Government, 2012)

All schools may also find the following from the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) useful:

- **Sexting in schools and colleges** (UK Council for Internet Safety 2016)

- **Education for a Connected World** – A framework to equip children and young people for digital life (UKCIS 2018)

- **Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations** (UKCIS 2019)

- **Digital Resilience Framework** – a framework and tool for organisations, policymakers, schools and companies to use to embed digital resilience thinking into products, education and services (UKCIS 2019)

FILTERING

All schools and colleges are required to provide appropriate monitoring and filtering. As a minimum, when considering filtering systems, schools need to ensure that access to illegal content is blocked.

Specifically, this means ensuring that filtering systems:

- Block access to materials on the Child Abuse Images and Content (CAIC) list, provided by the IWF; and

- Block access to materials on the police-assessed list of unlawful terrorist content, produced on behalf of the Home Office (re: the Prevent Duty).

Schools and colleges will need to look for a system that will manage access to inappropriate content, such as drug and substance abuse, extremism, self-harm and malware.

The DfE requires schools to have an 'appropriate level' of filtering provision, which the UK Safer Internet Centre defines here. South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL) also provides an Assisted Monitoring Service to help schools and colleges using monitoring solutions ensure learner behaviour is well managed.

However, no filtering system is 100 per cent effective – it must be supported by good teaching and learning practice, and effective supervision.

It is important to note that many filters inadvertently block access to age-appropriate information on LGBT issues. Some filters block specific categories of information such as 'violence and pornography', 'lifestyle', or 'sex education', while others block searches that include specific words and search terms. This can prevent LGBT pupils from accessing vital information on issues such as coming out, or mental and sexual health, which can risk their wellbeing.

Blocking sites that cover LGBT issues and identities can also lead young people to think that talking about sexual orientation/gender identity or being LGBT is wrong or taboo.

ONLINE SAFETY POLICIES

Creating clear policies and procedures on internet use in school is the first step towards keeping pupils safe online. Online safety and acceptable use of ICT policies enable all members of the school and college community to use the internet responsibly and understand the steps to take if something goes wrong.

Schools and colleges find that acceptable use policies are most effective when they include the following:
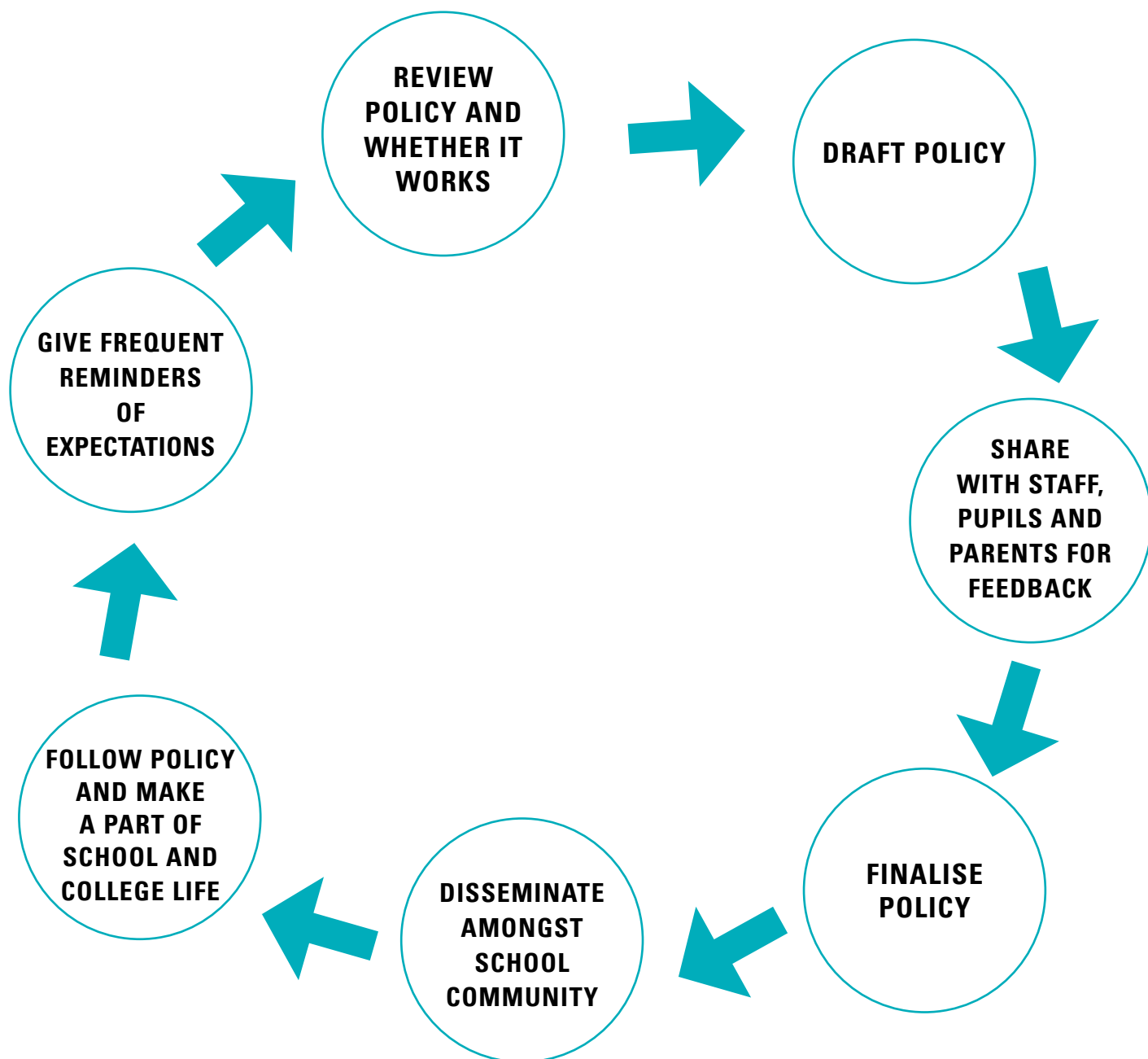
- Unacceptable online behaviours and respecting others

- Blocking communications from unknown or unwanted sources

- Accessing and downloading inappropriate or illegal content

- Privacy settings, security and passwords

- Reporting

Anti-bullying, online safety and acceptable use policies should state explicitly that homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, both online and offline, is unacceptable. Good policies make it clear that the same sanctions apply to HBT language and bullying online as in the classroom.

CASE STUDY:

At Orchard Manor, a special school in the South of England, HBT bullying online is treated just as seriously as HBT bullying offline. The school has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of bullying. Pupils have access to a pupil booklet where the school's anti-bullying approach is made clear in accessible, child-friendly language, and children are regularly reminded of how to report concerns or worries to staff.

Remember that the best policies are those which have: been **effectively shared and adopted throughout school life; incorporated youth/pupil voice;** and **sought parental engagement where appropriate**.

REVIEW POLICY AND WHETHER IT WORKS → **DRAFT POLICY** → **SHARE WITH STAFF, PUPILS AND PARENTS FOR FEEDBACK** → **FINALISE POLICY** → **DISSEMINATE AMONGST SCHOOL COMMUNITY** → **FOLLOW POLICY AND MAKE A PART OF SCHOOL AND COLLEGE LIFE** → **GIVE FREQUENT REMINDERS OF EXPECTATIONS** →

TOP TIPS FOR INCREASING THE PROFILE OF A NEW POLICY

- Invite staff, students and parents to feed into the development of the policy.

- Actively share with all audiences upon completion e.g. through newsletters, emails, assemblies, information evenings, posters, etc.

- Invite pupils and learners to 'translate' the policy by rewriting it in their own words, illustrating it, or adapting the language to be more child-friendly.

- Have a student consultation group or board who are passionate about supporting the new policy and ensuring it is followed – or use existing student leadership groups like prefects, ambassadors or a student council.

- Ensure that everyone understands the reasons behind the new policy and is clear on the consequences if it is not followed.

- Review the policy regularly to ensure it is achieving its intended outcomes.

CASE STUDY:

At Winstanley College, a sixth form college in the North West of England, students sign a code of conduct upon enrolment, as well as an ILT code of conduct about use of the internet and social media both in and out of college. These make the college's expectations around behaviour and conduct online clear and they are referred to regularly.

ONLINE SAFETY CURRICULUM

School and college policies alone won't equip young people to make safe choices online. A comprehensive online safety curriculum is the best way to communicate internet safety messages to pupils. LGBT pupils need to know about basic internet safety in the same way as all young people, but it's important that the information and advice given in lessons is relevant to and explicit about the specific issues LGBT children and young people face.

BEST PRACTICE

Developing an online safety curriculum inclusive of all pupils, differences and experiences. This should include messaging around the experiences of LGBT children and young people, regardless of their known presence in a classroom. It should not involve targeting individuals known to identify as LGBT with specific work, asking them to speak on behalf of LGBT young people in general, or require them to share their sexual orientation or gender identity publicly.

A good starting point for developing an age-appropriate online safety curriculum is the *Education for a Connected World* framework. Produced by the UK Council for Internet Safety, the framework 'describes the knowledge and skills that children and young people should have the opportunity to develop at different ages and stages of their lives'. Staff can use the framework to help establish the key learning objectives for pupils of different ages. To ensure the relevance and inclusivity of messages delivered in lessons, staff should

also familiarise themselves with the following advice provided by Stonewall:

- Creating an LGBT-inclusive primary curriculum

- Creating an LGBT-inclusive secondary curriculum

CASE STUDY

At Orchard Manor School, a special school in the South of England, pupils are given regular and repeated opportunities to learn about online bullying and how to stay safe online. The school uses information from Stonewall and CEOP to provide lessons and assemblies on these topics, including in planned ICT lessons and during awareness-raising weeks such as Anti-Bullying Week. Each half term, there is a different safeguarding theme, with online safety being included as part of this. In order to support pupils with processing difficulties, these topics are addressed regularly.

At Winstanley College, a sixth form college in the North West of England, whole cohort assemblies focus on equality and inclusion and are followed up by group tutorials tackling prejudice and discrimination. Regular whole cohort assemblies and smaller group tutorials are delivered specifically on staying safe online.

There are also a huge number of freely available subject-specific online safety resources. A selection of these are highlighted on page 32.

STAFF TRAINING

Many teachers lack the confidence to talk about LGBT issues in online safety lessons or other areas of the curriculum, but providing training can help staff feel more confident in delivering an inclusive curriculum for all pupils. Training should cover relevant policies and safeguarding procedures, but should also include advice on the challenges different pupil groups might face. It's important to

reassure staff that they're not expected to be experts or to be able to answer every question a young person has on LGBT issues. However, staff should have access to relevant information and be able to signpost to organisations and resources that can help.

WEBSITES AND ORGANISATIONS FOR RELEVANT INFORMATION ON LGBT ISSUES

GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STAFF

Stonewall offers a wide range of resources to help teachers, education professionals and those who work with children and young people to understand more about how to support LGBT young people. You can find our resources here: www.stonewall.org.uk/best-practice-toolkits-and-resources-0

Sex Education Forum is a membership organisation which works to achieve high-quality Sex and Relationships Education in schools: www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/schools

PSHE Association was set up to support PSHE practitioners raise the quality of PSHE teaching. Guidance on teaching about mental health and wellbeing and other topics can be found at: www.pshe-association.org.uk/resources

SUPPORTING TRANS YOUNG PEOPLE

Mermaids offer support, guidance and resources for trans young people and their parents and carers.

Gendered Intelligence offer support for trans young people and their families, as well as training for schools and workplaces.

Brighton & Hove City council Trans Inclusion Schools Toolkit: www.allsortsyouth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Trans-Inclusion-Schools-Toolkit.pdf

FINDING LOCAL SERVICES

Use Stonewall's 'What's in my area?' database, where you can search for organisations and LGBT youth groups by 'type' and 'region': www.stonewall.org.uk/whatsinmyarea

Call the Stonewall Information Service on 08000 502020 or tweet @stonewallukinfo with your question

Contact your local authority or look at their web pages for youth services

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Papyrus are the national charity for prevention of young suicide. They deliver awareness and prevention training, provide confidential support and suicide intervention through HOPELineUK, campaign and influence national policy, and empower young people to lead suicide prevention activities in their own communities.

They run HopelineUK, a national confidential helpline. Phone: 0800 068 41 41 / Text: 0778 620 9697 / email: pat@papyrus.org.uk (Mon-Fri 10am-10pm / Weekends & Bank Holidays 2-10pm).

The Tomorrow Project is a confidential suicide prevention project that has been set up to support individuals and communities to prevent suicide.

StayingSafe.net offers compassion, kindness and easy ways to help keep people safer from thoughts of harm and suicide, seek support, and discover hope of recovery through powerful videos from people with personal experience.

TRAINING BY EXTERNAL PROVIDERS

In some instances, it may be useful to participate in training provided by an external provider. In this case, it's important to verify the credentials of the organisation or individuals offering the training, and also to ensure it is relevant and meaningful for your setting.

Stonewall's 'Train the Trainer' courses give teachers and education professionals the knowledge, tools and confidence to train colleagues on tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and supporting LGBT children and young people.

Our full-day courses help you understand and meet legal and statutory requirements under the Equality Act 2010, Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate. Participating schools and colleges become members of Stonewall's School & College Champions programme, and your first year of membership is included in the price of your training course. For more information visit: www.stonewall.org.uk/schools-colleges

Childnet offers in-school sessions for pupils, parents and staff. Staff training is delivered as a standard 1-hour session or interactive 1.5-hour session, looking at understanding, preventing and responding to online risks, with a whole-school approach. For more information visit: www.childnet.com/what-we-do/our-work-in-schools/booking-a-childnet-visit

SPEAKING TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT THEIR LIVES ONLINE

For many children and young people, the only setting in which they discuss their lives online with teachers and other adults is in an online safety lesson. While teaching and specific educational input is a key part of supporting young people to live happy and safe lives online, it is important that this forms part of a more comprehensive approach. There is a danger that if young people are only ever offered the opportunity to talk about the internet in the context of 'risks', 'dangers' and 'rules' online, they will be less engaged with important safety messages and less likely to be open and honest about their own experiences. One of the easiest ways to counter this is through regular, informal, open dialogue.

NOT EVERY CONVERSATION ABOUT LIFE ONLINE HAS TO BE AN ONLINE SAFETY LESSON.

All staff should be encouraged to initiate conversations about life online. This can happen during lessons across the curriculum or during time spent with pupils outside of lessons, e.g. form time, registration, extra-curricular clubs or over break/lunch periods.

TOP TIPS AND CONVERSATION STARTERS

- *It doesn't have to be deep and meaningful.*

Try asking pupils on a Monday morning: 'What did you do over the weekend? Did you go online?'

- *Start with the positives.*

Ask pupils about their favourite things to do online: 'What are your favourite five apps and why?'

- *Talk generally if they're reluctant to share.*

If pupils won't talk about themselves, try asking: 'Which apps do you think are most popular with other young people your age?'

- *Use appropriate current events and research to spark debate.*

Try asking: 'Have you seen the news? What do you think about the latest update?'

By establishing an interest in all young people's online lives, staff can foster an environment where all pupils feel more confident and comfortable sharing their own experiences and disclosing when things go wrong.

ESTABLISHING A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

A successful online safety provision is one that provides opportunities for children and young people to reflect on their online lives, and the issues that might be affecting themselves or others.

In the course of delivering an online safety curriculum that is inclusive and relevant for all your pupils and students, there may be points at which they draw on their personal/peer experience, or wish to bring up issues they are curious or concerned about, such as high-profile news stories or questions around the law. It is vital that they are able to do this in a climate of trust, support and acceptance.

The PSHE Association outlines good practice in their 'Handling sensitive or controversial issues' resource. It states that teachers should:

• Work with pupils to establish ground rules and link PSHE education into a whole-school approach to supporting pupil welfare

• Offer opportunities for pupils to discuss issues confidentially in small groups, as well as with the whole class

• Be sensitive to the needs and experiences of each pupil, remembering that some pupils may have direct experience of these issues

• Signpost pupils to sources of information and support both inside and outside the school

If pupils feel confident and comfortable, they are more likely to share their ideas, ask questions and contribute to discussions. This in turn helps the whole group to learn from each other and broaden their attitudes to online safety.

Below are a range of techniques to work towards creating a safe and supportive environment in a group setting:

• Set up ground rules: Work with your students to agree on a set of ground rules that clearly state expectations around behaviour and discussions.

• Model and expect the use of appropriate and respectful language: use accurate and age-appropriate terminology when referencing different groups of people, and help pupils to do the same. (Many Stonewall resources have a child-friendly glossary, breaking down LGBT-specific terminology in clear and accessible language: you can find a child-friendly glossary that can be adapted for any age group here).

• Take a non-judgmental approach: Although some views or opinions can and should be challenged, it is important for both the educator and pupils not to shame or judge a student or pupil who shares something sensitive.

• No real names policy: Ask pupils and students to use the third person, e.g. 'someone I saw online', when using stories or examples in discussions.

• Use distancing techniques: Use fictional stories, characters, role plays and scenarios based on real situations to stimulate discussion while 'de-personalising' any content.

• Use 'save it for later' techniques: Pupils may ask questions or start discussions that require further consideration before answering, or that are more appropriate to discuss with individuals, rather than in a group setting. Use techniques such as question walls and 'time outs' to pause discussions, assess the situation, and decide on how best to respond.

PEER-TO-PEER EDUCATION

'I think that it is better having young people teaching about internet safety, because we can relate to them.'

Secondary school pupil

'I think that it is quite hard to get young people to listen to you – they listen more to people closer to their age than adults.'

Secondary school pupil

With children and young people often at the forefront of online change, there is the risk that safety messaging delivered by staff and parents may fail to provide advice and guidance that is always up-to-date or relevant to young people's experiences. One solution to this is the use of peer-to-peer education, where children and young people support each other, share practical advice, and fill in the gaps where teaching staff and other adults may struggle.

For many children and young people, hearing online safety messages from somebody the same or a similar age as themselves may make them more likely to engage with advice. Peer-to-peer education also has the additional benefit of empowering children and young people to think proactively about their internet use and online safety messages.

Similarly, peer mentoring gives LGBT children and young people an opportunity to talk about sexual orientation and gender expression with people their own age. Talking to a peer can be much less daunting than approaching a teacher or parent about an issue like coming out, transitioning, or homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying.

Some schools and colleges train student groups, such as anti-bullying ambassadors, to become mentors. There are many schemes and resources available to support in the development of this. Even if it isn't possible to set up peer mentoring in school, there may be a scheme run by a local youth group or university.

CASE STUDY

At Winstanley College, a sixth form college in the North West of England, LGBT inclusion work is led by students and supported by all staff, including senior management. The college has an active LGBT society, which meets monthly and is supported by a member of the senior management team. The group organises events across the college, such as fundraising and awareness raising for Stonewall's Rainbow Laces campaign, and plans the college presence at local Pride events. The group offers an important safe space for students to talk about issues they feel are important.

For information on setting up a student LGBT group and putting pupil voice at the heart of your LGBT inclusion work, see Stonewall's free guide for primary schools and secondary schools or colleges.

TOP TIPS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

1. USE THE INTERNET FOR GOOD:

The internet is a place with so many opportunities to change the world for the better. Whether it's supporting a cause, raising money for charity, sharing posts from other people doing great things online or simply sending your friend a funny photo to cheer them up, a small step or action can make a huge difference.

2. REPORT ONLINE BULLYING AND HARASSMENT:

If someone is treating you or your friends unkindly online, or not respecting you for who you are, you can use the block and report buttons to take positive action to stop it and make sure you tell someone too. Support your friends and show others how to be respectful and kind online.

3. ASK IF IT'S OKAY:

Think about how your online actions might make others feel, and ask for permission before sharing something about someone else. This includes checking before posting a selfie of you and a friend, or before adding friends into group chats where there might be people they don't know. If anyone wants to share something about you online you're not happy with, you have the right to say no.

4. KEEP YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION SAFE, AND OTHER PEOPLE'S TOO:

This includes full name, date of birth, home address, school address, email address and passwords. Remember, photos and video can include personal information too.

5. THINK BEFORE YOU POST:

Consider the consequences of your online actions and remember that things online can be seen by lots of people. Treat other people the way that you would like to be treated and always think about their feelings. How you talk to someone online is just as important as how you talk to someone face to face.

6. EXPLORE AND INVESTIGATE CRITICALLY:

The internet is a place with so many different types of content – from communities, videos and music, to apps, filters and information. You can use it to find information on pretty much any topic! We all have different sides to ourselves, and the internet allows to you to explore so much. Whilst it's great there's so much information, not all of it is trustworthy or helpful. Use your critical thinking skills and talk to those around you to figure out what is reliable, helpful and good for your mental health.

7. REMEMBER THAT NOT EVERYONE IS WHO THEY SAY THEY ARE ONLINE:

Always get advice from an adult if anyone you only know online makes you feel uncomfortable, or asks to meet up or share personal information or images.

8. TALK TO SOMEONE:

It can sometimes be hard to ask for help especially if you don't know what to say, or what might happen next. Find someone that you trust and go to them if something happens online that makes you feel worried, upset or confused. People who care about you want to help you. It's never too late to ask for help.

ENGAGING PARENTS

Most of the time young people spend online will take place outside school and college, so it's especially important to engage parents and carers to ensure children and young people get consistent messages around online safety. Best practice in this area includes sharing relevant policies and procedures with parents/carers, frequent communication regarding online risks and advice, a dedicated section of your school and college website, and clear signposts showing where parents and carers can access further information and support.

CASE STUDY:

At Winstanley College, North West England, parents and carers receive a letter about how to support students with a variety of issues, including mental and emotional wellbeing, and parents are reminded of how to report concerns to a member of college staff.

Parents and carers of known LGBT children and young people may have more specific concerns regarding their child's online activity, including the areas listed in the previous chapter. Staff may find it useful to share this guide, or parts of this guide, with these parents and carers. However, not all parents will find this level of detail helpful and for some it may be too overwhelming.

For this reason, this document also includes a handout specifically designed for parents and carers of LGBT children and young people. This handout includes top tips for supporting an LGBT child, advice around filters and parental controls, key reporting websites, and places to go for further information. This handout could be shared as part of an informal discussion about their specific concerns. This also provides the opportunity to emphasise the importance of the internet for many LGBT children and young people, along with the positive opportunities it has to offer.

HANDOUT FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

It's natural to have concerns about your child's life online, but it's important to remain open-minded. For most LGBT children and young people, the internet is a vital source of support and information, a place where they feel free to be themselves, and an opportunity to feel part of a worldwide community.

TOP TIPS

BE SUPPORTIVE

Make sure your child knows that regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, you're on their side. Let them know they can come to you in any situation – including to talk about life online.

BE POSITIVE

Recognise that the online world might be an important part of your child's life. Acknowledge the opportunities it has to offer and talk about the things they love about using the internet.

BE CLEAR ABOUT YOUR EXPECTATIONS

Discuss and agree on how your whole family can use the internet safely and positively. Make it clear that sites and services intended for over-18s are not appropriate but offer online and offline alternatives where your child can make friends and feel comfortable to be themselves.

BE OPEN AND HONEST

Keep talking with your child about their online experiences and if things go wrong, make sure you're familiar with the tools available like blocking and reporting (see below) to support them moving forward.

BE ALERT

Look out for unusual behaviour. If your child is avoiding using the internet or phone, or seems preoccupied after going online, check in with them and share your concerns.

USEFUL WEBSITES

YOUNG STONEWALL - www.youngstonewall.org.uk

STONEWALL INFO SERVICE - www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/contact-stonewalls-information-service

CHILDNET - www.childnet.com

MERMAIDS - www.mermaidsuk.org.uk

GENDERED INTELLIGENCE - www.genderedintelligence.co.uk

MOSAIC - www.mosaicyouth.org.uk

A NOTE ABOUT FILTERS AND PARENTAL CONTROLS

Many parents choose to use filters and parental controls to limit their child's access to harmful or inappropriate online content. However, sometimes filters can block websites relating to LGBT issues and which may be useful, appropriate and relevant to your child. By doing some quick online searches yourself, you can check that there's still access to sites that will help your child stay safe and find information. For example, check sites like Stonewall and Childline aren't blocked.

It's also important to remember that filters and parental controls are most effective when used alongside open and honest conversation. If a child or young person feels like they're being spied on or unfairly censored then this can damage family relationships and foster mistrust, making them less likely to come to you for support. If you are using filters, review them regularly and, as your child gets older, it may be helpful to explain why and how they work.

WHAT IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG?

TRUE VISION
This website gives information on hate crimes or incidents and advice on how to report them, including anti-LGBT hate crime: report-it.org.uk

CEOP
If a child is worreid about online sexual abuse, or the way someone is communicating with them online, this should be reported to the police. Show pupils how they can make an online report to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP). CEOP has a 'report abuse button' that can be loaded onto school computers. ceop.police.uk

IWF (Internet Watch Foundation)
The IWF work to help victims of child sexual abuse worldwide by identifying and removing online images and videos of their abuse. Anyone can anonymously report content of this nature via their website: iwf.org.uk

RESPONDING IF THINGS GO WRONG

This chapter will include:

✓ An overview of inclusive safeguarding procedure when addressing online incidents

✓ Areas where particular care and attention should be paid to the circumstances of LGBT pupils and students

✓ Considerations around the barriers to reporting faced by LGBT pupils

✓ Signposting to relevant reporting routes

If an LGBT child or young person experiences online harm, the way in which a school and college responds can have a huge impact on:

- The LGBT child or young person's well being

- The likelihood of escalation and further harmful behaviour, both offline and online

- How much confidence other LGBT children and young people have in the school and college, and the reporting process, and could reduce the likelihood of future disclosures

- Perceptions of the school or college's stance on HBT bullying by the wider community

An effective response should:

- Be based on robust school and college policy and procedure

- Be proportionate and relevant to the nature of the incident

- Put the wellbeing of those targeted first

- Be applied consistently by the whole school and college community

- Reinforce a positive and supportive school and college culture

- Support those who engage in HBT bullying to understand why their actions are unacceptable and to change their behaviour

SAFEGUARDING

All staff should understand that if a young person says they are LGBT or is talking online to other young people who identify as such, this doesn't constitute a safeguarding risk.

All pupils should understand that staff have a responsibility to keep them safe. They should be made aware that if staff believe a pupil is in an unsafe situation, e.g. an online friend is asking to meet up, they have a duty to follow the school or college's safeguarding procedure. Pupils should also be made aware of what the safeguarding procedure involves.

Make sure pupils know that:

- Staff are duty-bound to act on situations in which they feel a child or young person is unsafe, including online

- Staff may need to inform another staff member about a disclosure in order to decide what to do next

- They will be kept informed, and, where possible, included in any conversations or decisions made about them

- In many cases, parents/carers will need to be informed, but that pupils can be a part of that conversation and have their own say

If an online incident comes to the attention of staff, they should follow their school and college's safeguarding procedures as below, making sure it is an inclusive process for those involved:

1. Acknowledge the barriers the young person has overcome to make a disclosure, take their report seriously and reassure them they have done the right thing.

2. Report the incident to your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible, and follow up with a written record. *Include relevant contextual factors, both online and offline. Recording online incidents allows schools to identify problem areas and follow up with a tailored approach if patterns emerge.*

3. If required, the DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff.

Work together on a risk assessment of the situation, taking into account relevant contextual factors such as home life, online behaviour, race, religion, disabilities, sexual orientation, gender and gender identity, and whether this has a bearing on the situation.

4. If required, there should be subsequent interviews with the young people involved.

Be sensitive to their needs, and do not force them to disclose personal information about their sexual orientation, gender or gender identity, or assume you know this about them. Allow pupils to explain the particular nuances of the online service(s) involved and how this is relevant to the incident under review.

5. Parents/carers should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process unless there is good reason to believe informing them would put the young person at risk of harm. *If the child or young person identifies as LGBT, assess whether it is relevant to ask them if their parents/carers know this – there may be some situations in which it has no bearing, in which case it does not need to be asked. However, there may be times when you should raise this question in order to avoid inadvertently 'outing' a child to their family.*

If an LGBT child or young person makes a disclosure, staff should follow safeguarding procedures but should also find out if their parents/carers know they are LGBT, and, if so, whether they support them appropriately. If the parents/carers do not know their child is LGBT but they need to be informed about a disclosure their child has made, assess whether this is possible to do while taking steps to avoid outing the child.

For example:

A pupil tells you they have been chatting to an adult on an LGBT dating app. You follow safeguarding procedure, and decide the child's parent needs to be informed. The child has not come out to their parent as they are worried they would be rejected, and even made to leave home.

You discuss with the child their fear of coming out to their parent, and decide bringing this up with their parent would actually make them more unsafe. You talk to the child about how you could both explain the situation to their parent together, in a way that does not out them.

You talk to the parent, together with their child, and refer to the dating app in general terms, without referencing the LGBT nature, and instead focus on the risk in hand – the age of the adult that is speaking to the child.

Later, you explore if the child would like support in coming out to their parent separately, and if they would like support in meeting other LGBT young people (via youth groups or support networks), as an alternative solution to using online dating apps.

This example highlights the need to take into account context when supporting LGBT young people with online problems.

Safeguarding procedure should never be ignored as a way to avoid outing a child. Finding an appropriate approach should be of utmost importance – use your professional judgment and work with your safeguarding team to assess how to strike the right balance, while keeping the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person at the centre of any decisions.

BARRIERS TO REPORTING

Two in five young people have never told anyone about the worst thing that has happened to them online (Hopes & Streams, 2018)
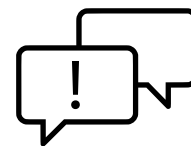
Two in three LGBT young people (65 per cent) think that online platforms are unlikely to do anything about tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic content or incidents when it is reported to them (School Report, 2017)

Do you know what problems your pupils are facing online?

Are there LGBT young people in your school or college being disproportionately affected by harmful online behaviours?

Do all your pupils and students understand why HBT bullying online is unacceptable and how to report it?

In order to respond effectively to harmful online behaviour and concerning incidents, schools and colleges first need to know about them. The safeguarding procedures in the previous section are a reactive response to use when an incident comes to the attention of staff. However, there are a number of reasons why children and young people may not ever disclose worrying or concerning online incidents to staff. To address this, schools and colleges must take a proactive approach in identifying the barriers LGBT young people face in reporting, and work to remove them.

WHAT DOES 'REPORTING' MEAN?

In an online safety context, 'reporting' means actively responding to any upsetting, worrying, frightening or threatening experience online. **Reporting includes:**

- Telling a parent/carer

- Talking to a teacher

- Seeking advice from any trusted adults

- Clicking the 'report' button on an app or game, and sending a message to the safety team

- Submitting a report on a specialist website

- Informing police

Be clear which method(s) you are referring to when speaking about different reporting routes to pupils.

Effective reporting routes in school and college should mean all children and young people feel confident to speak out. If they experience worrying, upsetting, confusing or unsafe situations such as cyberbullying, online sexual harassment, or inappropriate contact, they should know what support they can expect. Children and young people who report

via a technical route (e.g. via the report button) should also be encouraged to talk to someone for emotional support.

Reporting mechanisms on websites, apps and games usually come in the form of a button, word or option on posts, comments, photos and videos. Anything that gets reported and that breaks a service's terms and conditions, or content which is illegal, should be removed. See the 'Report Harmful Content' website (below) for information on how to make a report online and what to do if you do not receive a response you are satisfied with.

Many children and young people face barriers that stop them feeling confident in reporting worrying or upsetting online experiences. For LGBT children and young people, these barriers may be additionally difficult to overcome when coupled with their LGBT identity.
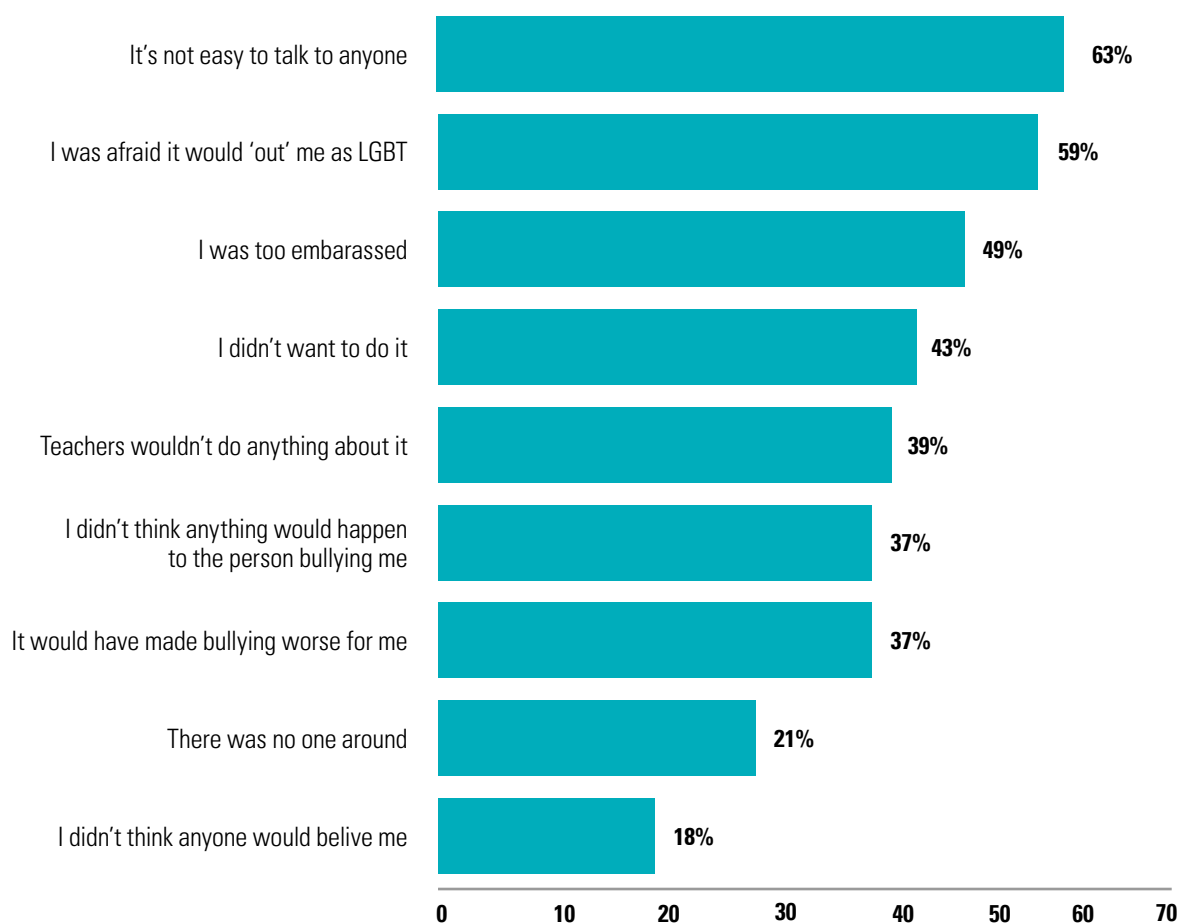
Factors preventing LGBT children and young people from reporting:

- They are not out and are afraid reporting will force them to disclose their LGBT identity to family or friends

- They are not out at school and do not want to talk about their LGBT identity with school staff

- They are worried they will be blamed, or their LGBT identity will be blamed

- They are worried reporting would make it worse and they'd be targeted by those involved

- They are not sure what can be reported

- They are not sure who they can report to

'When they have seen HBT content, fewer than half of LGBT young people (44 per cent) reported it to the site, game or app.'
Stonewall School Report 2017

Why didn't you tell anyone that you were bullied?

Reason	Percentage
It's not easy to talk to anyone	63%
I was afraid it would 'out' me as LGBT	59%
I was too embarassed	49%
I didn't want to do it	43%
Teachers wouldn't do anything about it	39%
I didn't think anything would happen to the person bullying me	37%
It would have made bullying worse for me	37%
There was no one around	21%
I didn't think anyone would belive me	18%

'Just ive per cent spoke to a parent or guardian about it, while three per cent spoke to a member of staff at school about it.'

Stonewall School Report 2017

range of people they could talk to – it doesn't have to be their form teacher or head of year, it might be the nurse or counsellor, or someone outside of school or college like a youth worker – anyone they feel most comfortable with.

Remind your pupils of this regularly. Pupils may not take this information in until they are in a position where they need help, so reassure them that sexual orientation and gender identity have nothing to do with how they'll be treated if they report.

WHAT CAN SCHOOLS DO TO REMOVE OR REDUCE THESE BARRIERS?

• **'Tell someone'** – Tell all children and young people they can talk to anyone in school or college, and that all adults are there to help them. Make pupils and students aware of the

• **Ensure pupils know what to expect if they make a report to staff** – clearly state what happens after a report is made to a member of staff, and what they might do next to support a pupil who comes to them. Be explicit around confidentiality and in what circumstances parents/carers would need to be involved, while also making sure pupils

know that, as far as possible, they can be involved in any conversations or decisions.

Make sure young people know that their parents/carers won't be informed that they are LGBT unless it is absolutely necessary to keep them safe – and they'll be involved in conversations about how to share that information in a way that's comfortable for them.

- **Take an inclusive approach to Relationships and Sex Education** – develop a shared understanding of what healthy relationships look like for all types of relationships, including LGBT ones. Include discussions around the online element of relationships too (e.g. peer pressure, flirting, sexting).

- **Run a school survey** – asking questions using an anonymous survey can help schools and colleges to find out whether there are problem areas that need to be addressed. Surveys can be adapted for different year groups to include age-appropriate issues. For example, older pupils could be asked about nude images or sexual harassment, while younger pupils might be asked about swearing or offensive language.

Including a free-text box gives pupils the chance to raise issues that haven't been addressed. Ask questions on whether pupils and students identify as LGBT to see if there is a common specific behaviour that LGBT pupils are uncomfortable with. See below for some possible questions to include.

Publicise what, where and to whom pupils can report – stick up posters including these details in various school and college locations, such as toilets, common rooms, cloakrooms, noticeboards and canteens. Drop this information into other announcements to help embed it within school and college culture. Clearly state that any online problems can be reported in school or college too.

Provide anonymous ways to report – this is important for LGBT pupils who are not out, or feel uncomfortable about reporting a concern that is relevant to their LGBT identity. This could be as simple as a 'worry box' in a classroom, or might involve online reporting mechanisms such as text message or email systems staffed by teachers or trained mentors. Online systems provide an immediate way to report a concern at any time, and as such they require infrastructure in place to manage them carefully. SWGfL has Advice for Schools on managing anonymous online reporting.

- **Put policies into practice** – To be effective, policies need to be revisited, referenced and reinforced daily, otherwise pupils will not know about them or follow them. See the 'Policies' section for more info.

SCHOOL SURVEY QUESTION IDEAS:

- **What do you like to do online?**

- **For secondary schools or colleges: Do you know what LGBT stands for?**

- **For secondary schools or colleges: Do you identify as LGBT?**

- **Are you aware of other pupils using homophobic/biphobic/transphobic language online?**

- **Have you ever seen the following online: homophobic bullying/biphobic bullying/ transphobic bullying?**

- **Did you report the bullying? How?**

- **Do you know how to report problems on every site you use?**

- **How confident would you feel reporting this issue to staff?**

- **Have you ever been stopped from accessing information or educational sites on a school or college computer? Which sites?**

- **What would you like to learn about online safety that you are not currently learning about in school or college?**

REPORTING WEBSITES

CEOP

If a child is worried about online sexual abuse, or the way someone is communicating with them online, this should be reported to the police. Show pupils how they can make an online report to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP). CEOP has a 'report abuse' button that can be loaded onto school computers.
ceop.police.uk

INTERNET WATCH FOUNDATION

The IWF work to help victims of child sexual abuse worldwide by identifying and removing online images and videos of their abuse. Anyone can anonymously report content of this nature via their website.
iwf.org.uk

REPORT HARMFUL CONTENT

This is a national reporting centre that has been designed to assist everyone in reporting harmful content online. Instructions on how to report content on different online platforms are provided. For users who are over 13 and have already submitted a report to a platform but are not happy with the outcomes, the RHC centre can review responses and advise on further action.
reportharmfulcontent.com

TRUE VISION

This website gives information on hate crimes or incidents and advice on how to report them. This includes sexual orientation and transgender hate crimes.
report-it.org.uk

UK SAFER INTERNET CENTRE PROFESSIONALS ONLINE SAFETY HELPLINE (POSH)

A free helpline to support any member of the children's workforce with online safety issues or risk prevention.
saferinternet.org.uk
0344 381 4772

CHILDLINE

Childline offers children free help and advice on a range of issues. They have counsellors available on the phone, online, or contactable via email and message boards.
childline.org.uk
0800 11 11

THE MIX

The Mix provide support and information for under-25s in the UK. They offer a free and confidential service via phone, email and online chat.
themix.org.uk
0808 808 4994

WHAT THE LAW SAYS

There are a number of laws which apply to both online and offline behaviours. Police should take a common sense approach to any incidents reported to them, and follow up with a proportionate response.

Not all harmful online behaviour is illegal, but every act of discrimination or unfair treatment against LGBT children and young people is unacceptable, and should be challenged appropriately.

If you are concerned that an online incident involving a child or young person may involve illegal activity, escalate your concern to your local safeguarding body using your school's referral process. Any report to the police is generally done in parallel with a referral to children's social care.

- Communications Act 2003: This Act covers all forms and types of public communication. With regards to comments online, it covers the sending of grossly offensive, obscene, menacing or indecent communications, and any communication that causes needless anxiety or contains false accusation.

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997: This Act covers any form of harassment that has occurred 'repeatedly'. In this instance, 'repeatedly' means on more than two occasions.

- The Malicious Communications Act 1988:

This Act covers the sending of grossly offensive or threatening letters, electronic communications or any other form of message with the intention of causing harm, distress or anxiety.

- Equality Act 2010: This Act states that it is against the law for organisations to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of protected characteristics. The protected characteristics covered by the law are:

  - **AGE**

  - **DISABILITY**

  - **GENDER REASSIGNMENT (when a person undergoes a process, or part of a process – social or medical – for the purpose of reassigning their sex)**

  - **MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP**

  - **PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY**

  - **RACE (including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)**

  - **RELIGION OR BELIEF**

  - **SEX**

  - **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

- The *Computer Misuse Act* 1990: Criminalises the impersonation or theft of someone else's identity online. For example, this would mean that writing a status on social media pretending to be your friend would technically be against the law.

- The *Protection of Children Act* 1978 (England and Wales)

- *Civic Government Act 1982* (Scotland)

- *Protection of Children Act Order* 1978 (Northern Ireland)

These Acts criminalise the taking, creating, showing, distributing, possessing with a view to distributing, and publishing any advertisement of indecent photographs of children (defined as anyone under the age of 18).

- Section 33 of the *Criminal Justice and Courts Act* 2015 criminalises the sharing of private, sexual photographs or films ('revenge porn') of adults without their consent, with the intent to cause distress.

- *Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm* (Scotland) Act 2016 criminalises abusive behaviour and sexual harm, including disclosing or threatening to disclose an intimate photograph or film ('revenge porn') of someone else without their consent, with the intent to cause distress.

- Section 51 of the *Justice Act* (Northern Ireland) 2016 criminalises the disclosure of private sexual photographs or films ('revenge porn') of someone else without their consent, with the intent to cause distress.

FURTHER RESOURCES

RESOURCES FROM STONEWALL

SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL STAFF

Stonewall's 'Train the Trainer' courses give teachers and education professionals the knowledge, tools and confidence to train colleagues on tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and supporting LGBT young people. Our courses help you understand and meet legal and statutory requirements under the Equality Act 2010, Ofsted and the Independent Schools Inspectorate.

With best practice advice on everything from tackling derogatory language to planning an inclusive curriculum, we can help you make sure your setting is a place where everybody is accepted without exception. Participating schools become members of Stonewall's School & College Champions programme, and your first year of membership is included in the price of your training course. For more information visit www.stonewall.org.uk/schools-colleges

Stonewall's School & College Champions programme is a network of schools and colleges across Britain working with Stonewall to support LGBT young people and tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying. As a School & College Champion, you'll get access to a range of membership benefits, including exclusive education resources, a poster and sticker pack, and year-round support from our Education and Youth team. For more information, visit: www.stonewall.org.uk/schools-colleges or email: education@stonewall.org.uk

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ORGANISATIONS

Our Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) Champions programme helps put LGBT inclusion at the heart of your service. We'll help to devise innovative solutions based on your needs to better support vulnerable LGBT children and young people, as well as improve their health and wellbeing. You can access a wealth of expert support including tailored advice, training, and resources, along with tools to evaluate and improve your policies and practice. For more information visit: www.stonewall.org.uk/cyps

Learn more about supporting LGBT young people on our day-long 'Improving mental health and wellbeing outcomes for LGBT children and young people' training course. Developed in partnership with YoungMinds, the course will help you understand more about LGBT young people's experiences and how you can help the young people in your care develop resilience and positive coping skills. For more information, visit: www.stonewall.org.uk/training-courses-and-opportunities or email cyps@stonewall.org.uk

RESOURCES AND SIGNPOSTING

Stonewall has a wide range of toolkits, guides and resources for teachers, LGBT young people and their families. These are available online at: www.stonewall.org.uk/educationresources

In particular, you might wish to look at:

· Bi Inclusion in Secondary Schools

· Celebrating Difference and Building Belonging: Making sure non-binary students feel valued at school and college

· Celebrating Diversity Through Pupil Voice

· Creating an LGBT-inclusive primary curriculum

· Creating an LGBT-inclusive curriculum: a guide for secondary schools

· Delivering LGBT-Inclusive Further Education

· Getting Started Toolkit – Early Years Foundation Stage

· Getting Started Toolkit – Primary

· Getting Started Toolkit – Secondary

· Primary Best Practice

· Student voice: setting up a student LGBT group in secondary schools & colleges

· Supporting trans young people: guidance for schools and colleges

To find local LGBT organisations and LGBT youth groups in your area, visit: www.stonewall.org.uk/whatsinmyarea

INFORMATION SERVICE

For help or guidance on any issue affecting LGBT people, contact Stonewall's Information Service:

By phone: 08000 50 20 20

By email: info@stonewall.org.uk

Online: www.stonewall.org.uk/info

RESOURCES FROM CHILDNET

PSHE toolkit - A set of practical online safety PSHE toolkits to explore online issues such as healthy relationships and body image, including links to Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), with pupils aged 11-14 years old.

Step up! Speak up! Teaching Toolkit - A practical campaign toolkit to address the issue of online sexual harassment amongst young people aged 13 – 17 years.

Trust Me - Lesson plans, worksheets and guidance to deliver activities around critical thinking online to primary and secondary pupils.

Safer Internet Day Resources - Education packs, films and more created as part of the Safer Internet Day campaign for pupils aged 3-18. Each year the UK focuses on a different topic, designed to reflect the current issues facing young people online.

Parent Toolkit - Practical tips and advice on different aspects of keeping your child safe online. They can help support parents and carers of any age child to start discussions about their online life, to set boundaries around online behaviour and technology use, and to find out where to get more help and support.

Smartie the Penguin - An online safety story for 3 to 7 year olds, covering cyberbullying, upsetting content and contact from strangers.

Digiduck Stories - The Digiduck® collection has been created to help parents and teachers educate children aged 3 - 7 about online safety. The collection includes an ebook, a poster and an interactive app.

STAR Toolkit - Practical advice and teaching activities to help educators explore online safety with young people who have special educational needs in Key Stage 2 and 3.

Childnet Digital Leaders Programme - A fun, educational online platform which empowers and trains children and young people to educate their peers, parents and teachers about staying safe online.

RESOURCES FROM ELSEWHERE/ FURTHER ORGANISATIONS

Childline – childline.org.uk – A free, confidential service for children under the age of 19 to obtain counselling support online, via email or the phone – 0800 11 11

The Mix – themix.org.uk – A free and confidential multi-channel service for young people aged between 13-25 years old – 0808 808 4994

Young Minds – youngminds.org.uk – A mental health and wellbeing charity that offers support and guidance for young people who need help with their mental health

South West Grid for Learning - swgfl.org.uk - a charity dedicated to empowering the safe and secure use of technology though innovative services, tools, content and policy, nationally and globally.

Respect Phone Line – respectphoneline.org.uk – A confidential and anonymous helpline for anyone concerned about their violence and/or abuse towards a partner or ex-partner – 0808 802 4040

Youth Access –youthaccess.org.uk – Finding access to local counselling services for young people

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACE - an umbrella term used to describe a variation in levels of romantic and/or sexual attraction, including a lack of attraction. Ace people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including, but not limited to, asexual, aromantic, demi and grey-A.

ASEXUAL - Someone who does not experience sexual attraction.

AROMANTIC - Someone who does not experience romantic attraction.

ACEPHOBIA - the fear or dislike of someone who identifies as ace or the mistreatment of that person because of their ace identity or perceived ace identity.

BI - Bi is an umbrella term used to describe an emotional, 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, bi-curious, queer, and other non-monosexual identities.

BIPHOBIA - the fear or dislike of someone who identifies as bi or the mistreatment of that person because of their bi identity or perceived bi identity.

CISGENDER - a word to describe someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people, however cisgender is a more inclusive term.

COMING OUT - when a person first tells someone/others about their identity as lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans.

DEADNAMING - Calling someone by their birth name after they have changed their name. This term is often associated with trans people who have changed their name as part of their transition.

GAY - refers to a man who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. Also a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality – some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian.

GENDER DYSPHORIA - used to describe when a person experiences discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity. This is also the clinical diagnosis for someone who doesn't feel comfortable with the gender they were assigned at birth.

GENDER IDENTITY - a person's internal sense of their own gender. This could be male, female, or something else (for example see non-binary below).

GENDER STEREOTYPES - the ways that we expect people to behave in society according to their gender, or what is commonly accepted as 'normal' for someone of that gender.

HOMOPHOBIA - the fear or dislike of someone who identifies as lesbian or gay, or the mistreatment of that person because of their sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation.

HOMOSEXUAL - this might be considered a more medical term used to describe someone who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards someone of the same gender. The term 'gay' is now more generally used.

LESBIAN - refers to a woman who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women.

LGBT - the acronym for lesbian, gay, bi and trans.

NON-BINARY - 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.

PRONOUN - words we use to refer to people's gender in conversation – for example, 'he' or 'she'. Some people may prefer others to refer to them in gender-neutral language and use pronouns such as 'they'/'their' and 'ze'/'zir'.

QUEER - a term used by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation and/or gender identity. It can also be a way of rejecting the perceived norms of the LGBT community (racism, sizeism, ableism, etc). Although some LGBT people view the word as a slur, it was reclaimed in the late 80s by the queer community who have embraced it.

QUESTIONING - the process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

SEX - assigned to a person on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and reproductive functions. Sometimes the terms 'sex' and 'gender' are interchanged to mean 'male' or 'female'.

SEXISM - 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.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION - a person's emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to another person.

TRANS - an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. 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.

TRANS BOY/MAN - used to describe someone who was assigned female at birth but identifies as a man.

TRANS GIRL/WOMAN - used to describe someone who was assigned male at birth but identifies as a woman.

TRANSPHOBIA - the fear or dislike of someone who identifies as trans or the mistreatment of that person because of their trans identity or perceived trans identity.

TRANSSEXUAL - this was used in the past as a more medical term (similarly to homosexual) to refer to someone who transitioned to live in the 'opposite' gender to the one assigned at birth. This term is still used by some, although many people prefer the term 'trans' or 'transgender'.

STAYING SAFE ONLINE

Practical strategies to best support all children and young people online, including those who identify as LGBT

This guide is for teachers, educators and parents wanting to ensure the LGBT young people they know feel able to speak openly about their experiences online, and to make safer and more informed choices in their digital lives. Here you'll discover simple changes you can make in your school or college, and you'll hear from young people themselves about life online'.

Paul Twocock
Interim Chief Executive, Stonewall

Childnet International

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Acceptance without exception