

Tackling pupil instances of Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (HBT)



We know from the [Just Like Us Report 2021](#) that instances of HBT-phobia are still sadly a common issue in schools:

- 42% of LGBT+ school pupils have been bullied in the past year, double the number of non-LGBT+ pupils (21%).
- Only 33% of LGBT+ pupils say there is a clear process for reporting anti-LGBT+ bullying in their school.

When addressing HBT-phobic instances, schools should follow their antibullying policy. The approach should be no different from that taken to address other bullying incidents, for example racism, islamophobia, antisemitism and so on. When there is a conflict between protected characteristics such as religious views and LGBTQ+ be clear that a person's ability to express their views should not extend to allowing them to discriminate against or bully others.



[For clarification please see the DfE guidance on the Equality Act and schools section 2.7](#)

It can help to include faith role models in your LGBTQ+ displays or lesson planning to provide a positive intersectional perspective. [Access our guide for inspiration!](#)

Ensure all instances of HBT bullying are addressed:

- Ensure you have a clear policy in place to address HBT bullying and that pupils know and understand the processes involved.
- Ensure all instances of HBT bullying are effectively recorded and monitored.
- Be clear that HBT language is “not just banter” and is never acceptable.
- Ensure appropriate sanctions are imposed and consider restorative justice as an effective approach to educate – please see page 2 for further details.

To help reduce rates of HBT bullying schools should strive to create an LGBTQ+ inclusive environment through:

- Visibility
- Embedding LGBTQ+ across curriculum
- Pupil support and involvement
- Inclusive policies
- Appropriate changing room and toilet facilities



Upon implementing changes to tackle bullying, there may appear to be a rise in HBT bullying / incidents. This is quite normal as students feel more confident to come out and to report bullying incidents.

There is a clear legal framework to support schools:

- Equality Act 2010
- Ofsted
- RSE
- KCSIE 2022



Restorative practice includes all of those activities used to engage those affected by harm and conflict to communicate effectively about the impact of behaviour, explore relationships and mutually agree the steps that need to be taken to acknowledge and, where possible, repair the harm that has been caused.

To implement restorative ways of resolving conflict when dealing with HBT incidents, consider the restorative principles:

- Restoration - the primary aim of restorative practice is to address and repair harm.
- Voluntarism - participation is voluntary and based on informed choice.
- Neutrality - restorative processes are fair and unbiased towards participants.
- Safety - processes and practice aim to ensure the safety of all participants and create a safe space for the expression of feelings and views about harm caused.
- Accessibility - restorative processes are non-discriminatory and available to all those affected by conflict and harm. Participants can remain anonymous if they wish to do so, for example, if they do not want to be outed or deadnamed.
- Respect - restorative processes are respectful to the dignity of all participants and those affected by the harm caused.

Restorative Justice is a voluntary process involving communication between the person who has suffered harm, the person who has caused harm and their supporters. It empowers both parties to make decisions about how to repair the harm caused. Staff can offer Restorative Justice following an incident of HBT even if it is not reported to the police. This would involve working with people who have been affected to understand what they need to move forward. It helps to put things right and heal relationships.



This can help people to work towards a positive outcome for all those affected. It can help:

- People understand why the incident happened
- Reduce similar incidents from occurring – making the school a safer place

Restorative Justice can offer those affected by hate crimes or incidents the chance to explain their thoughts and feelings around what happened. It can break down barriers between victims of hate crimes or incidents and those responsible. There is also the opportunity to challenge or educate the person who caused the harm if this is wanted.

Some examples of a formal Restorative Justice process:

- Face-to-face meetings
- Video or audio recordings
- Letters



If you think that this is something you are interested in and want to find out more, get in touch with Why me? at info@why-me.org. [Click here to find your local Restorative Justice service provider](#)