

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer

Educational Services Committee: 4 September 2019

Subject: Policy and guidance for supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender Plus (LGBTi+) pupils in West Dunbartonshire schools

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- a) Inform elected members of the inclusive support practices in West Dunbartonshire schools; and
- b) to inform elected members of our policy and guidance for supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender Plus (LGBTi+) pupils in West Dunbartonshire schools. (Appendix 1)

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members of the Educational Services Committee are asked to:

- a) discuss and note West Dunbartonshire Council's inclusive support practices and to
- b) discuss and note West Dunbartonshire Council's LGBTi+ in Educational Establishments Policy.

3. Background

3.1 At the Council meeting of 23 December 2016, Council affirmed that all young people in West Dunbartonshire and across Scotland had the right to study in a learning environment which is fully inclusive, tolerant and accepting of LGBTi+ identities, and which is free of homophobic and transphobic bullying.

3.2 West Dunbartonshire Council is committed to supporting and maintaining the dignity and individuality of all of our children and young people. (Children and Young Person Act 2014) This is reflected in our Promoting Positive Behaviour and Reducing Bullying Behaviour in Educational Establishments Policy. (Appendix 2) This is regularly reviewed and amended to reflect advice and feedback from all stakeholders, integral to our Improvement Planning frameworks.

3.3 All West Dunbartonshire schools enhance learning and teaching with a range of resources; developing respect and tolerance of self and others. Schools use a range of resources and partner agencies across sectors.

There is no prescribed resource and staff are expected to resource learning and teaching as appropriate to the age and stage of their classes. Typically but not exclusively, these resources will include: West Dunbartonshire Council's Promoting Positive Behaviour and Reducing Bullying behaviour in Educational Establishments Policy, Curricular guidance such as Health and Well-Being plans, Religious Education guidance and plans such as Called to Love and God's Loving Plan, Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (P.A.T.H.s), Rights Respecting Schools, Respect Me and Nurturing approaches.

- 3.4** All schools work with a range of partner agencies; appropriate to individual settings and cohorts of pupils, taking into account age and stage, to develop intra and inter-personal awareness and skills. We recognise parents as key partners in our work and include and inform them in planning of learning and teaching. Our partners include: Stonewall, Show Racism the Red Card, Divided City Theatre Group, Police, Tulloch, Young Carers, School Counselling Service, Hopscotch Theatre, Youth Link Scotland, Scottish Catholic Education Service (SCES).
- 3.5** Continuing planned staff development is integral to supporting children and young people and developing learning and teaching. Head Teachers plan required developments to reflect and respond to their setting and to the needs identified. Supports can include: Educational Psychology input, Diocesan supports, Education Scotland, Local Authority support for schools, Curriculum Leader support Forums in Secondary schools, Youth Scotland.
- 3.6** An increasing number of young people are accessing and supported by youth counselling services. The number of young people presenting with issues around their sexuality is recognised and increasing.
- 3.7** The Archdiocese of Glasgow, Scottish Catholic Education Service (SCES) has supported Catholic schools with guidance in ensuring respect and dignity for all young people, which reflects the teaching of the Catholic Church.
- 3.8** It was recognised that particular guidance and support was required in the form of a policy, specifically guiding and supporting school communities in meeting the needs of LGBTi+ pupils. (Appendix 2)

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** West Dunbartonshire Council resolves to work with a range of stakeholders, including equalities organisations and the Scottish Government, to ensure that our schools actively promote equality and inclusivity for all young people and understand the needs and challenges of LGBTi+ pupils.
- 4.1.1** A continuing programme of professional learning is essential to ensure that staff are equipped to support and promote the dignity and respect of all children and young people.

This is assured through our Pupil Support Curriculum Leaders' Networks, individual school Improvement Framework activities and the Improvement and Performance team.

- 4.1.2** Respect for all staff and pupils remains integral to our ethos. Training, working parties, guidance and policy includes and reflects all stakeholders. Our Pupil Support Curriculum Leaders' Sub group developed policy support and guidance materials for staff working with LGBTi+ pupils. This group included staff from every secondary school, experienced staff with recognised good practice in supporting LGBTi+ pupils and Council Officers: Health and Well-being, Inclusion and Child Protection.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** There are no people implications as a result of this report; however it is essential that robust systems are in place to ensure appropriate staff training.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1** All activities related to the implementation of this policy are contained within Service Budgets.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** If the Council is unable to support the dignity of all young people, we will not be meeting their needs (Children and Young People Act 2014) (Equalities Act 2010).
- 7.2** If the Council is unable to support the dignity and respect of all children and young people then the reputational damage could be significant.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** The supports and Policy enhance the quality of the service provided to all children and young people and therefore can be seen to have a positive impact in terms of the equalities.

9. Consultation

- 9.1** Legal Services and the Section 95 Officer have been consulted in relation to the content of this report. Pupil Support Curriculum Leaders', Additional Support Co-ordinators a focus group of pupils and SCES have been consulted.

10. Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** This report reflects the Council's aspiration to reduce inequalities for the people of West Dunbartonshire.

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – LGBTi+ Policy
Appendix 2 – West Dunbartonshire Council's Promoting
Positive Relationships and Reducing Bullying Behaviour
in Educational Establishments Policy

Background Papers: Schools' (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Wards Affected: All Wards