

## **Diversity and Equality**

Everyone has the right to be educated in a safe environment and at Epinay School we promote equality, diversity and safety in education for LGBT+ people. We want everyone to be aware of diverse identities because these identities shape the world.

Characteristics can be genetic, physical and social. Here are a number of examples:

**AGE, GENDER IDENTITY, SEX, SIZE, RACE, EDUCATION, RELIGION/BELIEF/NON-BELIEF, DISABILITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION.**

Characteristics are not inherently better or worse than the other. It is only society that gives them value. As a school we explore diversity. We empower students at an appropriate age to understand differences within sexual orientation/gender identity to enable students to make informed decisions and interpret things accurately.

At Epinay School, we celebrate all our differences. We recognise that our students come from different families. Like many other schools in the UK, some young people have a mum and a dad, some young people live with just one parent, some young people live with their grandparents and some young people have two mums or two dads. Within our school community, we understand that many young people are growing up in same-sex parent families. Many students will have or know relatives, family friends or neighbours who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Trans. It is important to us at Epinay that we represent different families in our community as we know that young people who see their families reflected in class and around the school will grow up to be confident, respectful and successful citizens.

The data shows 3,192 people in [South Tyneside](#) identified with a sexual orientation other than heterosexual when the census was carried out in March 2021 – 2.6% of respondents.

It is both our moral and statutory duty to teach young people about different families and relationships through PSHE and the wider curriculum. Through this teaching we ensure that the needs of all students are appropriately met, and that all students understand the importance of equality and respect. As a school, we ensure that all of our teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content.

To prepare our young people for the diverse society they live in and to prevent bullying and discrimination, we regularly talk about differences in general as well as different families. At Epinay school, the young people learn about and celebrate all differences primarily through our PSHE scheme of work, all schemes of work, outside visitors and external workshops and through our planned assemblies e.g. celebration of LGBT+ History Month and Pride month. In addition, our school reading spine reflects equality and diversity. All young people are encouraged to talk positively about themselves and others. The school does not tolerate any homophobic, biophobic or transphobic language.

## Why do we use the rainbow as a symbol of LGBT+ equality?

“Rainbow flags tend to be used as a sign of a new era, of hope, or of social change”.



The rainbow flag or pride flag is a symbol of LGBT pride and LGBT social movements. The colours reflect the diversity of the LGBT community and the spectrum of human sexuality and gender. LGBT+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender. The “plus” represents other sexual identities.



## **Rainbow Flag Award**

The Rainbow Flag Award is a national quality assurance framework for all schools and youth-centred organisations. The award focuses on positive LGBT+, (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, plus other related identities), inclusion and visibility.

The Rainbow Flag Award was gained in 2021. This award recognises a whole school approach to LGBT+ inclusion, as well as developing strategies to effectively challenge and combat LGBTphobic bullying.

We are committed to working with young people your LGBT+ students, those from LGBT+ families, and LGBT+ staff members.

## **What Does LGBTQ+ Mean?**

LGBTQ+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or sometimes questioning), and others. The "plus" represents other sexual identities including pansexual and Two-Spirit. The first four letters of the acronym have been used since

the 1990s, but in recent years there has been an increased awareness of the need to be inclusive of other sexual identities to offer better representation. The acronym is used to represent a diverse range of sexualities and gender-identities, referring to anyone who is transgender and/or same/similar gender attracted.

# An LGBT Glossary of Terms

A comprehensive list of terms that you may come across when discussing lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people.

Term	Definition
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	a person's emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to another person.
<b>Sex</b>	registered 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'.
<b>Lesbian</b>	refers to a woman who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women.
<b>Gay</b>	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.
<b>Homosexual</b>	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 sex or gender. The term 'gay' is now more generally used.

<b>Bisexual</b>	refers to a person who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards both men and women.
<b>LGBT</b>	the acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (sometimes LGBTQ – Queer or questioning, which can be self identified, but not labelled by someone else as a description).
<b>Coming out</b>	when a person first tells someone /others about their identity as lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans.
<b>Homophobia</b>	the fear or dislike of someone who identifies as lesbian or gay.
<b>Biphobia</b>	the fear or dislike of someone who identifies as bisexual.
<b>Transphobia</b>	the fear or dislike of someone who identifies as trans.
<b>Gender identity</b>	a person's internal sense of their own gender. This could be male, female, or something else e.g. non-binary.
<b>Gender stereotypes</b>	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.
<b>Questioning</b>	the process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
<b>Trans</b>	an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were registered with 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.
<b>Queer</b>	in the past a derogatory term for LGBT individuals. The term has now been reclaimed by LGBT young people in particular who don't identify with traditional categories around gender identity and sexual orientation, but is still viewed to be derogatory by some.
<b>Cisgender</b>	a word to describe someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were registered with at birth. Non-trans is also used by some people.

<b>Non-binary</b>	an umbrella term for a person who identifies outside of the 'gender binary' (in other words, outside of 'male' or 'female').
<b>Transsexual</b>	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 registered with at birth. This term is still used by some although many people prefer the term trans or transgender.
<b>Gender variant</b>	someone who does not conform to the gender roles and behaviours that they were registered with at birth. This is usually used in relation to children or young people.
<b>Asexual</b>	asexuality means having little to no sexual attraction to others.

### **Signposting**

Below are some useful links if you would like to find out more or require further support. Please contact the safeguarding team in school if you would like support on the referral process to Humankind or any 1-1 discussion.

<https://humankindcharity.org.uk/service/lgbt-north-east/>

[Stonewall Website](#)

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/sexual-identity/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/sex-relationships/sexuality-sexual-orientation/>