



## LGBTQIA+ INCLUSION POLICY

At VLC, we believe that all Relationships Education and RSE must be LGBTQIA+ inclusive, promote gender equality and actively challenge all forms of abuse, discrimination and oppression. It needs to reflect and celebrate a diversity of cultures, faiths and family types and support children and young people to be their unique and authentic selves.

This policy has been written to ensure the protection and education of all LGBTQIA+ individuals and relates to a number of school policies, including Equal Opportunities, Anti-bullying and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). It sets out in more detail the school's approach to LGBTQIA+ people and issues in line with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Equality Act 2010:

There are several pieces of legislation and statutory guidance relevant to LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

- Advancing equality (Public Sector Equality Duty, Equality Act 2010)
- Preventative anti-bullying measures (Section 89, Education Inspections Act 2006)
- Broad and balanced curriculum (Section 78, Education Act 2002)
- Safeguarding Children (Keeping children safe in Education 2019; Section 175 of the Education Act 2002)
- Pupil wellbeing (Section 10 of the Children's Act 2004)

### Education and Inspections Act 2006

Schools have a duty to promote the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people in their care, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils and those experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic (HBT) bullying.

### Equality Act 2010

Schools are required to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender reassignment. This includes tackling HBT bullying. Schools are also required to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. This means that schools should go beyond tackling HBT bullying and take proactive steps to promote respect and understanding of LGBTQIA+ people and issues.

### VLC Aims:

- To develop a whole school approach for staff, students, parents and visitors
- To make LGBTQIA+Q+ Inclusion a key feature of the culture at VLC
- To work restoratively together with students and families
- To provide a holistic and caring approach
- To uphold the LGBTQIA+ Charter

- To provide an inclusive environment in which LGBTQIA+ pupils, staff and guardians are valued and respected
- To promote understanding of and support the needs of LGBTQIA+ pupils, staff and guardians
- To promote LGBTQIA+ awareness and issues through the provision of an inclusive curriculum
- To monitor and tackle homophobic, bi-phobic or transphobic (HBT) bullying and language

### **The LGBTQIA+ Charter**

The LGBTQIA+ Charter helps safeguard lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning people's human rights, particularly in receipt of services, at school. These rights draw on international human rights and relevant UK and Scottish legislation and have been developed in consultation with LGBTQIA+ people about what's most important to them.

- LGBTQIA+ people have the right to be themselves and to live free from prejudice and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.
- LGBTQIA+ people have the right to be kept safe from harm and to be protected from hate crime, bullying and other forms of violence.
- LGBTQIA+ people have the right to be heard, treated fairly and for their views and experiences to be taken into account.
- LGBTQIA+ people have the right to be healthy, with equal access to healthcare, and for the impact of prejudice and discrimination on their health properly addressed.
- LGBTQIA+ people have the right to form relationships, free from abuse and with equality of recognition.
- LGBTQIA+ people have the right to privacy and information about sexual orientation and gender identity not to be disclosed to others, without consent to do so.
- LGBTQIA+ people have the right to education that recognises diversity and implements programmes that seek to eliminate prejudice on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.
- LGBTQIA+ people have the right to be cared for free from prejudice and discrimination in every setting.

### **VLC seeks to achieve these aims:**

- By ensuring that school policies and practices are inclusive and supportive of LGBTQIA+ people and explicitly state that homophobic, biphobic or transphobic (HBT) language and bullying are unacceptable;
- By providing training to staff in supporting LGBTQIA+ pupils, developing an LGBTQIA+ inclusive curriculum and tackling homophobic, biphobic or transphobic (HBT) language and bullying;
- By providing support structures, information and resources to LGBTQIA+ pupils on LGBTQIA+ issues and support services;
- By providing pupils with LGBTQIA+ inclusive Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), opportunities to discuss gender identity and sexuality, and including LGBTQIA+ people and themes in the PSHE and wider curriculum where relevant;

- By providing multiple ways for pupils to report homophobic, biphobic or transphobic (HBT) language and bullying, monitoring (including through staff and pupil surveys) and recording homophobic, biphobic or transphobic (HBT) language and bullying, as well as ensuring that pupils are aware that homophobic, biphobic or transphobic (HBT) language and bullying are wrong;
- By ensuring that the school library contains books with LGBTQIA+ themes and that any projects or displays which celebrate diversity or tackle bullying are LGBTQIA+ inclusive;
- By ensuring that the school provides accessible toilets and changing facilities.
- By nominating a member of staff (Bradley Lintern) as the school's LGBTQIA+ lead to monitor the implementation of this policy and provide training and additional support and advice to pupils and staff.
- An action plan for the next two years will be written, setting out the school's strategy for embedding LGBTQIA+ awareness and inclusion more firmly in its practices and in the wider curriculum

### **Disclosures**

If a pupil tells you they feel like they may be a different gender, or aren't sure which gender they are, you should:

Listen calmly and neutrally

Take what they say seriously

Ask them how you can help

Be positive and somewhat 'matter of fact'

Reassure the pupil that their gender feelings are valid

Reassure the pupil that you are pleased that they are able to talk to you about their feelings

Ask questions in a sensitive and gentle manner

Ask if the pupil has told anyone else

Being trans is not a safeguarding concern in itself. You don't need to tell the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), but could encourage the pupil to speak to your LGBTQIA+ pastoral lead.

However, due to the stigma around transition, many trans pupils experience poor mental health – you can learn more about the link between being trans and mental illness on Trans Hub.

If you have a safeguarding concern about a trans pupil, you should of course report it to your DSL.

VLC should not tell a pupil's parents about anything they've said about their gender identity – it's up to individuals to choose who they tell. To 'out' someone without their permission is considered harassment, whether or not the person intended their behaviour to be offensive. This is set out in the transphobic bullying guidance from the Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIRES) and the Home Office.

Remember to ask the pupil what name and pronoun they'd like you to use in any communication with their parents, and to let you know if that changes.

If a pupil's parents aren't supportive of their child's identity, it will be difficult for you and the pupil to navigate transitioning at school. If a pupil wants to go ahead without the support of their parents, you should apply the principles of Gillick competence.

You could support the pupil to live in their preferred gender by allowing them to change into a spare uniform that matches their gender identity when they arrive at school.

If parents are receptive, signpost them to further information and support.

## **Names**

Keep in mind that you're representing the best interests of the pupil, so continue to address and refer to them by their preferred name and pronouns, except when communicating with their parents. Make sure all staff are aware that they should use the pupil's birth name and pronoun when communicating with the pupil's parents, but the pupil's preferred name and pronouns when speaking to or about the pupil at school.

If the pupil is going by a different name than the name recorded on the system, make sure all staff are aware of this. You could include a note in the register to let any supply teachers know that the pupil goes by a different name than the name on the register.