

SUPPORTING LGBT+ YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCHOOLS



**Bryony Mole, Charter
Development Officer, She/Her**

**Jamie Herd, Charter Delivery
Officer, He/Him**

WHAT WE WILL COVER IN THIS SESSION?

1. Background of LGBT Youth Scotland
2. LGBT+ Terminology
3. Life in Scotland 2022 Research
4. Main Challenges
5. Best Practice
6. Support for Schools and Young People

Questions are welcome throughout the presentation

WHO ARE LGBT YOUTH SCOTLAND?

LGBT Youth Scotland are a national youth organisation, began as a volunteer organisation in 1989 and established as a national charity in 2003

Our vision is that Scotland is the best place to grow up for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people.

Our mission is to play a leading role is to provide safe spaces for LGBT+ young people through our youth work, to promote health and wellbeing for LGBT+ young people, and to be an influential partner in campaigning for LGBT+ equality and human rights.



LGBT TERMINOLOGY

Lesbian: A girl or woman who is emotionally and/or sexually attracted to other girls or women.

Gay: Someone who is emotionally and/or sexually attracted to people of the same gender. (People of any gender use this term).

Bisexual: A person who is emotionally and/or sexually attracted to **more than one** gender.

Asexual: A person who may not experience sexual attraction or may only experience it in certain circumstances.



LGBT TERMINOLOGY

Queer: An umbrella term used for diverse sexual orientations or gender identities that are not heterosexual and do not fit within a gender binary.

Transgender: An umbrella term for someone whose gender identity or expression differs in some way from the sex assigned to them at birth. Transgender is commonly shortened to 'trans'.



LGBT TERMINOLOGY

Non-Binary: People who do not identify exclusively as male or female or fall into the 'gender binary'. Non-binary can be used as an umbrella term for other identities such as gender non-conforming, genderqueer, genderfluid.

Cisgender: individuals who have a match between the sex they were assigned at birth and their gender identity. By having a term for people whose gender identity matches their assigned sex at birth we can avoid using damaging descriptions such as 'trans people' and 'normal people' or 'other people'. Instead, we can talk about transgender (trans) people and cisgender (cis) people.



A QUICK DIVE INTO THE 'WHY' THIS WORK IS IMPORTANT



CONTEXT FOR THE RESEARCH

- Quinquennial survey: 2007, 2012, 2017, 2022
- Sample size for 2022: 1,279 participants
- Questions covered a wide range of topics pertaining to lived experiences of LGBTI young people in Scotland



WE ASKED YOUNG PEOPLE “WOULD YOU SAY THAT THE EXPERIENCE OF LGBTI+ YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCHOOL IS GOOD, OKAY, OR BAD?”

What percentage of young people answered ‘Good’ ?

A.30%

B.25%

C.10%

WE ASKED YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING IN SCHOOLS

What percentage of lesbian/gay young people stated they experienced homophobic/biphobic bullying in school

A. 80%

B. 70%

C. 50%

WE ASKED YOUNG PEOPLE HOW CONFIDENT THEY FELT REPORTING BULLYING TO STAFF/ AUTHORITY FIGURES IN EDUCATION

What percentage of young people felt confident reporting HBT bullying to staff/authority figures in school?

A. 30%

B. 50%

C. 25%

WE ASKED YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT HOW HBT BULLYING HAS IMPACTED THEIR EDUCATION

What percentage of LGBTQIA+ participant have left education as a direct result of homophobia/biphobia/transphobia

A. 13%

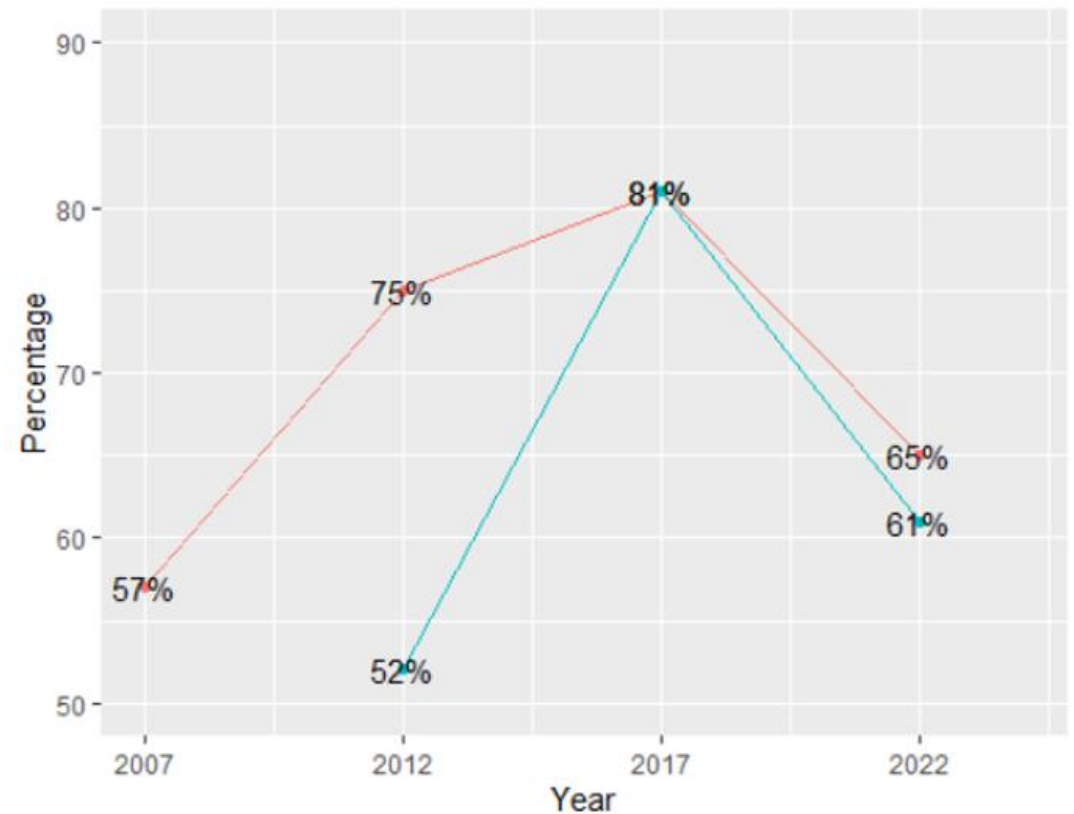
B. 9%

C. 20%

IS SCOTLAND A GOOD PLACE TO BE LGBTI?

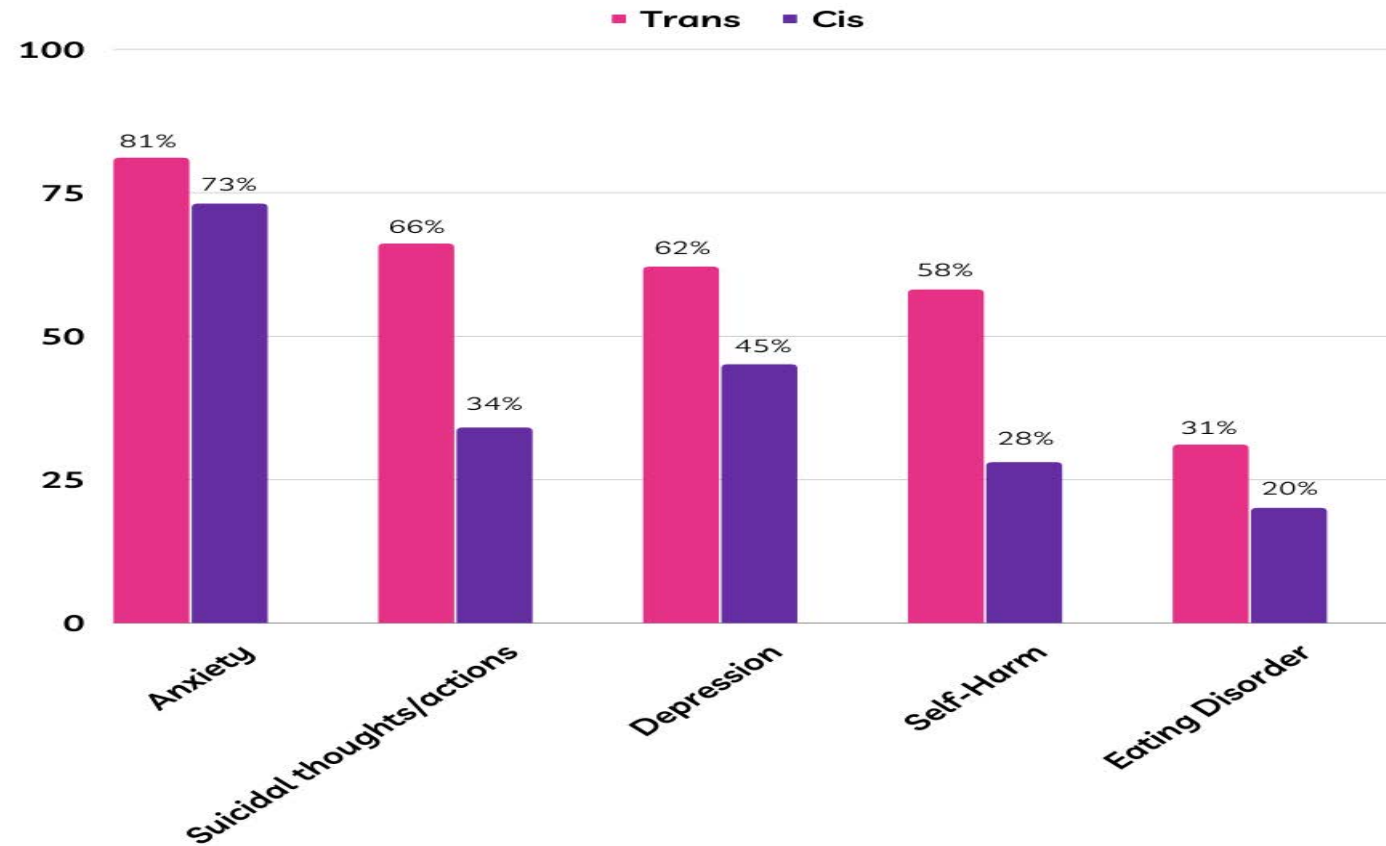
Percentage answering 'Yes' has fallen:

- **81%** in 2017
- **65%** in 2022



IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

Percentage of Life in Scotland 2022 participants experiencing a mental health condition or related behaviour



IMPACT ON EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Figure 36: Percentage of participants who feel that homophobia/biphobia/transphobia had a negative impact

Negative impact	Percentage
Educational experience	70%
Educational attainment	36%
Training opportunities	30%
Employment opportunities	33%
Financial situation	23%

QUOTES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE'S RESPONSES ABOUT EDUCATION

'I think if I hadn't experienced bullying when I was younger I wouldn't have been so distracted and paranoid and I would have been able to focus on the classes instead.'

'I left school way too early because I was so afraid that I'd be outed and ridiculed for my identity. Now I'm playing catch-up with my qualifications and am about two years behind where I'd like to be. I could already be in university instead of having to take extra classes.'

Curricula including lessons on specific LGBTI issues

'I was forced to drop out of high school following an event where another student threatened my life. I had to start over again at a new school and by that point was so traumatised that I couldn't attend mainstream school and thereby completed my exams in a secure SEN department.'

'More identities being involved in PSE and science. Science is very binary. Never once touches on intersex people existing, and I imagine it would confuse and make intersex people feel out of place.'

'More education about queer people! SO many of our problems would be solved if our peers were less ignorant.'

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Did any of these statistics surprise you? Why? Or why not?
- Are these statistics reflected in your own practice, experience, and understanding of working with LGBTI young people?

MAIN CHALLENGES FOR LGBTI YOUNG PEOPLE

- Fear of bullying, harassment, or discrimination
- Apprehension to build trust or being open about who they are
- Mental health issues as a result of minority stress
- Fear of being 'outed' to peers or family, or seen as to be involved with LGBTI groups/activities
- Lack of visibility: on the website, in staff, in administrative processes, or in activities
- Risk of feeling unsafe, uncomfortable or insecure
- Fear of been seen as 'difficult' or being treated unequally

FOR STAFF

- Lack of knowledge on LGBTI identities and issues
- Confusion over pronouns and why they are important
- Lack of confidence on supporting LGBTI young people
- Unsure how to challenge homophobia, biphobia or transphobia
- Fear of 'getting it wrong' and upsetting people / getting 'cancelled'
- Fear of backlash
- Not sure where/when to signpost

BEST PRACTICE IN INCLUSION



QUESTION TO CONSIDER

Now we've explored some of the key issues and challenges LGBTI young people face in in school, what do you think would make your practices more inclusive?

Active listening and respectful,
proportionate enquiry

Involve young people in consultation
and decision-making

Avoid gendered language when
appropriate

Consider forms and reporting
language

Respect identities and pronouns



Visibility in resources

Celebrate key dates in the LGBT+ calendar

Challenge homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and gender stereotypes

“More role models, better representation of LGBT people of all walks of life, age, status/class, race would be a good thing. If people could see those people then it would normalise them.”



“Knowing that you're not alone is a big step to getting better. When you have people around you that are going through the same kind of issues it can be helpful and you can help each other through it.”

Invest in mental health first aid

Respect intersectionality

Create LGBT+ safe spaces in schools

Policies reflect the needs of all learners

Gather data and ask about
LGBT+ young people's
experiences

Learn, educate, and have
conversations which may
be uncomfortable

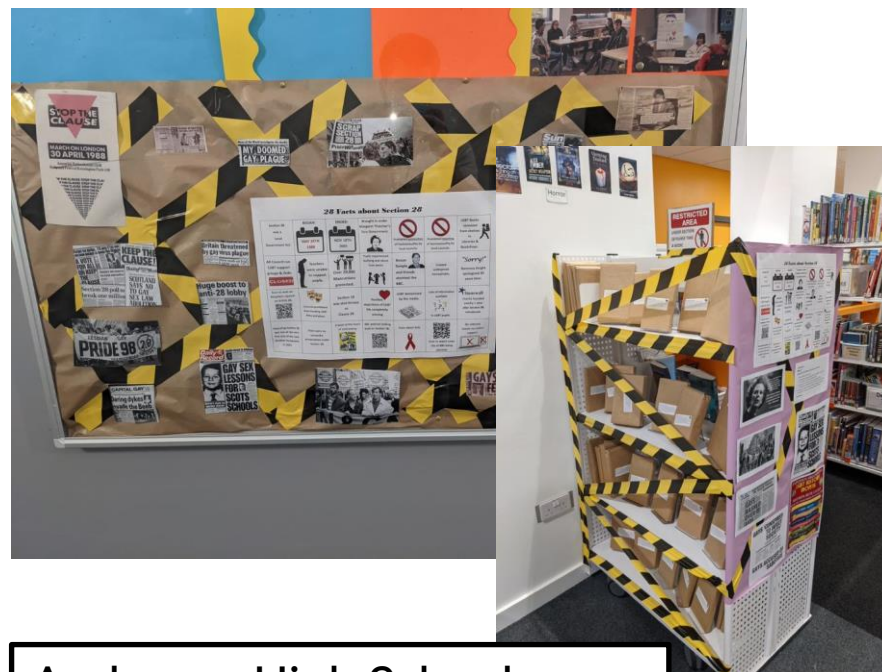
Show kindness, empathy,
and patience to yourself
and others



BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES - SECONDARY



Airdrie Academy –
Rainbow Lanyards
and Badges for
Visibility



Anderson High School –
Section 28 display and
lessons for LGBTHM 2022



Barrhead High School –
Teacher Pronoun Posters
and Pupil LGBTQIA+ Group
Posters

RESOURCES



lgbt education.scot

LIFE
in SCOTLAND
for LGBT
YOUNG PEOPLE

LGBT YOUTH SCOTLAND

Top Tips for Trans Inclusion in Youth Work Spaces

Youth clubs and services are spaces where transgender and non-binary young people should feel welcome, relaxed, respected and able to be themselves.

This resource offers practical advice to help you make your setting inclusive for trans and non-binary young people. This is not an exhaustive guide, and we hope you find it useful.

Definitions used:

Gender identity: a person's internal sense of self in relation to their gender, which may or may not align with the gender assigned to them at birth.

Some people may use words like trans and non-binary to describe their gender identity.

Transgender: sometimes shortened to trans. An umbrella term for those whose gender identity or expression differs in some way from the gender assigned to them at birth.

Non-binary: someone who does not identify as only male or female. They may feel like a blend of both or feel like neither.

Cisgender: sometimes known as cis. A term for someone whose gender identity or expression matches the gender they were assigned at birth.

Sexual orientation: This is different from gender identity. It refers to who a person is romantically, physically and / or sexually attracted to. This includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual and asexual identities.

We use the term LGBT+ to be inclusive of lots of identities.

MY NAME IS

MY PRONOUNS ARE

I TEACH

AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT ME IS

www.lgbtyouth.org.uk

LGBT YOUTH SCOTLAND

10 TOP TIPS FOR CREATING AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

- CHALLENGE HOMOPHOBIA, BIPHOBIA & TRANSPHOBIA**
We should never ignore pejorative language. Ensure that you help pupils to understand why they shouldn't use pejorative language rather than just making them avoid using it around you. Pupils should know that if they use the word 'gay' as an insult it will be treated as homophobic bullying and dealt with accordingly.
- BE A VISIBLE & PROUD LGBT ALLY**
Small everyday things that visibly show you are an LGBT ally can have the greatest impact in creating an inclusive environment. Think rainbow bangles, LGBT badges or flags! Wearing or displaying these items also signifies you are someone who pupils can trust within the school.
- TRY TO AVOID ASSUMPTIONS & UNCONSCIOUS BIAS**
Sometimes we need to remind ourselves and make a conscious effort not to make assumptions. Don't assume that a pupil being LGBT is an 'issue' to address or a negative thing. Try not to assume heterosexuality or 'heteronormativity' within the classroom/community.
- USE CORRECT PRONOUNS**
Ensure you respect a person's pronouns if they are different to the ones you have previously used for them. If you're unsure, ask them. If you're not sure, it's okay to ask. Apologise, move on and consciously try to get it right next time.
- CHALLENGE GENDER STEREOTYPES**
It's important for young people to develop their own sense of self. Their environment at school can help them do this. Use LGBT identities to celebrate difference and diversity in the classroom. Diversity should be celebrated.

10 TOP TIPS FOR CREATING AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

- DEVELOP AN LGBT GROUP / GENDER AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION ALLIANCE (GSA)**
How Good is our School? (HGOS) suggests schools create an 'equality working group' that supports inclusion and equality work. A pupil-led LGBT group can create opportunities for networking and visibility whilst promoting wellbeing within a school environment. If you don't have one set up in your school, see our guidance for setting up a GSA, available for download at lgbtyouth.org.uk
- THINK ABOUT LANGUAGE**
Language is powerful and can often reinforce stereotypical messages. Dividing a class by 'boys' and 'girls' can be distressing for trans/non-binary pupils. Instead of saying 'oh, girls and boys' try 'oh everyone'. Some schools now use 'head' to be more inclusive.
- VISIBILITY WITHIN THE SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM**
How might your school curriculum be more inclusive of LGBT identities? Think role models, lesson plans, textbooks, books and films. Our Guide to Curriculum Inclusion is available for download at lgbtyouth.org.uk
- UNDERSTAND THE LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE AND POLICIES WITHIN YOUR SCHOOL**
There are frameworks, policies and legislation to ensure we are teaching about, and protecting LGBT identities. Think about the policies in your school and how they might be more LGBT inclusive, your anti-bullying policy, uniform policy etc.
- LEADERSHIP**
Cultural change doesn't happen overnight. It takes persistence and time. Having a staff team committed to creating an inclusive school environment is vital. Leadership from senior management, working alongside teachers, pupils and parents/careers will ensure there is a whole school approach to inclusion.

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@lgbtys

LGBT YOUTH SCOTLAND **LGBT CHARTER**

WE CELEBRATE TRANSGENDER VISIBILITY

RESPECT EVERYONE'S GENDER IDENTITY. USE THE PRONOUNS PEOPLE ASK YOU TO USE.

Support is available for LGBT youth LGBT gender identity and transsexual people if you have difficulties

Top Tips for Trans Inclusion in Youth Work Spaces

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The most successful interventions are those embedded within a positive ethos and culture. Practitioners can support children and young people in responding to bullying by role modelling what is acceptable and taking the time to allow a child to understand the effects of certain language.

RESPONDING TO 'THAT'S SO GAY' – CREATING UNDERSTANDING IN PRIMARY SETTINGS

STEP ONE – LEARNING: EXPLAIN WHAT IT MEANS
 "The word gay is used to describe a boy who loves another boy or girl who loves another girl, not to mean something is bad or that you don't like it."

STEP TWO – EMPATHY: EXPLAIN THE IMPACT ON LGBT PEOPLE
 "What message do you think gay people might hear when you use the word like this? What about kids who have 2 mums or 2 dads or family members who are gay? How might it make them feel?"

STEP THREE – CREATE BOUNDARIES
 Set up the boundaries: explain the anti-bullying policy, what is not tolerated, and the possible consequences.

RESPONSES TO 'THAT'S SO GAY'

Although young learners might not know what they are saying or what the word means, they are learning there is a connection between the word 'gay' and 'bad' or 'rubbish'. Be clear that is unacceptable and has a negative impact when used to mean something is bad. You could say:

- "Using the word 'gay' to leave someone is bullying and is unacceptable. If it happens again I will report it as bullying."
- "You may not have meant to be hurtful, but when you use the word 'gay' to mean something is bad or stupid, it is hurtful." Follow-up: "Do you know why it is hurtful?"
- "Do you know what 'gay' means?"
- "It's not OK to use 'gay' to mean something is bad." Follow-up: "Do you know why?"
- "Remember we don't use put-downs in this class."
- "Even if you didn't mean to offend people who are gay, it is offensive to call this class gay. If you don't like something, then say you don't like it."

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CURRICULUM INCLUSION

LGBT Mapping Across Curriculum for Excellence

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www.lgbyouth.org.uk

LIFE in SCOTLAND for LGBT+ YOUNG PEOPLE

More resources available for download from lgbyouth.org.uk

SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS AND YOUNG PEOPLE



WHAT IS THE LGBT CHARTER?

The LGBT Charter has been developed to support schools and education settings to undertake training and review policies, practice and resources to improve inclusion for LGBT+ learners. The Charter enables settings to become safe spaces for LGBTI young people by supporting and training staff to shift and challenge any prejudice-based culture to a more inclusive one.

Being awarded our LGBT Charter enables you to send a positive message, with confidence, that your school is a champion of LGBT inclusion and a place where LGBT employees, students, and parents/carers will be safe, supported and included.

The LGBT Charter makes a clear statement that equality and diversity are at the heart of your school.

If you would like to sign up or learn more about the LGBT Charter programme email:

lgbtcharter@lgbtyouth.org.uk

SUPPORT FOR LGBT YOUNG PEOPLE

It is important that school staff and young people know what support is available for LGBT+ learners who might be after some advice or even just to connect with like minded young people.

1. Youth Groups

A number of LGBT+ youth groups run across Scotland, find your local youth group using this link - <https://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/groups-and-support/find-local-youth-groups/>

SUPPORT FOR LGBT YOUNG PEOPLE

2. Digital Youth Work

LGBT Youth Scotland offer a wide variety of online support to young people.

This includes a digital chatline for young people (see image), a Discord server for youth groups for LGBT young people to connect and 1 to 1 online support sessions. Young people (ages 13 – 25) can use these services directly or a referral can be made by emailing:

info@lgbtyouth.org.uk



SUPPORT FOR LGBT YOUNG PEOPLE

Many other organisations have useful information and helplines for LGBT+ young people:

- Time for Inclusive Education: <https://www.tie.scot/>
- Scottish Trans: <https://www.scottishtrans.org/community/>
- LGBT Health and Wellbeing: <http://lgbt-helpline-scotland.org.uk/>. The LGBT Helpline is open every Tuesday and Wednesday between 12-9pm on 0300 123 2523.
- Mermaids: <https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/helpline-support-services/>. The Mermaids helpline is for transgender and non-binary youth, up to and including the age of 25. Helpline Open Monday to Friday, 9am to 9pm on 0808 801 0400



QUESTIONS?

Thank you for listening to our presentation.

If you would like to find out more about how we support schools please go to www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/the-lgbt-charter/

We will now have time to answer questions you may have about LGBT+ inclusive education.





@LGBTYS



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@LGBT Youth Scotland

lgbtyouth.org.uk

bryony.mole@lgbtyouth.org.uk

jamie.herd@lgbtyouth.org.uk