

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30th January 2015

Growing up as a Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgender young person in North Yorkshire

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide the Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee with information on the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people growing up in North Yorkshire. This draws from data in the 2014 Growing Up in North Yorkshire survey and the experiences of LGBT young people from the Harrogate LGBT youth group.
- 1.2 The data and testimonials clearly show that the majority of LGBT young people are having a more negative experience growing up in North Yorkshire in relation to their peers. This relates to their time at school, engagement in risky behaviours and their emotional health and wellbeing.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In the Growing Up in North Yorkshire 2014 survey Year 10 pupils were asked about their sexuality. The table below sets out the responses.

Year 10	Gay/lesbian	Bisexual	Trans	Questioning / don't know	Other	Prefer not to say
NY boys	2%	3%	1%	2%	1%	1%
NY Girls	1%	5%	1%	5%	1%	1%

- 2.2 Year 6, 8 and 10 pupils were asked for the first time in the Growing Up in North Yorkshire survey 2014 if they had heard the word 'gay' being used in a negative way in the last month. Using gay in this detrimental way has a very negative impact on the LGBT community.

- 2.3 The results from the survey showed:

	Been called 'gay' in the last month in a negative way	
	Boy	Girl
North Yorkshire Year 6 pupils	38%	17%
North Yorkshire Year 8/10 pupils	31%	13%
LGB Year 10 pupils	64%	55%

- 2.4 'Background document one' shows the responses of the LGB young people in comparison to other social identify groups in the Growing Up in North Yorkshire survey. Data has been highlighted that shows a significant difference to the responses given by the average North Yorkshire Year 10 pupil. For all but one of the indicators the LGB young people are statistically significantly different. This covers their experience of bullying, emotional health and wellbeing and engagement in risky behaviours. Within the social identity groups LGB pupils were most likely to have been bullied at or near school in the last year, had the lowest 'high resilience' score and worried most about being different.

- 2.5 Further comparisons show that between the LGB young people in North Yorkshire and the average year 10 pupils in North Yorkshire there are further negative differences for example, 66% LGB pupils rated their safety at school as 'very good or good' compared to 81% of year 10 pupils, 54% of the girls who identified as being LGB had cut or hurt themselves compared to 16% of year 10 girls, 51% of the LGB young people communicate with people they have met online and don't know in real life compared to 28% of year 10 pupils and a final example is 18% are or have been in an unhealthy relationships where a partner has used hurtful or threatening language towards them compared to 8% of year 10 pupils.
- 2.6 This data shows that North Yorkshire has a significant number of young people in the LGBT community and more who are questioning their sexuality but unfortunately the data also clearly shows that their sexuality makes them a vulnerable group. Is there enough awareness about this group of young people and are schools, and services meeting the LGBT young people's needs to ensure they have a positive educational experience, which enables them to achieve their potential and that they enjoy a happy and healthy life?

3.0 Related Aspects

Stonewall Education Equality Index

- 3.1 The Education and Skills Service has been the lead for the past three years on the Stonewall Education Equality Index which all local authorities are able to engage with. Completing the index enables local authorities to assess their performance and benchmark their own progress year-on-year on the work being done to celebrate difference and prevent and tackle homophobic bullying.
- 3.2 North Yorkshire's score on the Stonewall Education Equality index has risen from 52% in 2011 to 86% in 2014 (we came 14th out of 45 local authorities). From completing the index an action plan has been developed that is monitored by the LGBT delivery group. This group is made up of representatives from the Education and Skills team, the youth service, the police and schools. A key aspect of participating in the Equality Index has been the development of a range of documentation and guidance for schools. However the survey data and feedback from students indicates that there is a need for the schools and other professionals to be much more pro-active to ensure that LGBT young people feel safe at school, homophobic language is consistently challenged in all schools, both primary and secondary, to ensure they have a positive educational experience. This will support the young people to achieve their potential and enjoy a happy and healthy life.
- 3.3 The index covers three key areas.

Stonewall Education Equality Index	North Yorkshire Evidence
<p>The role of the local authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is written documentation offered to schools that states they must tackle all forms of bullying and discriminatory language including homophobic bullying and language and is anti-bullying training offered to schools which includes these key messages? 	<p>A range of supporting materials have been developed for schools with a focus on anti-bullying as well as some specific guidance for tackling homophobic language and bullying and supporting LGBT young people</p> <p>Guidance has also been developed to support schools that may have a Transgender pupil(s)</p> <p>Training has been offered to both primary and secondary schools and has been attended by some schools</p>

<p>Work with local schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is guidance offered to schools about how to record and analysis all incidents of bullying, including those of homophobic bullying? • Have good practice primary and secondary schools been identified that can share their good practice on celebrating difference and preventing and tackling homophobic bullying with other schools? 	<p>Guidance is provided to schools on how to record and analysis their bullying data</p> <p>A cluster of primary schools in Craven piloted the ‘challenging homophobic’ resources for primary schools and the FREE video by Stonewall. This information has now been disseminated to all primary schools through the PSHE network meeting and information to support anti-bullying week 2014</p> <p>A number of secondary schools have shared their good practice at the LGBT training for secondary schools, through secondary PSHE network meetings and on-going work. Schools recently participated in a ‘mind your language’ competition for anti-bullying week 2014 which has led to a school and youth club winner- both resources will be shared with schools as future curriculum support materials</p>
<p>Working with the local community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the LA link with LGBT youth groups? and other public and private sector service to prevent and tackle homophobic bullying in schools? • Does the LA promote mental health support for LGBT young people in schools and youth groups? 	<p>Good links have been made with the Harrogate LGBT youth group which has led to some joint training with the young people to youth workers to increase their understanding of LGBT issues. The Scarborough LGBT youth group have developed a video which has been disseminated to secondary schools.</p>

The Harrogate LGBT youth group

3.4 The young people in the group are very keen to promote the needs of the LGBT community and to support professionals and schools understand their needs and ‘stamp out’ homophobic bullying. They have co-delivered some training to youth workers which they are keen to replicate with other professionals and they feel that by sharing their experiences will help others:

- “My school experience is bad. I do not look forward to going to school just because of the people and comments I get. I get hate” (Female, lesbian, aged 15)
- “During school I was bullied all the time- it was only when I went to college that I came out as gay” (Male, gay, aged 21)
- “I have been bullied for so long about being gay. I also have had self-harm issues. School was difficult and I’m so glad I left” (Female, bisexual, aged 18)
- “I am happy with who I am inside –just not out. I have good and bad days and struggle with wearing the boys’ uniform” (Female, transgender, aged 16)
- “Being able to go to an LGBT youth group is great – I am more myself and we have all had to go through things” (Male, gay, aged 18)
- “The LGBT youth group has helped me feel more confident within myself. People here support me and don’t make me feel down or bad about myself” (Female, bisexual, aged 17)

Mind Your Language – Anti-Bullying Competition for Secondary schools and Youth Groups in November 2014

- 3.5 Schools were asked to enter an anti-bullying competition in November 2014 to develop something creative working with the title, 'Mind your language'. The focus was on on pupils' use of homophobic language, asking them to reflect on their use of derogatory words relating to lesbians, gays and bisexuals e.g. using the word 'gay' to mean something negative. A number of schools and youth groups entered and the winning entries were from Ripon Grammar School with a rap about the negative use of the word gay. The Harrogate LGBT youth group have produced a short video expressing their experiences of homophobic language. These two resources along with a video that has been produced by the LGBT youth group in Scarborough will be available to schools as teaching and learning resources.

4.0 Recommendations

- Ensure the needs of LGBT young people are taken into consideration in strategic planning e.g. Young and Yorkshire, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and that their needs are taken into consideration in all relevant commissioning.
- Continue with the annual submission of the Stonewall Education Equality Index and widen the membership of the delivery group to work on the identified actions.
- Continue to raise awareness with all schools and professionals who work with young people and increase the expectations that they will challenge homophobic language and support LGBT young people in their school and the wider community. The aim being that all LGBT young people have a positive educational experience, which enables them to achieve their potential and that they enjoy a happy and healthy life.
- Continue the Harrogate and Scarborough LGBT youth group provision and explore how support can be provided to LGBT young people in other areas of North Yorkshire.
- Continue to support LGBT young people to 'have a voice' to raise awareness and understanding of their experiences and issues with professionals and young people.
- Explore how mental health services can be targeted to support LGBT young people.

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Background Documents: Growing Up in North Yorkshire 2014 – Equalities monitoring data

Growing Up in North Yorkshire 2014 – Equalities monitoring in North Yorkshire

Year 10 percentage data

	Yr 10	LGB	Ethnic minority	Young carers	Children in care	One parent family	Not in own home	SEN	Disability /long term illness	FSM	Armed forces family
Actual number of pupils	3529	180	261	117	23	616	65	243	96	237	151
Bullied at or near school last year	17%	41%	17	31	15	20	24	29	34	30	23
High Resilience Score	17%	7%	21	15	14	12	10	16	13	13	14
High wellbeing score	20%	9%	19	12	0	16	9	16	21	10	15
Worry 'quite a lot/ a lot' about being different	6%	39%	17	11	13	9	20	8	8	9	11
Ever tried smoking	34%	49%	38	56	61	44	60	39	30	51	33
Drank alcohol last week	35%	42%	31	34	28	36	41	30	36	29	44
Ever offered drugs	28%	38%	26	42	33	36	43	32	30	34	34
Ever taken drugs	14%	20%	15	23	26	19	26	16	15	22	17
Sexually active	19%	30%	16	40	38	24	28	24	16	28	28
7+ hours exercise /week	27%	16%	24	21	10	22	23	23	31	16	29
I know my own targets at school and I am helped to meet them	62%	48%	61	55	65	54	48	54	55	54	56

Grey squares = difference from all Year 10 is statistically significant