Secondary LGBT pilot project report
August 2010

Introduction

This report describes a project aimed at meeting the needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) students at St. Dunstan’s community School and Arts College in Glastonbury. The project was one of two pilot projects supported by the Local Authority between 2008 and 2010, in order to develop best practice which could then be disseminated to other Somerset secondary schools. Staff from other schools who would like to know more about the project, or obtain materials referred to in the report, are welcome to contact Peter Newman, Senior Adviser – Equalities and Diversity (01823 355576 pnewman@somerset.gov.uk).

Starting points

<table>
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<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>St. Dunstan’s Community School and Arts College</th>
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<td>Age range</td>
<td>11-16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lead staff</td>
<td>Beth Rowlinson-Baker (also the author of this report)</td>
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<td>Issues originally identified</td>
<td>LGBT vulnerable student groups were not receiving adequate provision within the curriculum (PSHE) or as a whole school priority</td>
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<td>Timescale</td>
<td>May 2008 – July 2010</td>
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Process

1. Initial training/audit meeting involving several staff (June 2008)
2. Review and planning meeting (September 2008)
3. Action plan
4. Implementation of planned activities
5. Second review meeting (March 2010)
6. Further implementation of activities
7. Final evaluation (July 2010)
### Actions and review

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<th>Actions</th>
<th>Process/progress/impact</th>
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| Initial training/audit | The initial audit meeting involved several staff at the school. The Healthy Schools team, Connexions LGBT worker and Senior Adviser – Equalities and Diversity presented a range of useful background information about LGBT young people’s experiences. An audit was completed (using one adapted from Healthy Schools criteria) and key actions agreed, including:  
  - Assemblies  
  - Staff training  
  - Policy updates  
  - PSHE work  
  - Displays  
  - Questionnaires to evaluate impact |
| Assemblies         | These were not carried out during the initial project, but will be put into action next year, starting in the Autumn term 2010 – they will be part of an annual programme from then on. |
| Staff training     | A staff briefing on LGBT issues/needs was timetabled on a yearly basis to inform/update. This will continue in the 2010-11 school year, with Andrew Wilson (previously the Connexions LGBT worker, who runs a Somerset LGBT group for young people) doing a staff briefing in September – including a focus on homophobic language and why the prevalent negative use of ‘gay’ is undermining and damaging for LGBT young people. |
| Policy updates     | Sex and Relationships Policy for St. Dunstan’s was updated to ensure that the needs of LGBT students were addressed and also to ensure general awareness raising was addressed within the curriculum  
  - Meeting with S&RE Coordinator in one feeder primary school to ensure progression of curriculum. This occurred after the S&RE coordinator at the school contacted me to help ensure there was continuity in S&RE education. During the conversation, the teacher explained that she had concerns about answering questions on lesbian and gay relationships, and would not normally do this. The importance of including LGBT relationships into discussion with primary students was discussed. This had a big impact as the primary coordinator was prepared to fully embrace the change and felt much more confident about answering questions about gay relationships.  
  - Following the collaboration with the feeder primary a further meeting was scheduled for policy development. I attended the session and offered support and advice on the inclusion of LGBT into the policy. |
| PSHE work | LGBT needs were included in the St Dunstan’s Scheme of Learning (SoL) for year 7 to address bullying issues  
| | Challenging Gender Stereotypes SoL included into years 9 and 10 Futures Programme Curriculum  
| | Complete SoL has been written to be delivered in year 9 – 6 lessons designed around ‘Fit’ DVD from ‘Stonewall’ (film length DVD that can be used in 6 parts – to be delivered by me)  
| | Year 10 ‘Sexuality’ session included in Curriculum Enrichment Days to introduce the topic as a starting point. This will be followed up in Curriculum time with the FIT SoL  
| | Year 8 S&RE Curriculum Enrichment Day – One session dedicated to sexuality (Delivered by the Somerset Youth service)  
| | Focus on the use of the word ‘gay’ among young people and how this is unfair/damaging (awareness raising for staff and students)  
| | Internet policy blocking addressed with SWGFL to ensure that students have access to all relevant websites while in school  
| | Year 9 – Diversity Day (Delivered by the Somerset Youth Service) with one full session being dedicated to LGBT |

| Displays | Notice boards have been placed in all prominent corridors of the school and include signposting information for all students.  
| | Display includes ‘Stonewall – Some People Are Gay’ and SCC posters provided by Peter Newman. |

| Health and well being drop in sessions | Health Clinic now in place in school and attended by considerable number of students. The health workers are unable to give us data relating to specific use. Display notice boards signpost this as a point of interest/information/advice for LGBT students as well as being signposted during curriculum enrichment days as these are delivered by health workers from the youth team. |

| Questionnaires to evaluate impact | Initially it was agreed that a member of the Local Authority’s LGBT focus group would supply questions but as these were not received at the start of the project the survey occurred later than expected. Questions were later supplied by the LA and I created an online survey for students to assess need/audit.  
| | A further survey is anticipated for December 2010 to judge the impact of the project. |

**Further actions to be taken**

- Staff briefings, starting in Autumn 2010
- Assemblies for students (following on from the staff briefings)
- Awareness raising / training session with peer mentors
# Overall evaluation

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<th>Staff responses</th>
<th>The work has so far not had a strong impact on staff and for this reason staff briefings next term are planned.</th>
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<td>Parent/carer /community responses</td>
<td>None</td>
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| Any clear evidence of impact | - Provision for LGBT students within the curriculum exists in all year groups  
- LGBT is now a concept understood by almost all staff (they no longer say ‘what is that’ when I mention LGBT) |
| Most effective action | - New SoL to address LGBT needs specifically rather than having an ‘add on’ to more traditional S&RE SoL. |
| Least effective | Working with other staff – there needs to be a clear plan about how to address understanding of LGBT issues/needs among staff. The briefing sessions are a start but there needs to be an ongoing method of raising awareness |
| What we would do differently | Include LGBT needs into the assembly rota on a more regular basis and ensure that staff are working on this as a whole school approach.  
Staff CPD session would have given more status to the work than the staff briefings as the briefing tends to be more subject related and the issues can get a little compartmentalised.  
Work with other adults that would be prepared to act as role models for LGBT students – this is an area that I intend to carry on and develop during the next school year. |
| Overall judgment on how worthwhile the work was | The work was very worthwhile as we have moved on tremendously within the PSHE curriculum area. LGBT is now a serious topic which has been investigated and resourced which enables all students to receive the advice and support that they need when they need it. |
Key learning points

1. Continual, small steps lead to a greater understanding than one giant leap and this is the approach that I wish to take with the students. Drip feeding the work/language etc to staff and students will eventually encourage permanent change whereas if I had one big drive it would be forgotten when the drive was over.

2. Students are interested and respond very positively to awareness rising of this kind. When students have the opportunity to discuss the effects of homophobic language and look at the bigger picture they are more encouraged to choose different language. In many cases students do not mean to be homophobic and until the issue was addressed they thought they were just using trendy words!

3. It is important to address LGBT issues explicitly so that when discussing relationships students understand that this means all relationships.

Beth Rowlinson-Baker – Curriculum Team Leader for ICT and Futures Programme (Citizenship, PSHE and Careers)