Diversity Role Models

Embracing Diversity & Ending Bullying

How shared stories can bring an end to homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying

A report for schools

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1. Introduction

Diversity Role Models (DRM) was established in 2011 to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying in UK schools with the aim that all children and young people would be able to learn safely at school without fear of bullying. DRM actively seeks to prevent HBT bullying in UK schools. The mission of DRM is to assist schools and other youth settings to celebrate difference, encourage acceptance and eliminate gender and sexuality based limitations. DRM aims to stop bullying before it happens by educating all young people about differences in sexuality and gender identity, by challenging stereotypes and by tackling the misuse of language.

The DRM model is based on working with positive volunteer role models – lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) and straight allies – in schools to help LGBT* students feel confident and ensure their classmates are accepting of difference. Trained facilitators deliver workshops, giving young people the chance to hear personal stories and ask questions in a safe environment. The Theory of Change framework for this model can be found in Appendix A and describes the outcomes which all of DRM's work is aiming to achieve.

In its first three years, DRM reached over 13,000 young people in 78 schools and trained 136 volunteer role models. The staff team as well as the geographic reach of DRM continues to expand. By the time this report is published in January 2016 they can confirm delivery of 1512 workshops, reaching over 33,000 students in 163 schools and having trained 290 role models.

As the organisation has become established, it also wished to commission research into the impact of its work and to inform the quality of services delivered to schools and young people. In January 2015, DRM commissioned a piece of research which was seeking to evidence its work with young people in schools and to further develop its data collection methods in order to show both impact and outcomes of its programme for future development and as evidence for supporters. The research specifically looked at the impact of DRM's workshops in secondary schools and the impact of homophobia on young people.

This report was written specifically for schools as a way to highlight good practice and lessons learned so far in the work that DRM has done in schools; it also summarises the results of the research and makes recommendations for the future. It is split into sections which explain the methodology, looks at the case for why the work is needed, examines the impact of the workshops currently, shows what has been learned from the research and ends with conclusions and recommendations. Additional information and reports can be found on the DRM website: www.diversityrolemodels.org.

* Although we have used LGBT throughout for ease and brevity, DRM fully understands that many people define their sexuality and gender differently.

2. Methodology

The research fieldwork began in February 2015 and was completed by July 2015. Methods included observing DRM workshops in secondary schools, a literature review, five case studies of secondary schools who have worked with DRM, an online survey for secondary school students in the UK and a review of DRM data collection and monitoring.

A total of five case studies were completed in June 2015, with three secondary schools in Greater London, one in the Wirral and one in Birmingham. Each case study involved a researcher visiting the school for two consecutive days to do observations, several individual interviews with staff, five individual interviews with students and one focus group with up to ten students. The purpose was to understand the impact of the workshops on students who previously participated in them as well as the impact on staff and the school environment. Each case study school chose the students who participated in the research and all had attended a DRM workshop within the previous 3-12 months. A total of five focus groups were completed, 25 one to one student interviews and 15 staff interviews. Quotes are used throughout the report from students and staff and we have provided as much information as possible with each quote while maintaining anonymity.

An online survey was conducted to look at attitudes and experiences of current secondary school students across the country as a way to triangulate the case study data and literature review results. The survey was open for seven weeks between May and July 2015 and had a total of 1102 responses. More than half of responses (54%) were from West Midlands schools, the remaining were spread around the UK. The main age group of respondents was 11-16, with 58% of respondents identifying as female. Nearly 4% of respondents did not identify with any gender, 78% identified as heterosexual and 14.5% identified as either not sure or LGB. A majority of respondents (65%) identified as White or White British while 32.5% identified as an ethnic minority, with the largest minority group being Asian (17.5%). A minority of respondents (12%) stated they had a disability and the largest religious affiliation of respondents was Christian (26%), followed by Muslim (15%), with 27% identifying as atheist.

Throughout this report, we use the term LGBT when referring to the wider community of people or individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. We use the term LGB if we are not specifically including transgender people and it is worth noting that while transgender people are commonly included as part of the LGBT community, some do not identify with it or prefer not to use such labels. Gender identity neither depends upon, nor is related to, sexual orientation. Transgender people exhibit a range of sexual orientations as do all other minority communities. We use the term LGBTQ when we are including young people who may be questioning or unsure of their sexuality or gender identity.

Homophobia, bi-phobia and transphobia refer to the fear of, aversion to or discrimination against people who are LGBT or who are perceived to be LGBT.

3. Building the Case – why we need DRM workshops in schools

> *A society which protects and promotes equality is one in which everyone can flourish. It seeks equality in the valuable things that people can do or be, so that everyone has the real freedom to live in ways that they value. An equal society recognises the diverse needs, situations and goals of individuals, removes discrimination and prejudice, and tackles the economic, political, legal, social and physical barriers that limit what people can do and be.*[1]

The history of equal rights for LGBT people in the UK has changed dramatically in recent years. According to the Equalities Review of 2007, more men were executed for 'homosexual offences' in 1806 than for murder while today LGBT people have marriage equality and legal protection from discrimination and transgender people have their identity recognized in law. However it is important to remember that it was only in 1967 that the Sexual Offences Act decriminalized homosexuality in England (1980 in Scotland) and the first Gay Rights march in the UK took place in 1971. Still, tensions were rife in 1999 when in the same year that the ban was lifted for gays and lesbians to be in the military, a gay pub in Soho (The Admiral Duncan) was bombed. In 2002, the UK was found in breach of European Commission for Human Rights laws related to transgender rights and it was only in 2003 that Section 28 was repealed.

Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988 prohibited local authorities in England and Wales from 'promoting' homosexuality and labelled gay family relationships as 'pretend'. The organisation Stonewall was formed as a response to Section 28. While Section 28 never applied directly to schools, teachers were often confused about what they could include in relation to LGBT issues and support to students.

There has never been a better policy climate for LGBT rights but it is critical to understand the recent history to appreciate that schools and other institutions, who are often slow to change, are facing new challenges in relation to teaching about LGBT issues and history. Many of our teachers and leaders in education began their careers in a very different social context and policy climate. Schools often lack the clarity and resources to effectively teach about LGBT equality and diversity and teachers lack training to effectively intervene and prevent HBT bullying. However there is increasing public support against homophobia and HBT bullying, but prejudice is still happening in the UK. The quote below mirrors one view which is clearly still a challenge for schools:

> *For, mad as this may seem, schoolchildren are to be bombarded with homosexual references in maths, geography and science lessons as part of a government backed drive to promote the gay agenda… Alas, this gay curriculum is no laughing matter. Absurd as it sounds, this is but the latest attempt to brainwash children with propaganda under the camouflage of education. It is an abuse of childhood. And it's all part of the ruthless campaign by the gay rights lobby to destroy the very concept of normal sexual behaviour.*[2]

[1] Equalities Review, Final Report (2007), Crown Copyright.
[2] Melanie Philips, Daily Mail, 24 January 2011.

Research by Stonewall indicates that public attitudes have shown an 8% increase (favourably) about LGB people between 2007 and 2012. This same survey also suggests 83% of the British public would be comfortable with their child's teacher being gay.[3]

In the sections below, we look at homophobia, HBT language and bullying, gender, supporting LGBT students and best practice for schools in an attempt to build the case for this work in schools and youth settings around the country.

i. Homophobia

The first recorded use of the term homophobia was published in a 1972 book[4] and over the last several decades, British society has become less tolerant of discrimination and more interested in equality. However there continues to be a legacy in relation to Section 28 and the impact on schools.[5] Many teachers are still afraid or unsure about how to teach about diversity and LGBT issues.

> *That's why it's so disturbing that scores of schools continue to enshrine the offensive language of section 28 in their policies, signalling to gay young people that their lives and experiences are somehow second class and it's possible to somehow "promote" the way they were born. Yet it's hard to blame individual schools, many of whom are still using official guidance on sex and relationship education issued at the turn of the century and predating the repeal of section 28 by three years. To be sure, governing bodies in these schools have been careless to allow policies which aren't lawful to escape through their scrutiny, but the Department for Education has to take responsibility now.*[6]

Schools are often described in the literature as heteronormative due to the presumption of heterosexuality and a place where heterosexual boundaries are strongly enforced.[7] They go on to describe the 'complex, multi-dimensional interaction of sexuality and gender' and how schools enforce heteronormativity via curriculum, policies and discussion within the school. However this research also found that decreased homophobia can also strengthen heterosexual identity while allowing individuals to move outside of those boundaries.

The developmental foundations for homophobia clearly lie in gender[8] and begin early in primary school.[9] Especially for boys, it is rooted in a failure to measure up to a standard of masculinity rather than being particularly feminine.

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[3] Stonewall (2012), Living together: British attitudes to lesbian, gay and bisexual people in 2012.
[4] Weinberg, G.,1972. *Society and the Healthy Homosexual*. New York, St. Martin's.
[5] Jones, R. and Clarke, G. (2008) 'The School Experiences of Same-Sex Attracted Students in the 14- to 19-Year-Old Secondary Sector in England: Within and Beyond the Safety and Tolerance Framework', *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services*, 19(3-4), pp. 119–138.
[6] Tryl, L. 2013. Continuing homophobia in schools is the legacy of section 28, Guardian Newspaper, 20 August, available at: http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/aug/20/homophobia-schools-legacy-section-28
[7] McCormack, M. and Anderson, E. (2010) 'It's Just Not Acceptable Any More': The Erosion of Homophobia and the Softening of Masculinity at an English Sixth Form', *Sociology*, 44(5), pp. 843–859.
[8] Plummer, D. (2001) 'The quest for modern manhood: masculine stereotypes, peer culture and the social significance of homophobia', *Journal of Adolescence*, 24(1), pp. 15–23.
[9] Mishna et al (2008) 'Bullying of Lesbian and Gay Youth: A Qualitative Investigation', *British Journal of Social Work*, 39(8), pp. 1598–1614.

By mapping these meanings it was shown that homophobia has its early roots in boyhood "otherness"—specifically in being different from the collectively authorized expectations of male peers, in lacking stereotypical masculinity and/or in betraying peer group solidarity.

The relationship between homophobia and gender is complex. A boy who is different, stands apart from the group, is a loner, is smarter than other boys, who adheres to adult authority in preference to peer group codes and/or who doesn't participate in team activities can provoke homophobic targeting.[10]

Homophobia in wider society can encourage HBT bullying of young people, as it contributes to the isolation and lack of avenues of support for LGBT young people. School staff may well fear the views of parents and governors who may in fact be homophobic or be perceived to be homophobic. Young people are particularly influenced by parental views, religious interpretations of sexuality and a lack of understanding or awareness of LGBT people.[11]

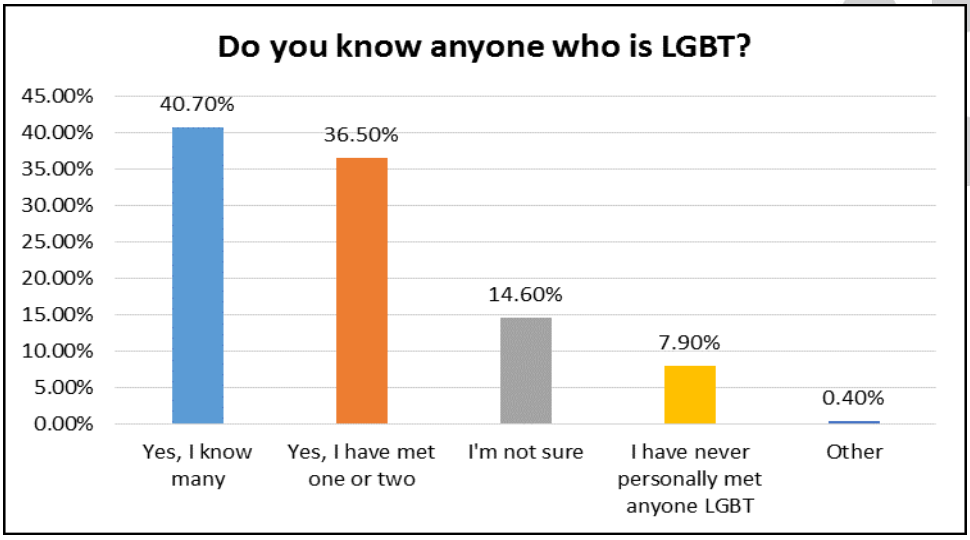
I spoke to a number of people…. about a gay/straight alliance, I was quite keen to introduce that in the school…. So we thought we'll go for it and then the head was not comfortable with it. He was at first and then he discussed it with governors….and it was 'what will the community think of our school, we want to be an up there community school, what will the community think of us having a gay/straight alliance'? Our head is not homophobic at all but I do remember a governor coming to me when it was LGBT week and we had a display up outside the hall and I had a couple of comments about 'what is that about' and 'I must talk to you about the display' and I said why do you have a problem with it? Not everybody is comfortable with it.[12]

I sat with a student and tried to get them to reflect on their views and, a Muslim student, I think the family influence about homophobia is so strong. I have had to say to a child, 'I'm going to ring your parents and say there is no place for you here'. Because as a school, this is not how we think. I have spoken to parents and some parents are difficult to shift. The biggest problem is culture.[13]

[10] Plummer, 2001, pp. 21-22.
[11] Mishna et al (2008).
[12] Case study school staff.
[13] Case study school staff.

As LGBT people become more visible, awareness is increasing among young people (Fig 1). This chart also shows that there is still a significant minority of young people who have never knowingly met anyone who identifies as LGBT.

Figure 1: online survey, question 12, 825 respondents



Boys learn to fear homophobia itself; it has been extensively described as being 'in a class of its own' in terms of its seriousness; and this phobia 'profoundly influences male behaviour'.[14] Homophobic behaviour is connected to lower levels of empathy[15] and is positively correlated to not knowing any LGBT people.[16] The roots of homophobia likely lie in power relationships and social categorisation:

> *The prejudice that underlies many of our fears is the result of the existence of a subliminal ideal – a perfect existence – that is threatened or undermined by the presence of those who do not achieve it. One way in which this ideal is 'owned' is by alienating or ostracising others, thus creating groups, categories or classes of people whose value is determined by their proximity to the ideal standard.*[17]

Rivers has spent decades researching homophobia and has succinctly summarised much of the theory related to bullying which is described below.[18] Social categorisation is described as a cognitive categorisation or stereotyping, which leads to discrimination. Social identity theory explains how people connect their belonging to a social group which then has particular significance and defines our position within the social order. Self-worth is linked to how we are perceived in relation to others. So our self-esteem is not only connected to our ability to identify with a group, but also in how that group is then evaluated relative to others. The theory states that people with desirable traits in society join the 'in-group' while

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[14] Martin, A. D. (1982). Learning to hide: the socialisation of the gay adolescent. *Adolescent Psychiatry*, 10, 52–65.
Plummer, D. (1999). One of the Boys: Masculinity, Homophobia and Modern Manhood. New York: Haworth Press.

[15] Poteat, P. V. and Russell, S. T. (2013) 'Understanding Homophobic Behavior and Its Implications for Policy and Practice', *Theory into Practice*, 52(4), pp. 264–271.

[16] Rivers, I. (2011) *Homophobic Bullying: Research and Theoretical Perspectives*. United States: Oxford University Press.

[17] ibid, p. 44.

[18] ibid, pp.39-61.

people with undesirable traits join the 'out-group'. This is helpful in understanding HBT bullying and how victims are often socially isolated with low self-esteem.

> *Perceived sexual orientation was not only used as a frequent reason for bullying other students, but together with other marks of 'outsiderness' (i.e. poor athletic and academic performance) reinforced the in-group and out-group divide within schoolyard peer relationships.*[19]

Additional theories as to why homophobia exists include ideas related to the desire for offspring to reproduce and for parents to be invested in their children's heterosexuality. In this scenario, homophobia is promoted to maximise the 'reproductive investment' of parents and is seen within a framework of natural selection. These ideas are also related to fears that gay people will 'recruit children' or abuse them.

> *Negative attitudes towards homosexuality were not only correlated with the propagation of gender stereotypes and the perceived social desirability of heterosexuality, but they were also correlated with popular misconceptions about the sexually coercive nature of lesbian and gay relationships.*[20]

These ideas are likely to be instinctive and deeply rooted within a minority of people in Britain today. Students from the case study summarised the reasons they think homophobia exists for young people:

> *It will come from TV, friends and parents. Those are the three. And religion definitely and culture. Those are the five main things that start it.*[21]

ii. Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying

A standard definition of bullying is difficult to get agreement on, however there are some agreed key elements of bullying, which include:

- It is deliberate and repeated
- It takes place within a social context with an imbalance of power
- It has order, structure and intent

> *Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally.*[22]

The government guidance on HBT bullying, Safe to Learn, describes HBT bullying as bullying motivated by prejudice against LGBT people. It can include verbal abuse, name-calling, spreading rumours, physical abuse and cyber-bullying. The negative effects of bullying are well documented in the literature and social isolation plays a key role. HBT bullying has an impact on victims' mental health, academic attainment, self-esteem, attendance and overall well-being. Victims of HBT bullying are more likely to self-harm as well.[23]

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[19] ibid, p.105.
[20] ibid, p.59.
[21] From a case study student focus group discussion.
[22] Department for Children, Schools and Families (2007). Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools, Crown Copyright.
[23] See Mishna, 2008 and Rivers, 2011.

A respondent explained suicidality among some lesbian and gay youth as a function of feeling isolated in multiple spheres of life, including family, school and peer group: 'I guess people turn to suicide because they feel, "when I go home I'm isolated from my whole family, when I go to school and with my peers it's the same way. Nobody knows. I can't come out. What do I do?" I guess that's the only option of a lot of youth'.[24]

Mishna also writes about the unique aspects of HBT bullying.

Several characteristics of bullying that victimizes lesbian and gay youth appear to be unique. First, whereas traditional bullying and bullying of lesbian and gay youth are both strongly evident in schools, conditions that foster the bullying of lesbian and gay youth appear across their entire social ecology, including peers, siblings, parents, teachers, religious authorities, and coaches, as well as in social policies, laws, institutions and the media. Having no safe space and no adults to whom to turn may render lesbian and gay bullying especially dangerous.[25]

HBT bullying can happen anywhere in the life of young people and is often under the radar of school staff. HBT bullying also can be localised within one year group within a school, making it more difficult to spot across the school.[26] Additionally, many young people are unwilling to admit that they are being victimised.[27] In an extensive study by Rivers, very few students (22%) reported telling their teachers about being bullied at school and even fewer (16%) said that they told a teacher the reason why they were being bullied. More participants (39%) were able to tell someone at home.[28]

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Homophobic abuse intensifies and peaks around Years 8 or 9 although this varies from late primary to late secondary school. It is clear that HBT bullying has its roots in primary school and is more intense outside the view of school staff, such as in playgrounds.

All accounts indicated that homophobic terms underwent an evolution in both meaning and intensity. Informants reported that boys started using words like "poofter" and "faggot" from an early age. Most described becoming aware of homophobic terms in primary school and all started using them prior to sexual maturity.[30]

Age can also be a factor; the older you are the less likely you are to experience prejudice in schools and HBT bullying appears to decline through secondary school.[31]

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[24] Mishna, 2008, p.1605.
[25] ibid, p.1607.
[26] Rivers, 2011.
[27] Mishna, F., Pepler, D. and Wiener, J. (2006) 'Factors associated with perceptions and responses to bullying situations by children, parents, teachers and principals', *Victims and Offenders*, 1(3), pp. 1–34.
[28] Rivers, 2011, p.98.
[29] ibid.
[30] Plummer, D. (2001) 'The quest for modern manhood: masculine stereotypes, peer culture and the social significance of homophobia', *Journal of Adolescence*, 24(1), pp. 15–23.
[31] Rivers, 2011 and Plummer, 2001.

I know a lot of people who are still subtly homophobic, who wouldn't feel comfortable seeing two gay men on the street. They say it makes them feel uneasy, but I think it's because they haven't really thought about it, they haven't been exposed to it as much and now they are getting to an age where they are seeing it on the street and they are struggling with it.[32]

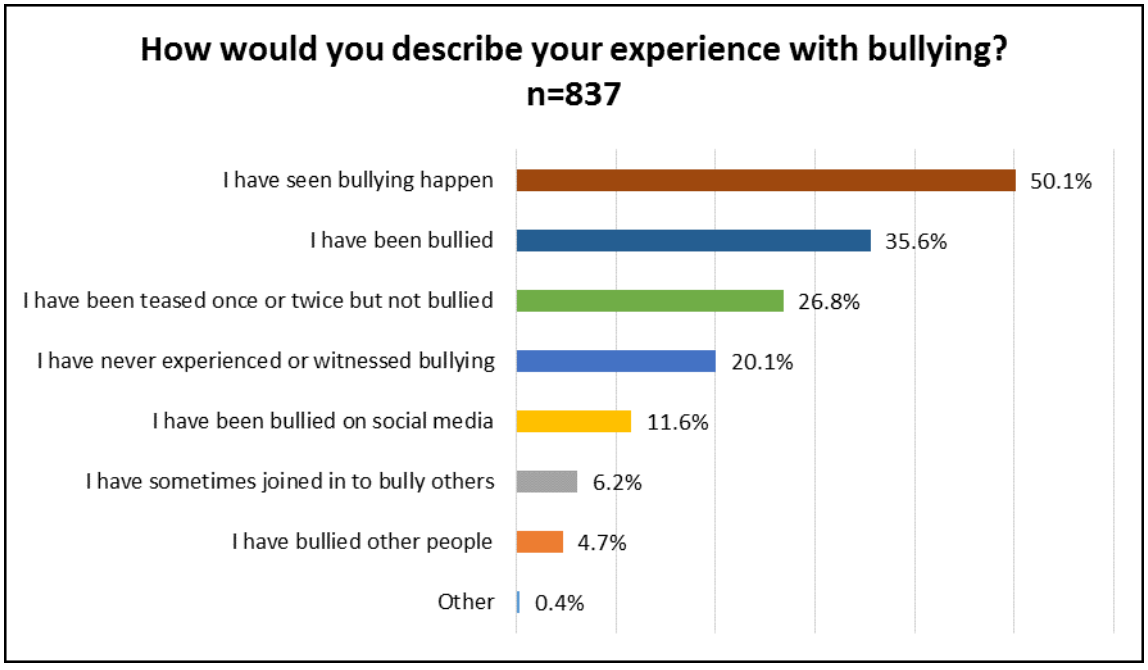
Bullying is clearly a complex process and HBT bullying can be difficult to pinpoint within an overall bullying scenario. Homophobia can be an 'add-on' insult to any bullying incident or it can be firmly rooted alongside gender as the basis of bullying.

The online survey shows that half of students have witnessed bullying and 35% have been bullied (Fig. 2). This research estimates that between 5-20% of students participate in bullying others.[33] It is important to note however that students can be bully, bystander and victim at different times and in differing circumstances. This complexity can make monitoring HBT bullying a challenge for schools.

I'm doing it because it's most effective but then after, when I think about it, I feel really bad because it's just not the case, there is no need to say something like that. At the time obviously I would get angry and say the first thing that pops into my head but then afterwards when I'm reflecting about it… Yes, I regret what I say.

Say there's a person and two people are arguing, they'll pinpoint everything that's bad about them. 'You're big, you're ugly' and they'll pinpoint everything and then they'll say, "And you're gay," as well, so it's just like adding more stuff on but it's not a bad thing but they mean it to sound bad.[34]

Figure 2: online survey, question 2, 837 respondents



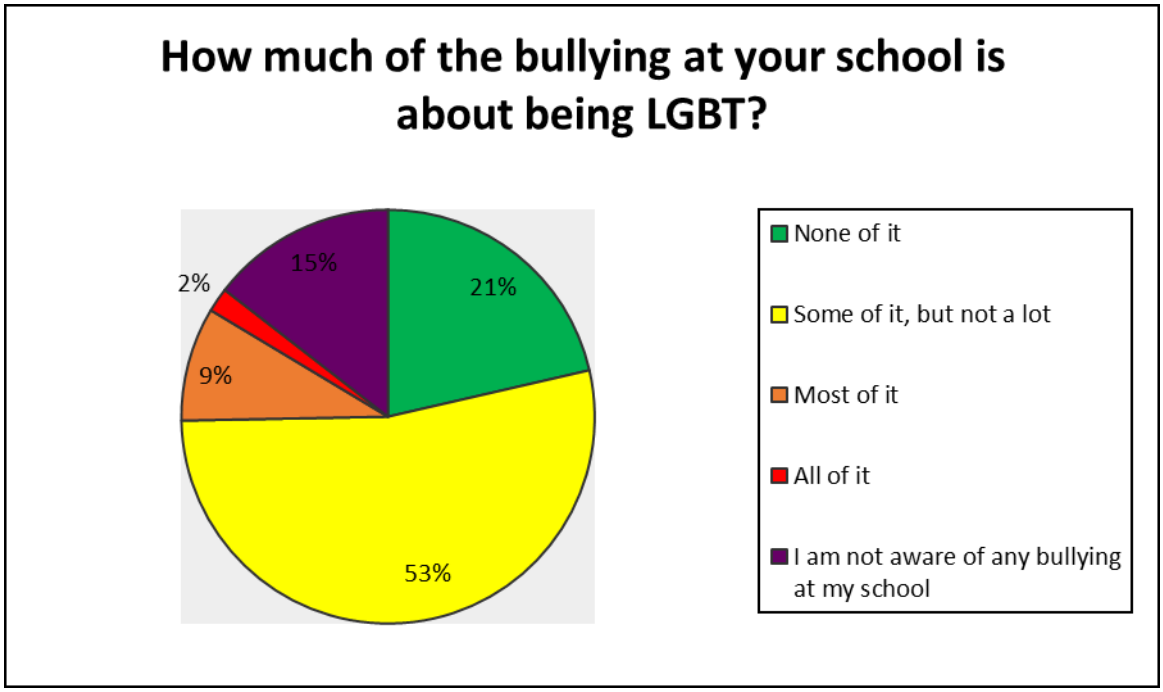
[32] Case study student interview with a boy in year nine.
[33] From our online survey results as well as Rivers, 2011.
[34] From focus group discussions with students in the case studies.

The online survey also shows that HBT bullying is more often than not a part of general bullying behaviour (Fig. 3) and bullying is likely to have multiple drivers. When bullying happens, it is likely to point out all the potential ways that the victim is 'different', this can be seen in children with learning difficulties, who are more likely to be bullied than their peers.[35]

> *In our experience the person is never attacked from one angle, what it starts with will grow and they find new ways to bully that person, it starts off with falling out, going to turning people against them, isolation, exclusion, then they throw in insults and there may well be homophobia in there. With girls it is exclusion, then it's about your looks, skin colour, where you're from and then the lesbian comments are the body blows to finish you off. I've never known exclusively homophobic bullying, they attack from all angles.*[36]

> *It's about difference. It's about people who are not prepared to fit a role that is created for them by their peers. What we need to try to do is ensure that people see their difference as a strength, rather than a weakness and if that's happening, I don't dispute that, then we're not doing our job right for that particular boy in supporting them in that.*[37]

Figure 3: online survey, question 3, 835 respondents



[35] Rivers, 2011.
[36] Interview with school staff from a case study.
[37] Case study interview with Headteacher.

The Stonewall Teachers Report[38], found that 86% of secondary school teachers say HBT bullying happens in their school. Stonewall also report that 65% of LGB young people experience homophobic bullying. However this is not solely an LGBT problem, as HBT bullying can affect any young person, whatever their sexual orientation, just for being perceived as 'different' in some way, including children who have LGBT parents.

> *....when teachers talk about mums and dads, you can't say mum and mum or dad and dad. There is no openness to it. Say if I had two dads, I wouldn't even tell my best friend, I'd say that's just my dad's friend and he just stays with us, because I know straight away I would get judged. Even by your best friend.*[39]

Less than a quarter (23%) of young gay people have been told that homophobic bullying is wrong in their school. In schools that have said homophobic bullying is wrong, gay young people are 60% more likely not to have been bullied.[40]

Barriers for schools in addressing HBT bullying can be categorised into three distinct groups: denial, dilution and fear of reprisal.[41]

Denial includes refusing to acknowledge the problem as well as the existence of LGBTQ youth; consequently, HBT bullying remains unrecognised within the school.

Dilution includes ignoring the specific motivation behind HBT bullying and treating all bullying as general bullying.

Fear includes the fear of reprisal or lack of support from senior leadership staff as well as fears related to views of parents and governors.

The literature is clear that strategies to eliminate bullying must start in primary school and include a zero tolerance approach to HBT bullying and language, where teachers get support and training to respond appropriately.[42]

There has been much written about the role of bystanders in bullying and (to a lesser extent) how bullying is challenged. Students often fail to intervene due to fear for their own safety or of being targeted themselves.[43]

Lastly, the role of religion in both homophobia and HBT bullying should not be underestimated. Religious interpretations of sexuality are sometimes used as an excuse for discrimination or HBT bullying and can also be the reason that schools are fearful to take on the issue.[44] However, both government guidance and many religious institutions want to be clear that no religion condones HBT bullying and it should never be used as a reason not to act.[45]

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[38] Guasp, A., YouGov, Ellison, G. and Satara, T. (2014) *HOMOPHOBIC BULLYING IN BRITAIN'S SCHOOLS IN 2014 – The Teachers Report*, Stonewall.
[39] Case study focus group with students.
[40] Guasp, A. (2012) THE SCHOOL REPORT: experiences of gay young people in Britain's schools in 2012, Stonewall.
[41] Mishna, 2008.
[42] ibid.
[43] Rivers, 2011.
[44] Rivers, 2011.
[45] CHURCH OF ENGLAND Archbishop's Council Education Division (2014) Valuing All God's Children Guidance for Church of England Schools on Challenging Homophobic Bullying.

We have had comments on parents evening questionnaires, every year we have parents evenings for all the year groups and I have had a few comments saying 'too much gay propaganda in the school'.[46]

Justin Welby announced plans to draw up new advice on the issue less than a year ago, after expressing concerns about the impact of homophobic bullying on the lives of young people. The new document, Valuing All God's Children, acknowledges that within the Anglican community there is a wide range of beliefs about homosexuality and that it is a "very divisive issue" for the church. But it adds that the purpose of schools is to educate and they should be a safe and welcoming place for all children.[47]

iii. HBT language

Language reflects the values held within our society and the use of language can either perpetuate prejudice and discrimination or reflect and celebrate diversity. The difficulty is in getting the balance right so that we are able to encourage debate and discussion about identity in a way that is supportive to both the mainstream and minorities while avoiding prescriptive solutions that stifle free speech. The challenge of finding the right balance is made all the more difficult by the constantly changing socio-political environment and the fluid landscape of language.

Language, as the most powerful communication tool at our disposal, shapes the views and behaviours of society. Communication is not simply what is said or meant by the speaker, it is also and perhaps more importantly, what is heard and interpreted by the receiver. As users we must consider all the meanings of the terms that we use, our intention in using the term and the potential reception by various audiences. While government policy can create equal rights for all its citizens, which is essential to fostering a common sense of belonging and status, it is not enough.[48] Being accepted and feeling welcomed are also essential to creating a common sense of belonging and this is where language can play a vital role in conveying acceptance and belonging.

Language can reinforce the exclusion felt by many LGBT people, often by the assumption that everyone is heterosexual. This is partly because of the invisible nature of sexual orientation, where LGB people can go unnoticed and inadvertently hear offensive remarks and HBT language. HBT language can be part of or a precursor to HBT bullying. [49]

[46] Case study interview with staff.

[47] Press Association, 2014. Homophobia must not be tolerated in schools, Church of England says, Guardian online, 12 May. Available at: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/12/homophobia-not-tolerated-schools-church-england

[48] Parekh, B., 2006. Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory (second edition). Palgrave, Hampshire.

[49] Poteat, et al (2011) 'The effects of general and homophobic victimization on adolescents' psychosocial and educational concerns: The importance of intersecting identities and parent support.', *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 58(4), pp. 597–609.

Name-calling is the most frequent form of homophobic bullying,[50] but HBT language can include a range of insults and phrases such as 'that's so gay', homophobic jokes or gender-based insults. Most (98%) LGB young people hear the phrases 'that's so gay' and 'you're so gay' at school.[51]

Early homophobic language is 'rooted in gender' and the use of it in primary school sets the scene for future HBT language and hostile secondary school climates.[52] Boys begin using homophobic terms in primary school, and regardless of their knowledge of the meaning of these terms, they remain the worst type of insults possible for boys.[53]

> *Homophobic language is banded around the playground I would guess from around Year Two or Three onwards as an insult. It almost becomes entrenched in children if it is not openly challenged…..I spent a year on secondment, at a local primary school and there was not a single mention of anything to do with LGBT issues, it is not something that is addressed with younger children and staff would not feel confident addressing it, so it becomes entrenched. Being gay instantly becomes associated with a negative.[54]*

HBT language is often described as 'harmless', a 'jokey insult' or not meaning to be homophobic. However the impacts of HBT language can be devastating to young people, regardless of their sexual orientation.

> *A couple of my friends used to say 'that's so gay' and we used to say what's wrong with being gay? After the workshop they were like 'there isn't anything wrong it, why are we saying it?'*
>
> *Some people don't realise when they say it that some of their friends could be gay and they just haven't said anything about it. They don't realise they could hurt their feelings.[55]*

The literature notes distinct differences between boys and girls use of HBT language in both frequency and use over time, with girls relying more on verbal and indirect forms of aggression and boys on physical aggression. For boys, the aggression tends to decline over time while for girls verbal aggression rises with age.[56]

In schools that have sought to eliminate homophobic remarks and where such language is rarely or never heard, the incidence of homophobic bullying is just 37% compared with 68% in schools where homophobic language is heard more frequently.[57] According to the Stonewall Teachers Report, 36% of secondary school teachers say they have heard homophobic language from other staff.[58]

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[50] Rivers, 2011.
[51] Stonewall School Report, 2012.
[52] Plummer, 2001.
[53] Poteat et al, 2012.
[54] Case study interview with staff.
[55] Case study interviews with students.
[56] Rivers, 2011.
[57] Stonewall Schools Report, 2012.
[58] Stonewall Teachers Report, 2014.

The types of HBT language and particular phrases or words used varies considerably by place and time.

> *For a long time my friends they stopped using the phrase 'that's so gay' but as time progressed people started using the phrase again. I mean it's not used as much as it was before, but occasionally you can hear it, and it can be used.*[59]

iv. Gender

The literature very clearly places the developmental foundations for homophobia within gender. There is strong evidence generally around the relationship between gender and homophobia, with HBT bullying described as almost inevitable for boys who do not meet a hetero-masculine standard, regardless of their actual sexual orientation.[60]

> *We all know children can be cruel, I've had to learn that the hard way, if you're not in the group boys are meant to be in, if you're not macho, get into fights, don't play football, then it means you're gay, you're not a typical person. It's not to do with gender, it's to do with perception and what people see, what people perceive. It's sexism.*[61]

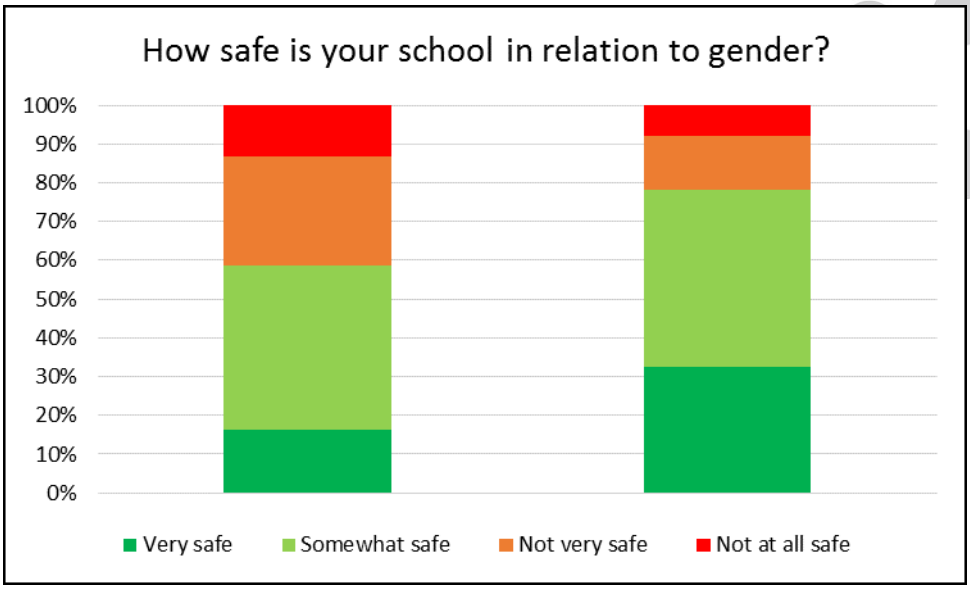
Homophobia is also linked to gender variation and gender non-conformity. HBT name-calling is commonly invoked due to gender non-conformity, and gender non-conformity is a known risk-factor for bullying and victimisation. The social cost of gender non-conformity may be especially high for boys.

> *People see that as not being typical or normal, so they've always called me gay from about year one but as I've got older, I put people in their place and told them I'm not gay just because I hang around with girls. It's stopped as people have come to realise that just because you don't do the normal things boy do, it doesn't always mean you're gay.*[62]

[59] Case study focus group with students.
[60] McCormack, M. and Anderson, E. (2010) 'It's Just Not Acceptable Any More': The Erosion of Homophobia and the Softening of Masculinity at an English Sixth Form', *Sociology*, 44(5), pp. 843–859.
[61] Case study interview with a male student.
[62] ibid.

The online survey asked students about how safe their school felt in terms of gender non-conformity (Fig. 4) and there are clearly tougher standards for boys, shown in the column to the left, with the right hand column related to how safe this is for girls.

Figure 4: online survey, question 9, 826 respondents – 1st column represents Boys, 2nd column represents girls



The online survey also found that girls were more likely to challenge other students for picking on someone they think is LGBT. In a focus group there was a discussion with one boy who expressed discomfort about people being gay and gender non-conformity, particularly focusing on one boy that was in his class last year:

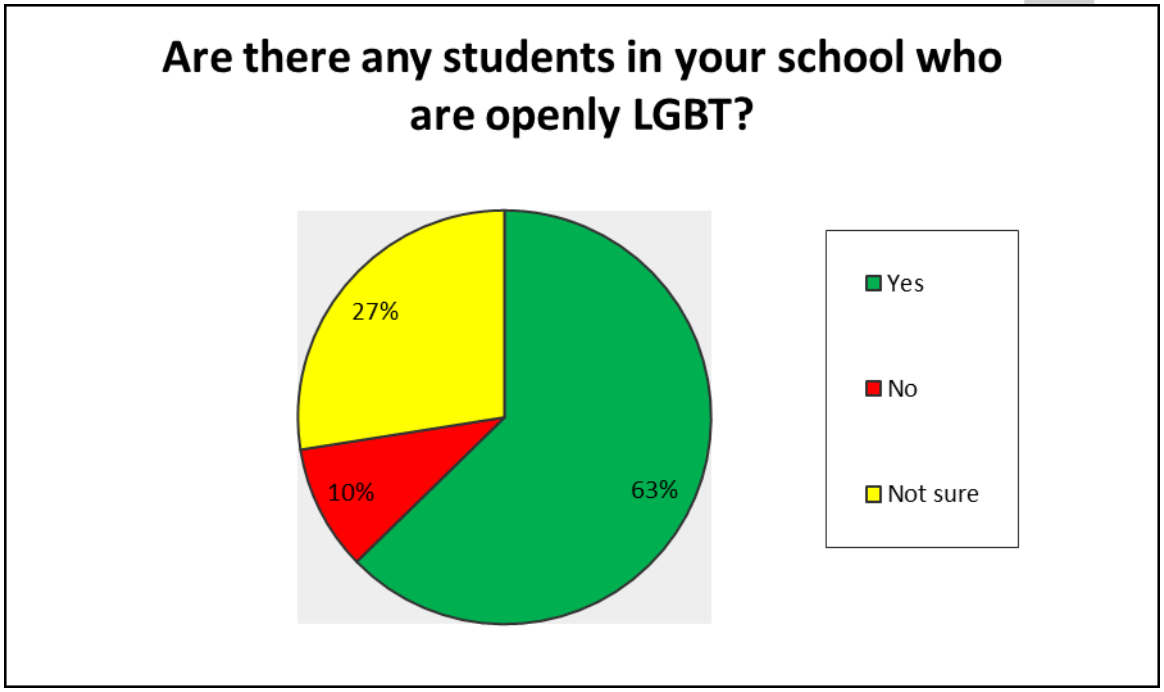
> *When you just look at him it makes you sick. Because he draws on his eyebrows. You can be gay but it's to an extent. You can't go over the top, drawing on your eyebrows, wearing handbags, pushing up your chest and your bum on Instagram…. He's not going to survive.*
>
> *I'm not going to lie, I judged him because of the way he looks. He dyed his hair, he has a handbag…. I say he's gay because he acts girly.*[63]

[63] Case study focus group with students (male respondent).

v. Supporting LGBT students and allies

Schools are likely to have some percentage of LGBT students, regardless of whether they feel able to openly identify as so. Most schools recognize that they have a responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of all students, including those who are LGBT. According to the online survey, (Fig. 5) 63% of respondents reported having openly LGBT students in their school.

Figure 5: online survey, question 14, 826 respondents

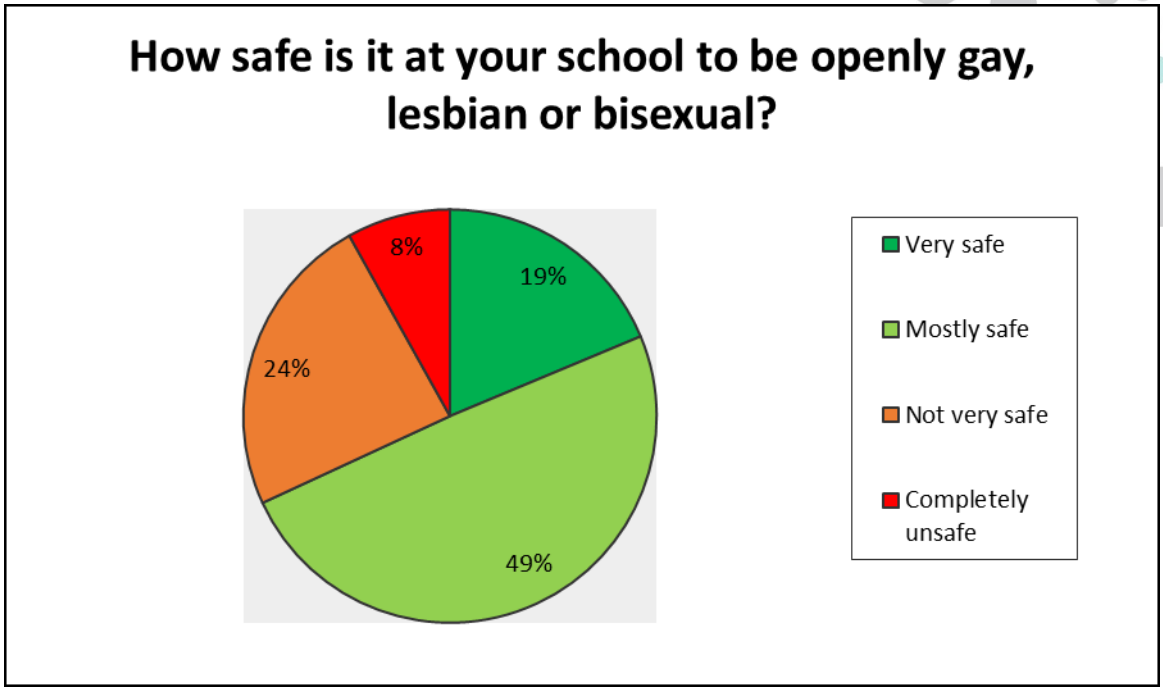


LGBT students are a particularly vulnerable minority within secondary schools. LGBT young people were 2.24 times more likely to be bullied and 1.82 times more likely to be victimised than their heterosexual counterparts.[64]

Nearly one in four (23%) LGBT young people have tried to take their own life at some point. In comparison, Samaritans report 7% of all young people in general ever attempt to take their own life.[65] The risk of self-harm and suicide among LGBT young people who are bullied and unsupported is well documented.[66] Among younger LGBT people, there is a higher likelihood of suffering long term negative effects of bullying. While schools are mostly safe places for LGBT students, there are a still some that are just not safe enough for students to express their identity (Fig. 6).

[64] Fedewa, A. L. and Ahn, S. (2011) 'The Effects of Bullying and Peer Victimization on Sexual-Minority and Heterosexual Youths: A Quantitative Meta-Analysis of the Literature', *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 7(4), pp. 398–418.
[65] Stonewall Schools Report, 2012.
[66] Rivers, 2011.

Figure 6: online survey, question 8, 814 respondents



'Coming out' is a crucial step for young LGBT people in terms of gaining support however it also carries a risk of losing the support of people and friendship networks which are critical to well-being.[67] This is described further in the literature:

> *Often youth are victimized further when they disclose their sexual orientation—to peers and adults, and are at risk of losing social support. The double-edged nature of the coming-out process may be one key component to understanding the experiences of lesbian and gay youth and to providing support and interventions.*[68]

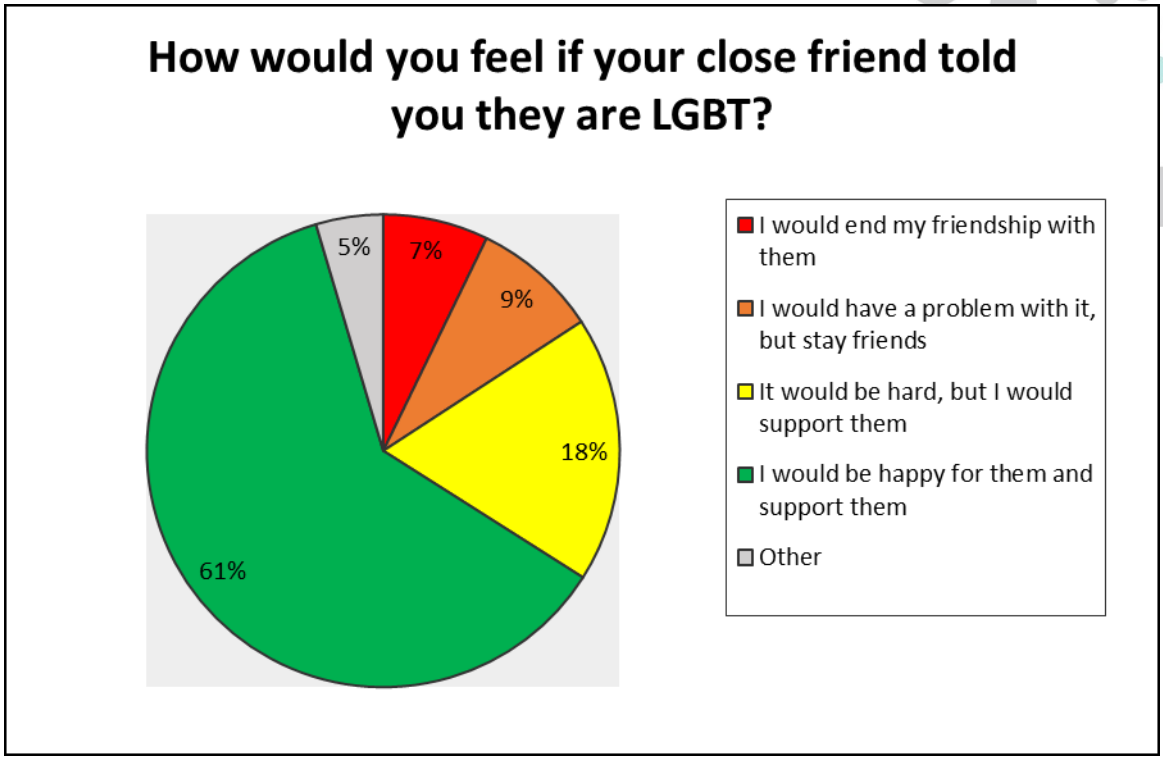
Also unique to LGBT young people is the dichotomy of parental support and the:

> *….distinct difficulties in engaging parents, who might traditionally be sought as advocates for their children. In the case of lesbian and gay youth, however, disclosing a youth's sexual orientation to his or her family might result in more rather than less danger.*[69]

Unlike heterosexual students, LGBT students have very few role models in school and within family and social groups. Fewer than 17% of secondary school teachers say that pupils have visible LGB role models in school.[70] LGBT students report that schools are doing little to talk about these issues in the curriculum, and there is little support from teachers and few resources available. Students are often quite supportive of friends 'coming out', yet there remains a minority of students who are clearly homophobic (Fig. 7).

[67] Newman, P. (2002) 'Coming out in a hostile social environment: Challenges for HIV prevention among young gay men', *Journal of HIV/AIDS and Social Services*, 1(1), pp. 81–94.
[68] Mishna et al, 2008.
[69] ibid.
[70] Stonewall Teachers Report, 2014.

Figure 7: online survey, question 11, 823 respondents

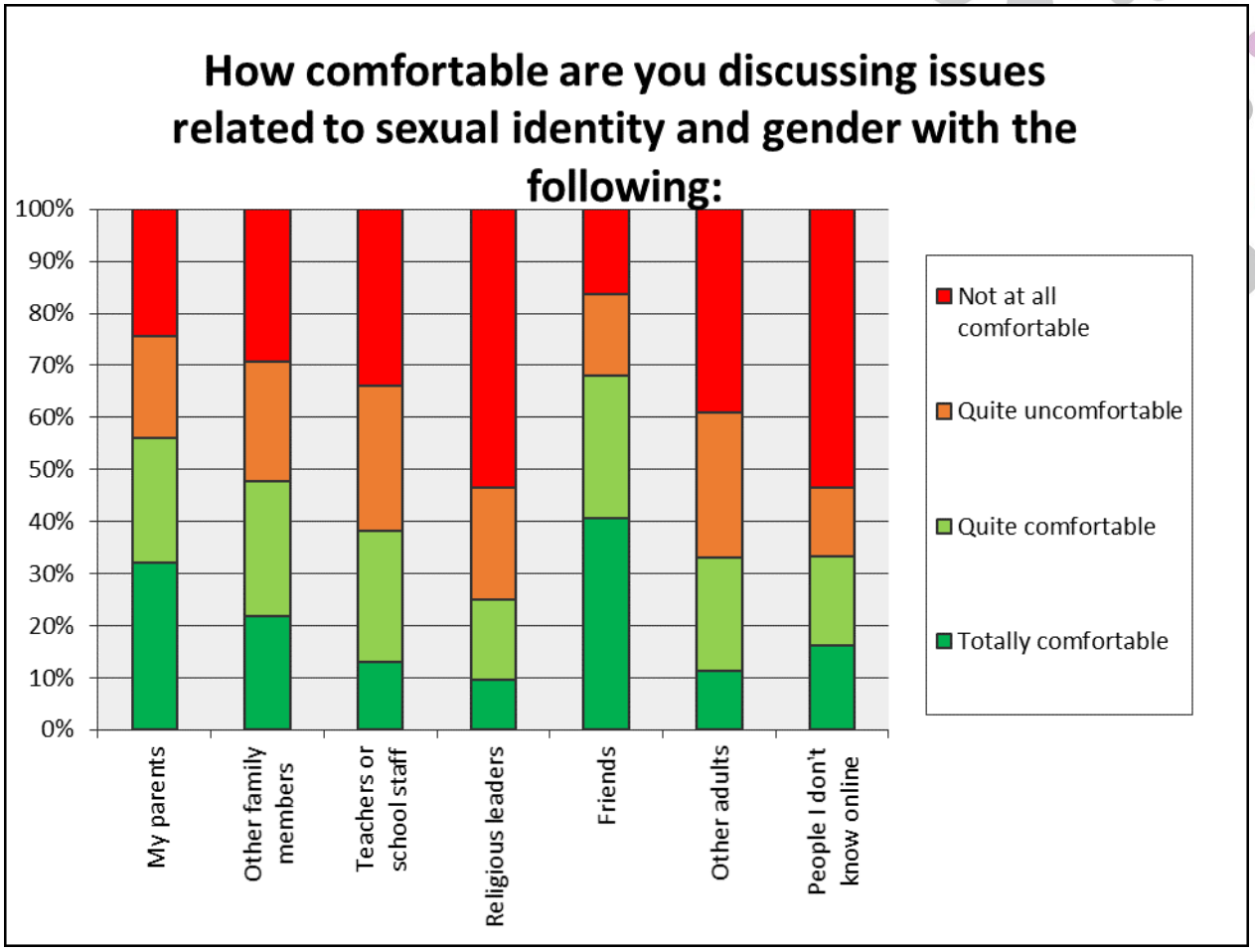


The online survey (Fig. 8) asked students who they were most comfortable discussing issues related to sexual identity and gender with and the results mirrored previous studies. Friends and parents are most comfortable, with teachers ranking in the middle.

Schools have particular challenges in supporting LGBT students and must address these barriers if they want to create a safe space for students. Some barriers to addressing bullying of lesbian and gay youth are analogous to identified barriers to addressing 'traditional' bullying, whereas others correspond to barriers that apply to motivational bullying that targets particular populations, and some appear unique to lesbian and gay youth - such as lacking any safe space or person to whom to self-disclose or to turn for help, and the entrenchment and even acceptance of sexual prejudice in social policies, laws and institutions. It is critical to address all of these dimensions.[71] (Mishna et al, 2009)

[71] Mishna et al, 2008.

Figure 8: online survey, question 10, 826 respondents



vi. Best practice for schools

This section looks at both policy and practice in secondary schools in relation to HBT bullying and creating an environment that celebrates diversity in all its forms.

Policy

Working against HBT bullying in schools now has a clear policy mandate and support across the political spectrum.[72] Schools have clear responsibilities to provide a safe environment for all children and there is comprehensive guidance for schools related to HBT bullying.

> *Schools have a legal duty to ensure homophobic bullying is dealt with in schools. Under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, head teachers, with the advice and guidance of governors and the assistance of school staff, must identify and implement measures to promote good behaviour, respect for others, and self-discipline amongst pupils, and to prevent all forms of bullying. This includes the prevention of homophobic bullying.73*

[72] Department for Education (2010). The Importance of Teaching White Paper, Crown Copyright.
[73] Department for Children, Schools and Families (2007). Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools, Crown Copyright.

An extensive review of school bullying policies was completed in 2012, which also gave an excellent historical context of policy development.[74]

The Education and Inspections Act[75] states that behaviour policies must be publicised and made known to all staff, pupils and parents at least once a year. It was recommended that the anti-bullying policy should form part of the overall school behaviour policy, although a school could decide to issue a separate and specific anti-bullying policy. Schools were encouraged to sign up to "Bullying – a Charter for Action" where they were expected to affirm that their school community "discussed, monitors and reviews the anti-bullying policy on a regular basis and good practice suggests bullying policies should be reviewed on average every two years.[76]

A report of the House of Commons Education and Skills Committee on bullying noted the importance of specifically addressing bias based bullying for fear that schools would not adequately address the issues.[77]

Government response in 2007 referred extensively to the then new Safe to Learn guidance which included that "*All pupils are clear about the roles they can take in preventing bullying, including the role of bystanders*"; "*Curriculum opportunities are used to address bullying*"; and "*Pupil-support systems are in place to prevent and respond to bullying*".

Following the government re-organisation in 2010, the Department for Education (DfE) developed Tackling School Bullying, which stated that:

> *The Government has made tackling bullying in schools a key priority and the Department has made it clear that no form of bullying should be tolerated … It is compulsory for schools to have measures in place to encourage good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils, and to prevent all forms of bullying. The Department supports schools in designing their anti-bullying policies, and their strategies to tackle bullying, by providing comprehensive, practical-guidance documents … Safe to learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools is the overarching anti-bullying guidance for schools.*

The Safe to Learn package of guidance also includes specialist advice on cyberbullying, homophobic bullying and bullying involving children with SEN and disabilities. Guidance for preventing and responding to sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying was published in 2009 as part of the Safe to Learn suite.

The Schools White Paper reinforced much of the previous points but also added a new OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) inspection focus on the issue and the importance of reaching beyond the school gates:

> *Bullying can happen or continue outside school, and behaviour on the way to and from school affects the perception of the school in the wider community.*[78]

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[74] Smith et al (2012) 'A content analysis of school anti-bullying policies: a follow-up after six years', *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 28(1), pp. 47–70.
[75] EIA (2006), Section 89(1)(b).
[76] DCSF, 2007.
[77] Smith et al, 2012.
[78] DFE, 2010.

Mention of homophobic bullying in secondary school policies increased from 33% in 2002 to 46% in 2012, but given the focus of government on the topic, was seen as disappointing. A correlation was found between a fully developed policy and better Ofsted ratings[79], however only 22% of teachers in England are aware that Ofsted considers a school's specific efforts to tackle homophobic bullying as part of their inspection framework.[80]

Over one third of inspection reports in England in 2013-14 mention homophobic bullying specifically. It is clear that schools are struggling to develop good policies that are inclusive and there is huge variation among school policies. It is likely around half of schools do not mention HBT bullying specifically.[81]

Curriculum and Training

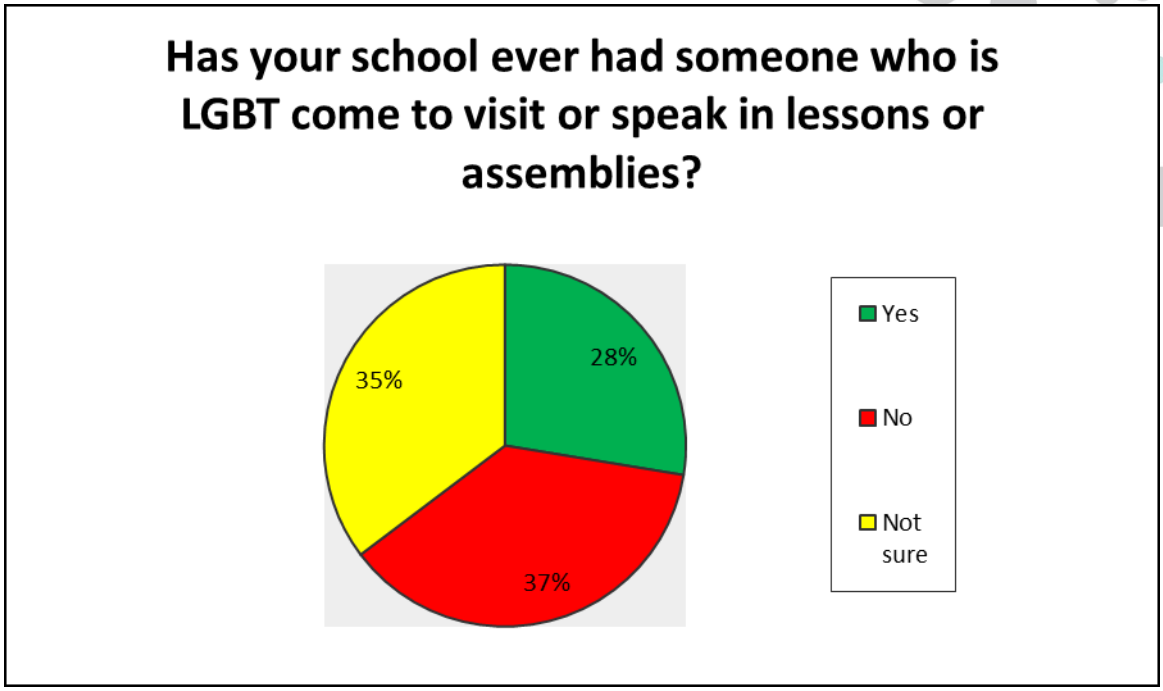
There is wide agreement within the literature that teacher training and curriculum are important areas for schools to further develop in relation to creating a school environment that prevents bullying and fosters acceptance of difference. These are both areas where schools still have a long way to go in terms of good practice.

The research conducted by Stonewall in 2014 highlighted current practice within schools. One third of secondary school teachers (34%) say they have not addressed issues of sexual orientation in the classroom while only 33% of gay young people say they have discussed LGB issues in PSHE lessons. One in five LGB young people (22%) report discussing gay people or their relationships in sex and relationship education and 16% of gay young people discuss gay issues in other classes. More than one third (37%) of student respondents to the online survey reported not ever having an LGBT speaker or visitor in class (Fig. 9).

There is widespread ignorance in relation to what schools and teachers are able to include in lessons; 29% of secondary school teachers and 37% of primary school teachers don't know if they are allowed to teach about LGB issues. While schools have a mandate to tackle HBT bullying, 80% of secondary school teachers have not received any specific training on how to do this.[82]

[79] Smith et al, 2012.
[80] Stonewall Teachers Report, 2014.
[81] ibid.
[82] ibid.

Figure 9: online survey, question 13, 827 respondents



There is a clear relationship between school climate and levels of school belonging in relation to HBT victimisation. Pupils who are taught positively about LGBT issues are also much more likely to feel part of their school community (87% compared to 55%) and to feel that their school is 'an accepting, tolerant place where I feel welcome'. School leaders should create an environment where staff feel able to be open about their identity, this is seen to be able to increase staff performance and create internal LGBT role models for young people in schools.[83]

> *Strategies to address bullying of lesbian and gay youth require interventions at various levels within the ecological context:*
> - *Interruption of homophobic acts by educators and adults*
> - *accessible lesbian and gay affirmative support in schools, shelters and other institutional contexts*
> - *training for educators and social service staff*
> - *funding for queer youth programming*
> - *queer-positive spaces of worship*
> - *support for youth initiatives within lesbian and gay communities*
> - *greater attention among mental health professionals to lesbian and gay issues.*
>
> *Silence on the part of educators and mental health and other professionals devalues the problem of lesbian and gay peer victimization, leading to further stigmatization and disenfranchisement of vulnerable youth. Importantly, responses by individual educators and adults to homophobic bullying, such as tacitly communicating acceptance for bullying or censuring disparaging comments about gay or lesbian individuals, were seen as significant in facilitating or mitigating bullying.*[84]

[83] ibid.

[84] Murdock, T. B. and Bolch, M. B. (2005) 'Risk and protective factors for poor school adjustment in lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) high school youth: Variable and person-centered analyses', *Psychology in the schools*, 42(2), pp. 159–72.

There is a growing trend for whole school approaches, described as:

> ***Taking action at various levels, including: the development of a positive school ethos; regular reviews of anti-bullying policies and strategies (including homophobic abuse); curriculum development; support and training for teachers; environmental design; and working in partnership with parents.***[85]

vii. Drivers

A number of drivers have been identified through the course of this research which impact on schools, young people and society's views generally around LGBT issues. The most significant drivers are seen to be policy drivers, the media, religious institutions and families. Drivers can have both a positive and negative impact; either fostering negative stereotypes and attitudes or bolstering acceptance and inclusivity. The media has a particularly important role related to influencing young people and this can have a tremendous amount of persuasion ability in either direction.

[85] Oliver, C and Candappa, M (2003), *Tackling Bullying: listening to the views of children and young people (summary report)*. Department for Education and Skills, London, p.90.

4. Evidencing the Impact – why the workshops make a difference

DRM currently have a highly structured workshop format for secondary schools which is delivered in a classroom setting by a trained facilitator and features volunteer Role Models. The role models come from varied backgrounds and they are given training prior to going into schools. DRM endeavour to match the Role Models to the school demographics as closely as possible e.g. Faith, culture, background and so on. The workshop normally includes before and after questions to monitor student attitudes, the story of Dominic Crouch, activities that challenge stereotypes (including a game), work around definitions, stories from Role Models themselves (normally two or three role models) and question and discussion time. The approach is open, honest, positive and interactive with an appreciation of and respect for the diversity of sexual and gender identities. Workshops normally run for 50-60 minutes with approximately 20-30 students in each session.

In looking at impact, we relied mainly on the five case studies that were completed within the research but also on previous data that has been collected by DRM. We took into account the views of students who participated in the workshops, teachers and staff at participating schools. The impact of these workshops can be summarised as follows:

- **Increasing empathy, understanding and respect for difference** – these are key indirect messages within workshops and appear to be particularly effective among allies and potential bullies. Students are able to identify with the basic human struggles and successes of people who happen to be LGBT. By sharing stories that cut across the human experience, students begin to relate to role models, understand their perspective and respect their humanity in a way that goes beyond stereotypes and clichés. This is particularly important for people who have never knowingly met anyone LGBT before in their lives.

  Everyone was quite uplifted by the workshop because a lot of the time in school people are quite homophobic, anyway it is only a very small minority of students, and it changed people's way of thinking because we were talking directly to gay people about their thoughts and exploring how they think.

  If one of my friends ever tells me that they were gay or lesbian, I would never touch them again. But when [DRM] came in and spent the day in our class and that, since then my friend has changed and one of her family members is gay and told her. Instead of her saying, 'I don't want to talk to you', she's got on well with it.

  It was nice to have a real person and not just statistics, because it is quite easy to relate to a person but you can't relate to a number or a figure.

  Before the Diversity Role Models came I used to think that being gay and bisexual was like proper wrong. But then since the workshop I can totally see that people are gay are just normal people. [86]

  I come from a tiny village, if you talked about Muslims, their perception is based around having never met one, the young people here have the same attitude when you introduce them to somebody who is gay, who then they see as a nice person, is

[86] Case study student interviews.

a normal person, they immediately can relate to it and that is the single most powerful way to overcome prejudice. They then don't think "gay", they think "that person".
Because you have real people talking about the impact on their lives….and they use humour. The beauty of these workshops is that it chimes with every kid sitting there who is going to think of a time when they have thought I don't want to talk about that with my parents or I can't tell my parents this….it doesn't have to be about their sexuality. It brings alive the whole LGBT issues and gives them a human context and that is the key thing, to keep it real.[87]

- **Challenging stereotypes** – this is a key message within each workshop and students clearly understand what stereotypes are and why it is important to look beyond them and respect people for whoever they are.

  There was another guy who used to work on the doors, a bouncer, you have to be big and tough for that, we were like "no way", it was a shock, it brought down the stereotypes. You can't know what a person's feelings and thoughts are, by the way they look. (Student)

  We do a lesson on stereotyping, Diversity were brilliant, in our group there was a guy who was a very good rugby player, cricketer and at the end they had to decide who they thought was – and of course none of them thought he was – and he explained his situation, how he came out. That was brilliant. The girls are now saying, "You can't always tell can you, miss?" I've said "no you can't, you can't tell just by looking at them whether they're heterosexual". We're beginning to break that down now. (Staff)

- **Encouraging open and honest discussion about LGBT issues** – students that we spoke to in the case studies rarely have opportunities for conversations with LGBT people about sexuality and gender but more importantly, they don't often discuss these issues with friends or family either. Having the conversation and being able to ask questions in a safe environment is critical for students to be able to increase their understanding and support for LGBT people.

  They've set it up in a very similar way to a PSHE lesson, they introduce basic ideas about what gay means, gay stereotypes, and then they layer upon that. The narrative really helps because students don't like to think of things in the abstract, the story of the boy who killed himself because he was perceived to be gay is a powerful way to do that, it makes sense pedagogically. Then they introduce the gay role models who tell their story, then there's a period for asking questions, that's when the students get the most from it. I've never been in any of the Q&A's when they were not extremely powerful because the first question normally takes a minute, then the floodgates open because they get the opportunity to ask questions, that might seem silly to us but they really mean something to the students to be able to ask that.[88]

[87] Case study interviews with staff.
[88] Case study interview with staff.

- **HBT language** – workshops increase awareness of HBT language in school and the wider community and allow students to debate issues around language in a safe space. Many of the participants we spoke to felt that the workshops had a direct impact on reducing the use of HBT language in the school.

  The impact was almost overnight. You will still hear the word "gay" used in a derogatory sense, but you don't hear it anywhere near as much.[89]

  After that workshop people very noticeably stopped using homophobic insults and this year they still talk about them, saying they were nice and it was quite fun to interact with people from outside of the school. They were saying that they view LGBTs more positively now.

  Before the workshop, everyone was taking the mick and things but then afterwards it all died down and no one used homophobic slurs and now when someone calls the other person gay, there is an uproar, people say you can't say that.

  When I was younger, I used to use the word gay as a negative, so even though I had stopped by that point, it made me think about the lasting effect if someone heard that and they were unsure about their sexuality, if they heard the word gay being associated with something negative, it would make them feel a lot more uncomfortable about speaking to someone.[90]

- **Supporting LGBT students** – the workshops play an important and unique role for LGBT students by providing positive visibility of LGBT people and issues, which may not exist elsewhere in the lives of students or in the school itself. Students who either identify as LGBT or are questioning their sexuality or gender feel encouraged and supported by LGBT role models.

  After the DRM workshops last time we had a girl who is very disengaged with school life and she came down demanding to see the head teacher and said 'I'm gay, I think I'm gay, I've been worrying about it for a long time and I want to tell my family. Can you ring my sister and get her to come in?' So he rang the sister got her to come in and she told her, so she got that from that workshop, she got the courage. It just gave her the confidence to be who she wanted to be.[91]

  When the [DRM] people came in, they expressed that, they reassured how I felt, you should express it, let it grow, be who you are, even if you're not gay, be whoever you are. For me, that was a great help because it was reassuring me.

  Some people question if they were normal for having thoughts like that… it's ok to feel like that. That's what it shows us.[92]

[89] Case study interview with a head teacher.
[90] Case study interviews with students.
[91] Case study interview with staff.
[92] Case study interviews with students.

Students will also feel supported by having positive staff role models at school but this can be a challenging issue for some schools.

> *…. nobody is openly out with the children and I think that says to children, 'you got to keep it secret'. But how can I say to staff, please will you come out in assembly to the kids? But I do feel bad about the fact that we don't have one member of staff who is out with the children. It bothers me because of the message it sends to children, this school is not quite safe enough to be openly out. But it is up to those staff, it is their private lives. But for the children who are struggling, I just think if they could see a member of staff, a senior member of staff who says I'm gay and so what? They might be more comfortable and be braver. We have a couple of children with sexuality issues and they are cutting but we can't tell their families because their family is the problem, really distressed young people and we are supporting them the best we can.*[93]

- **Developing allies** – we know from the research that most students are not homophobic and most likely have either neutral or positive views of LGBT people. The workshops are able to bolster support and understanding among this group and shift some of them to more directly identify as LGBT allies or champions of diversity and equality.

  This group is crucial within schools to create an environment that celebrates difference and also among bystanders or witnesses of potential HBT bullying or language, who may be most likely to challenge or report this behaviour or to support LGBT students.

  That was the first time that I took everything in and thought about it, ever since that talk, it makes me think that other people who are gay should come out and not be afraid of people being rude and that because there is people that are rude but there are also people who are kind and nice and accept how they are.

  Some people got more interested in LGBT rights, 'I certainly did…I got involved in Paperclip after that'.*[94]

- **Encouraging discussion and communication of issues in the home** – workshops have a cascading impact on intergenerational communication and understanding as well as helping to foster parental support for the school to tackle these issues. Some LGBTQ students were not at all comfortable discussing these issues at home but other students engaged parents, grandparents and other family members and friends in conversations about the workshop topic and messages.

  I told my dad and it's changed his views, he didn't used to like gay people and lesbians, he thought it was wrong but I told him and he understands where they're coming from, he's stopped saying "I don't like them", he's not like that now, he thinks it's normal.[95]

[93] Case study interview with staff.
[94] ibid.
[95] Case study interview with a year 10 female student.

I spoke to my mum about it and my mum is very accepting of different people, she was quite happy that it was going on in a mainstream school in the outskirts of London and that it was accepted that for people to come into the school and talk to the new generation about sexuality which wasn't something that you really talk about, in school you don't talk to your friends about it.[96]

I get picked up by my dad and we had a long discussion about it on the way home. We discussed how unfair it was that homophobia is such an issue when it shouldn't really be an issue and that people should be more accepting. My dad really agreed with me, people shouldn't be discriminated against for any reason. I spoke to my grandmother as well and she is quite modern actually and she was happy that I took part in the workshop and she told me you shouldn't bully anyone.[97]

A lot of people are influenced by their parents, so my mum and dad, well my dad, used to be a bit homophobic and so automatically I kind of just … I didn't know anything about it but I just thought the same thing and I'd be like, "Oh yeah, that's wrong," but now I've grown up and I've actually realised what it is, I've kind of changed his opinion now.[98]

- **Increasing confidence among staff** – there is limited evidence to show impact in relation to increased confidence and skills of teachers who observe workshops. It seems most likely that impact here is limited to less experienced teachers or those who have had very little experience with teaching PSHE, sex education or citizenship topics. There are mixed views about whether age is a factor in teacher confidence at dealing with LGBT issues.

  I think it gives teachers something quite tangible to pin a conversation on. It all just ties into this thing around values and how we treat each other.[99]

Much of the impact of DRM workshops is from the Role Models telling their stories to students and in the opportunity for students to ask questions and have an open discussion with the workshop team. Authenticity plays a key role in why the workshops have impact, as students have an appreciation for real stories that are told at some risk (real or perceived) to the person telling.

The impact is also related to the Role Models themselves and the style they use to tell their stories, which is often with humour, respect and kindness. Humour in particular seems to be important to students and allows them to relate better to the Role Models.

Students frequently commented on Role Models being 'nice'; or people they could relate to, based on appearances. The students often felt like they got to know the Role Models over the course of the session because the Role Models shared sensitive and genuine personal information about themselves, in a way similar to the way in which friends get to know each other.

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[96] Case study interview with a year 9 white male student.
*Shortly after DRM workshops in 2012, students at one of the case study schools started an equalities group called Paperclip. It meets weekly and focus is on equalities and LGBT issues.
[97] Case study interview with a ye*ar 9 female ethnic minority student.*
[98] Case study focus group with students.
[99] Case study interview with staff.

How long the impact lasts is another question altogether, and it is not clear how long the impact lasts, as we were not able to do longitudinal studies with students beyond school years. We did speak to some students one year after they attended the workshop and almost all of these students had very clear memories of workshop messages and Role Model stories. There was a mix of opinion as to how long the effect was on reducing HBT language within a school and this seemed to vary by school.

> *I have changed how I think and behave around people because no matter what they are, I behave differently now to how I used to behave. As I am growing up, you become an adult, and you think well that wasn't the most sensible thing to do. You think about what has happened in your life before, like what you have been told and that.*[100]

[100] Case study interview with a student.

5. Challenges and needs within schools

Schools have their own unique ecosystems and are mini fiefdoms within the larger educational bureaucracy. Understanding who runs them, how they operate and what their needs and challenges are is an important part of ensuring greater impact in relation to DRMs work. The research highlighted some of those needs and challenges.

Schools face many challenges related to curriculum development as well as pressures from government to regularly adapt their curriculum to current priorities. Some schools prioritise embedding LGBT issues into their curriculum, some schools might want to do this but lack the support or expertise and some schools may not understand the importance of this. DRM have an opportunity to assist schools in this area.

> *It would be great if Diversity Role Models could sit down with schools and talk about how they might build up their curriculum. I think it would be good for DRM to go in and start working with schools at a developmental level, with the workshops being part of the end game product rather than saying we've got a problem, let's get Diversity Role Models in and that will tick a box, which a lot of schools do. I was shocked at the number of schools that say yeah we do Citizenship, we do it with our PSHE and we have now called it PSHCE, so you get an extra initial but not a lot of extra approach.*[101]

Most of the schools interviewed for the case studies did their own teacher training in relation to HBT bullying and language. They also expressed an interest in getting more support in this area and teachers themselves often talked about other teachers from random subjects talking to students about LGBT issues but not feeling equipped to do this properly. Stonewall research also shows that training for teachers is a key element of tackling HBT bullying.

> *You have to imagine the people who are going to be delivering this are teachers and that's why the DRM session is good because their Head of Education is a teacher. The work that Stonewall do is not really made by teachers, so it doesn't fit with how we would teach it, often it's youth workers or academics and so there's that disconnect, it's got to be structured in the right way as there's a methodology to the teaching, otherwise people don't know how to use the resources. They need to be things that are trialled.*[102]

School staff are of course quite varied in both their experience and expertise in relation to LGBT issues and how to challenge HBT bullying. A minority of school staff may also be homophobic or simply lack the confidence to talk to students about issues related to sexuality and gender. There is an opportunity for DRM to assist schools in a variety of ways.

> *The post package work is where there needs to be some real development, in terms of what there are on offer, even in terms of supporting schools with things like assemblies because for example, I'm quite confident about talking about these issues but other people who are in senior management positions, they may not be on these issues and they may not know how to approach it. If you Google "gay assemblies", what's out there isn't very good.*[103]

[101] Case study interview with school staff.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.

Schools in the case study showed a surprising lack of awareness of gender issues within their schools and how this relates to HBT bullying. Many schools had simply not thought much about it and there was little intent to shift gender roles and norms in the schools. This may be an area that schools are unwilling to tackle or they may not have had the right leadership or discussions internally. There is an opportunity here for DRM to more seriously think through how to link their work to gender and to present an alternative to schools.

One of the key challenges facing schools is the current economic climate and the budget cuts that are a reality for many. Resources to pay for workshops and assistance are tight, even for schools that have prioritised the work. This presents a barrier for schools who may otherwise want to engage with DRM. It may be in DRM's best interest to provide financing models and examples to schools as well as clear evidence of impact and how the work relates to the school's priorities.

> *It is important to try and bring in but budget is an issue, particularly in terms of the drop down days, I would like Diversity Role Models to be part of that but I don't have the budget to pay for them.*[104]

> *I recognise organisations need to make money but from a completely selfish schools perspective, we don't have the money and there are organisations who are perfect to help us with these issues.*[105]

Schools admitted having difficulties identifying HBT elements in bullying situations and we have seen that this is a complex scenario. Having resources available for schools to assist them to understand and quantify the problem would help.

Many of the case study schools have recently imposed sanctions for HBT language and bullying. They have also talked about the difficulty of working with teachers to get sanctions right and how this fits into their overall behaviour management system.

There are clear policy expectations and guidance documents from government but some schools still seem reluctant to develop strong policies in relation to HBT bullying, equalities and inclusion. There are an astonishing number of schools with outdated policies that do not adequately reflect their priorities in this area.

LGBT staff at schools experience a wide variety of environments and not all staff feel safe to be out, even to colleagues. We are far from a situation where there is equality in terms of how heterosexual staff share personal details with students versus LGBT staff. Of course this varies by school and some schools share very little and others are more open. Many SLTs are unsure how to deal with these issues and are frustrated at the message it sends to students and staff.

Schools have to be sensitive to parent views and governor attitudes are sometimes strikingly different to staff, particularly in relation to LGBT issues. Schools are nervous about this and sometimes use it as an excuse not to act but also face real risks of parent and governor backlash.

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[104] Ibid.

[105] Ibid.

Some of the barriers to this work include religious belief and the need to do more work with parents and families around LGBT issues. If schools have particular problems with religious families and communities, they need support in how to tackle it and communicate about it. This is a challenge for schools and they are unsure of how to handle this in many cases. Many schools at the same time are not harnessing the support of parents and governors who support inclusion and this is a missed opportunity. Additionally, there is a small but growing number of families with LGBT parents, siblings and extended family members who require schools to support them and their children, this is often an overlooked stakeholder group for schools.

While it is clear that all schools have LGBT students, not all schools are aware of these students and there are varying levels of visibility for these students. School staff are often unsure of how to support LGBT students and staff and need advice in this area.

DRM as an organisation can help schools and staff with all of these challenges and help meet their needs whether it is through staff training, developing policies, workshops for Governors and parents, advice on curriculum issues or helping them find resources to help pay for workshops.

6. Conclusions

The research has shown clear impact related to DRM workshops, most of the work of the organisation is received in a very positive way, with real strengths being spoken about from participants. Students love hearing the role model stories and staff evaluations are overwhelmingly positive. At the same time, HBT bullying and language is an entrenched problem in schools, which they are not always willing or able to recognize. Workshops have an impact because they use real people that children can relate to who tell authentic stories which are basically human stories that transfer into the lives of children. This builds empathy and understanding, especially for those young people who have never met any LGBT people. It also provides critical support for LGBT students.

There is a positive relationship between workshop impact and embedding diversity across the whole school. When schools tackle HBT bullying and language as well as celebrate diversity in all its forms, workshops will be more effective than on their own as a one off solution. Workshops are part of a whole school approach to challenging HBT bullying and language as well as inclusion and diversity. The key is building a culture of appreciating and celebrating difference in all its forms.

Being able to attribute wider or longer term change to a specific workshop is always complicated and challenging. This is why the TOC framework is important for DRM and to take a more strategic view of data collection. The TOC framework can also be a tool for schools to use to help understand their approach to these issues.

Balancing the different and sometimes competing needs of LGBT young people, their allies, more neutral bystanders and homophobic bullies is difficult. Each of these groups presents unique support needs and messaging.

Homophobia is complex and deeply rooted in society but it is far less acceptable now by a majority of people than ever. Home environment, religion and the media are key drivers related to homophobia among young people and gender expectations and roles are linked to homophobia. Bullying is also complex and we have shown is rooted in primary school and in

gender roles and varies by age. Much of the bullying that occurs in schools likely involves many aspects of 'difference' and gender and homophobia can easily be 'thrown in' to this toxic mix, making it difficult to identify clear cases of HBT bullying in all but the most serious incidents. Our schools must be able to identify HBT bullying sooner and more effectively prevent it from damaging our children.

Key recommendations

DRM, as a charity, was started to work specifically with schools across the country to support and equip them to prevent HBT bullying and to create an inclusive environment where all students are valued for their uniqueness.

We hope that this report provides a solid evidence base of the need for this work in schools and a call to action for schools to engage with this work.

Below we have highlighted priority areas for consideration. Some of the recommendations will be quicker and easier to implement than others.

The key message from this research to schools is that we need a 'whole-school' approach to HBT bullying and that schools must also consider gender roles when tackling HBT bullying. We call on primary, secondary and FE schools of all types to work with us to eliminate HBT bullying and create safer schools for our young people.

There is a very clear opportunity for schools to take a 'whole school' approach. This would include staff training on HBT bullying and challenging HBT language as well as supporting LGBTQ students. It would also include advice or training in embedding LGBT issues further into the curriculum and support for staff on pre and post lesson work. Workshops could include a further menu of support for students such as mentoring, drop in sessions, assemblies or discussions. Policy advice and support should be on offer to all schools related to their anti-bullying and equalities policies and procedures. DRM should be able to offer support to governors to tackle these issues or develop their understanding and support to schools on engaging the support of parents and families.

The following key recommendations are suggested to schools:

1. Take a 'whole-school' approach to tackling HBT bullying. This should include:
    - Teacher training sessions specifically designed to build skills to address HBT bullying and be more aware of it
    - Embedding diversity in the curriculum and celebrating it throughout the school
    - Clear policies and procedures in place related to these issues
    - Having sanctions and monitoring system in place which tracks and reports HBT bullying
    - Supporting LGBT students
    - Working with governors and parents to address these issues.

2. To create an inclusive environment for everyone at school, including all staff. This should mean that all staff, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, should feel comfortable and safe at school to be themselves.

   Schools should consider an annual anonymous online survey for staff that provides equalities data and feedback from staff about inclusion and diversity. DRM can provide a survey template or host the survey for your school as well as do analysis and reporting.

   LGBT staff should have the same rights as heterosexual staff to disclose personal information (as appropriate and if staff so choose to do so) to students and to serve as role models.

3. Schools should consider a wider perspective on inclusion and diversity as a tool for success that students should be equipped with on their career journey and life path. When schools value diversity and inclusion and clearly communicate this as part of its culture, appreciation of difference will grow. Schools need leadership in this area to change cultures that might be less tolerant of diversity.

4. Schools can do more to support LGBT students, who are often invisible. Providing signposting to LGBT resources locally, mentors, advice, guidance, role models and resources for support groups or clubs are all positive examples of support for LGBT students.

5. Schools can do more to support students who show HBT bullying behaviour or homophobic views. Developing workshops and one on one support for these students can have a positive benefit for all students.

6. Schools should review their policies on bullying, equalities, harassment and related issues to ensure that they are abiding by equalities law and best practice as well as being inclusive in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity. If the policies need updating or revising, seek support from organisations such DRM to help.

7. Consider hosting DRM workshops. If you would like workshops, think about which year groups to target (if not all) and when it would fit best into your curriculum or year. This might be linked with other activities, assemblies or events in the school.

8. If schools host DRM workshops, take the time to do both pre and post lesson planning to make the most of the content and activities. DRM provide guidance and resources for schools to do this.

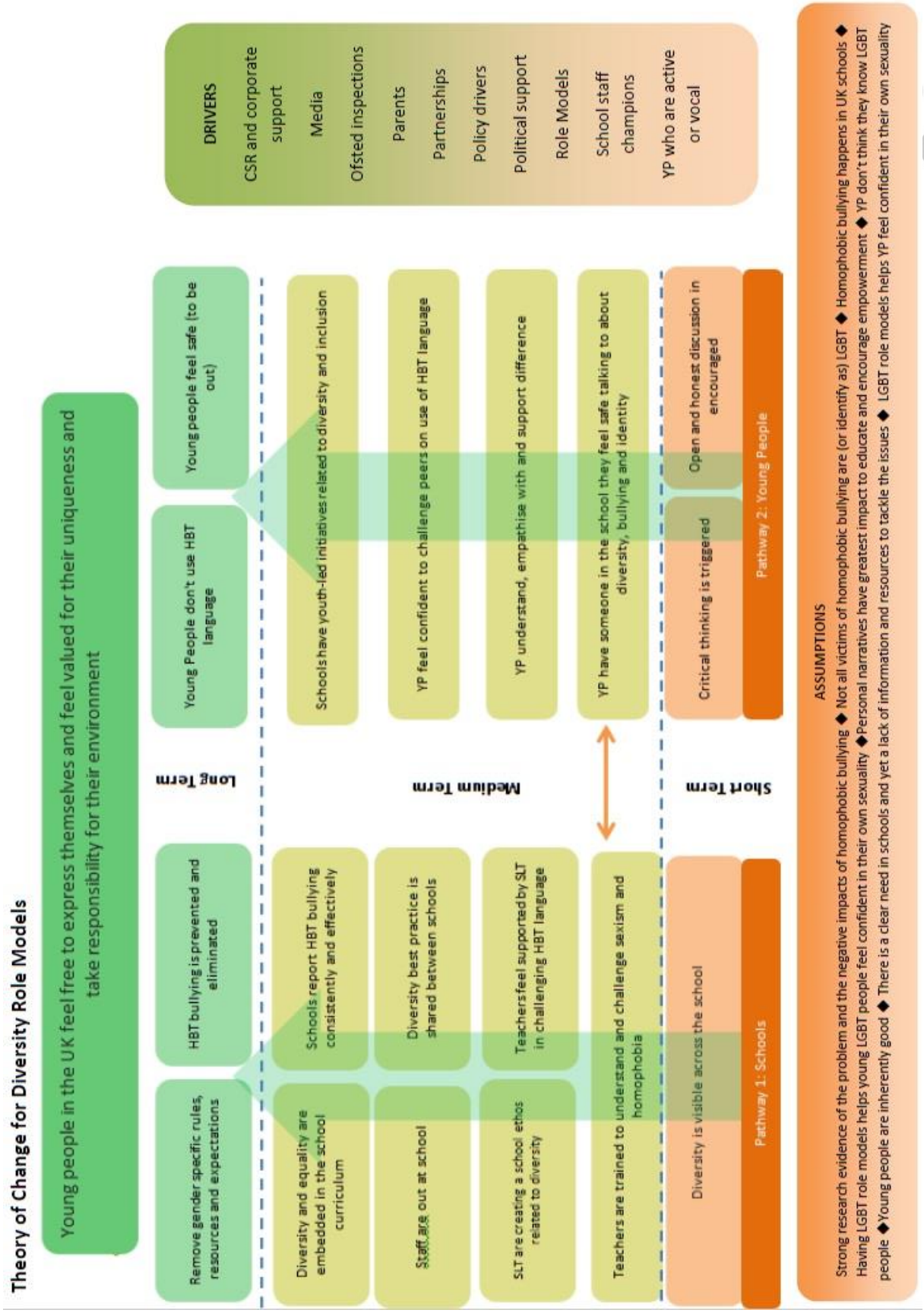
9. Collect some data about these issues so that your plans are evidence based. This can include the staff surveys mentioned above and also an online anonymous survey of students in order to collect a range of equalities data and to get student perspectives about how to best tackle these issues and provide support. DRM can provide a survey template or run the surveys on your behalf and provide analysis and reports.

10. Schools should look wider than the Local Authority for support and resources for the above activities. Local and regional corporate sponsorships, for example, might provide DRM workshops and advice. Schools should work with DRM to develop partnerships and funding resources beyond traditional funding pathways.

11. If your school is just starting this process, have a look at what other schools are doing in this area and look at the resources that DRM provide for schools.

For further information please contact Diversity Role Models at
info@diversityrolemodels.org

7. Appendix – Theory of Change



8. Acknowledgements

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