

# About Us

HeadStart South Tees is the CAMHS Transformation Strategy for South Tees (Middlesbrough + Redcar and Cleveland). HeadStart works across all schools, and also within the wider community, to give children and young people the necessary support to build resilience and achieve good emotional health.

Mental health is a major issue for young people. One in six children aged five to 16 were identified as having a probable mental health problem in July 2020, a huge increase from one in nine in 2017. That's five children in every classroom (i).



## Contact us

You can get in touch with us through [www.headstartsouthtees.co.uk](http://www.headstartsouthtees.co.uk) or by sending the team a message on Twitter @HeadStart\_ST



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**HEADSTART SOUTH  
TEES**

**CREATING A  
GENDER  
INCLUSIVE  
ENVIRONMENT  
FOR YOUR  
PEERS IN  
SCHOOL**

# Why is it important to be gender inclusive in school?

Mental health issues and difficulties faced in childhood can go on to have a significant impact on adulthood. One-third of mental health problems in adulthood are directly connected to an adverse childhood experience (ACE) (ii).

Being LGBTIQ+ doesn't automatically mean someone will have a mental health problem or an ACE, but may mean they're at higher risk of experiencing poor mental health because of things such as a lack of inclusion, discrimination, bullying, homophobia and , transphobia

In 2018, Stonewall published a report that stated that "Half of LGBT people (52 per cent) said they've experienced depression in the last year. One in eight LGBT people aged 18-24 (13 per cent) said they've attempted to take their own life in the last year". (iii)



LGBTIQ+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer or questioning (iv).

However, this does not cover all of the ways people can identify either their gender or sexuality.

People may also use the more recognisable LGBT to describe their gender or sexuality as a way of helping you understand more clearly.



**WOOLEY (2018)**  
**“BEING INCLUSIVE REQUIRES OPENNESS TO THE DIFFERENCES FOUND IN OTHERS AND INDEED TO RECOGNISING THE DIFFERENCES IN ONESELF. WE ARE ALL UNIQUE AND THEREFORE ALL DIFFERENT”.**

## How can you be gender inclusive in school?

At the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995, world leaders defined an inclusive society as a “society for all”. This would be a society “in which every individual, each with rights and responsibilities, has an active role to play.

That means making sure that everyone in your community is treated equally.

To be gender inclusive within school means not treating someone or doing something that discriminates against them based on their gender or sexual identity.

Some of the biggest concerns some pupils and teachers have is the use of language used when talking about someone's gender or sexuality.

Understanding and using key vocabulary can immediately help make a person feel more welcome and included within the school community



### Key Terms (v)

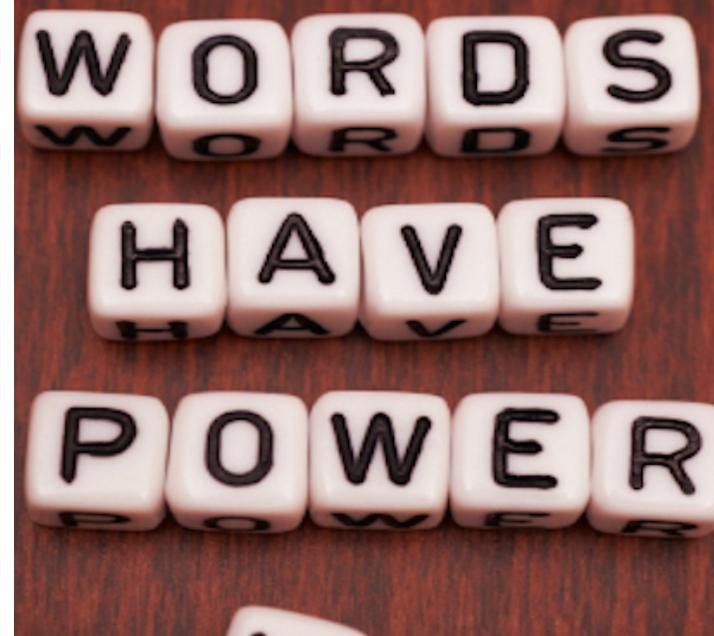
**BISEXUAL** - A person who is attracted to both males and females, or to more than one sex or gender

**CISGENDER** - A person whose gender identity aligns with their assigned sex at birth

**GENDER IDENTITY** - A person's innate sense of who they are and how they define themselves, whether male, female, neither, or both male and female

**NON-BINARY** - A person who does not label themselves within the societal gender binary of male and female

**TRANSGENDER/TRANS** - A person whose gender identity does not align with their assigned sex at birth



**THESE KEY TERMS ARE A STARTING POINT TO HELP YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF GENDER IDENTITY.**

**FOR A MORE COMPREHENSIVE GLOSSARY PLEASE VISIT [WWW.LGBTQPRIMARYHUB.COM/GLOSSARY-OF-TERMS](http://WWW.LGBTQPRIMARYHUB.COM/GLOSSARY-OF-TERMS)**

# Creating a safe space for your peers

A safe space is a place or environment in which a person or category of people can feel confident that they will not be exposed to discrimination, criticism, harassment, or any other emotional or physical harm.

This may be achieved by using language and descriptions that explicitly refer to a person, having relevant materials in communal school spaces and respecting an individual in what they ask of you - this is particularly important when it comes to pronouns!

You should always use the pronouns and given name that someone wishes to go by, even if you have known that person by another name or identity for a long time.

Do not assume a person's gender or their needs (they are the expert on themselves) so talk with them to find out how they would like to be treated and what you can do to help them feel included!



## Pronouns

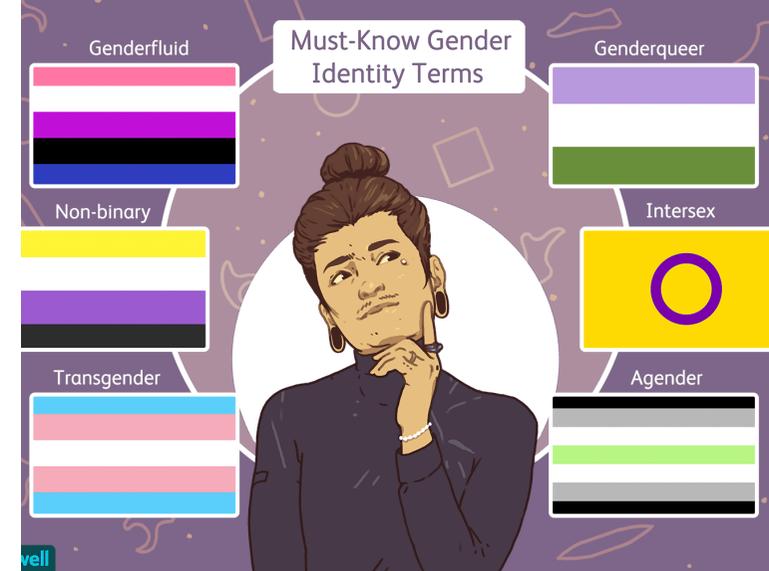
A pronoun is the word that identifies an individual i.e. he/she, him/her or they/them

Pronouns are one of the most common ways in which a person can identify themselves

They are also one of the first things to change when someone's gender identity is different to the one they were assigned at birth

Mistaking or assuming a person's gender can be harmful to a person

If you do mistake someone's pronouns, the best thing to do is apologise for your mistake and make a conscious effort to get it right next time



**IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT A PERSON'S GENDER IDENTITY IS WHATEVER THEY SAY IT IS, AND EVERY IDENTITY IS VALID**

**"CHILDREN FROM AN EARLY AGE REQUIRE A ROBUST BUT FLEXIBLE SENSE OF IDENTITY TO THRIVE IN A DIVERSE, CHANGING AND UNCERTAIN WORLD". (EAUDE, 2020)**

## Further Information

This guide to helping create a gender inclusive environment for your peers in school aims to be a brief guide and give you a head start on doing this

There are a number of specialist websites and resources available for free online that can give a more detailed and in-depth look at areas of gender identity and diversity.

<https://www.lgbtqprimaryhub.com/>  
<https://www.transhub.org.au/>  
<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/>  
<https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/>



## References

(i)NHS Digital (2020): 'Mental Health of Children and Young People in England', prevalence survey. Available at:  
<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2020-wave-1-follow-up>

Kessler, R. (2010) 'Childhood adversities and adult psychopathology in the WHO World Mental Health Surveys' *British Journal of Psychiatry* 197(5): 378-385.

Stonewall (2018) *LGBT Health in Britain Report*, p 5

