

Homophobia, Sexual Orientation and Schools: a Review and Implications for Action

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**Research Report
No 594**

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The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education and Skills.

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ISBN 1 84478 346 4

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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all those who contributed to this review for their time, ideas and views about how best to address homophobia and related discrimination in school communities. Special thanks to Stuart Watson, who undertook some of the interviews, and Anna Kirke, Cass Fleming, Kerry Frampton and Sean Jennings for secretarial support.

Background

Inequalities, social exclusion and discrimination impact negatively on the health, well-being and achievement of children, young people and adults.¹ Clear links have been identified between children's and young people's experiences of education and schooling, and their achievements, socio-economic position and health as adults.²

Certain groups of children and young people are made vulnerable by their circumstances and face particular educational challenges. They include those with special educational needs, those from minority ethnic groups and those who are looked-after by local authorities.³

During the last two decades, there has been an increasing awareness of the need to address bullying among young people in and out of school settings.⁴ Responding to widespread public and professional concern about the negative effects of bullying on pupils' academic attainment and emotional well-being, legislation now places a legal duty on head teachers to have a policy to prevent all forms of bullying among pupils. Furthermore, a number of resources have been developed to support professionals, parents, carers and pupils to develop, implement and evaluate anti-bullying policies.⁵

In addition and in recent years, there has been growing concern about the impact of homophobia – and homophobic bullying – on children's and young people's physical and emotional well-being and on their attendance and achievement at school.⁶

Among teachers, the experience of homophobic discrimination can have a detrimental effect on their lives and careers. In a survey conducted by the campaigning and lobbying group Stonewall, teachers were said to be the occupational group who found it most difficult to be open about their sexuality in the workplace.⁷

Responding to advocacy, campaigning and lobbying by groups such as Stonewall and Schools' Out, as part of broader work to prevent further hate crimes, building on findings from the Stephen Lawrence enquiry, and linked to the process of implementing new human rights legislation, there has, since 1997, been an increasing awareness among policy-makers of the need to address homophobic practices – both in and out of school.⁸

Actions to tackle homophobic-bullying in schools have been developed concurrently with national policies, programmes and initiatives, some of which may not at first sight seem directly related to sexual orientation and homophobia. Yet all have common ambitions – to protect children and young people from harm, to provide

¹ Social Exclusion Unit (2000), DfES (2003)

² Acheson (1998)

³ Acheson (1998), DfES (2003)

⁴ Thompson (2000)

⁵ See <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying> and

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying> for further information.

Accessed 5 October, 2004

⁶ Rivers (2000), Warwick et al (2000)

⁷ NUT (1997)

⁸ Warwick et al (2001)

them with safe and secure environments, and to contribute to improvements in their emotional, physical and educational well-being.

Although in different stages of development, key policies, programmes and areas of work through which homophobia in schools can be addressed include, the DfES *Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners, Every Child Matters*, developing personalised learning and building a new relationship with schools, the Behaviour Improvement Programme and DfES advice on behaviour and attendance, the *Make a Difference Campaign*, the National Healthy School Standard and Extended or Full Service schools, and actions and activities to improve Initial Teacher Training and Continuing Professional Development.⁹

In the light of these developments, it is opportune to consider how preventing homophobia and supporting sexuality-related diversity and inclusion might best be integrated into the day-to-day life of schools. To assist in this process, the DfES asked the Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London to undertake a concise review what is known about (and to identify gaps in relation to) homophobia, sexual orientation and schools.

The review set out to examine three sets of key questions:

1. What is the extent and impact of homophobic bullying on pupils?
2. How is homophobia and sexual orientation addressed *both* within classrooms (issues relating to the curriculum) *and* as part of whole school approaches?
3. To what extent and in what ways are issues of equity and diversity in relation to sexual orientation being addressed within the school workforce and what implications does this have for recruitment, retention and promotion?

⁹ See Appendix 1 for further details.

Methods

The review sought to focus on key issues in response to each of the above questions, and drew on published articles, and interviews with a range of individuals who have particular expertise in this area of work.

To identify key articles, a search of the following education and social science indexes was undertaken: British Education Index (BEI), Australian Education Index (AEI), ERIC (the major US indexing service for education), Applied Social Sciences Indexes and Abstracts (ASSIA), the International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS) and PsychInfo. Search terms used included combinations of the following phrases: 'schools', 'pupils', 'education', 'discrimination', 'teachers', 'teaching', 'homophobia', 'homophobic', 'masculinities', 'femininities', 'lesbian', 'gay', 'bisexual', 'sexual orientation'.

Publications since 1997 were included (this date coinciding with the development of education policies being brought in by the present Government). Articles were selected for more detailed review if they made specific reference to homophobia and homophobic bullying in schools and/or made reference to discrimination among the school workforce on the grounds of sexual orientation.¹⁰

Key informants were identified through a number of routes. In the first place, the DfES provided a list of key partner organisations that they felt should be consulted as part of the review. Secondly, researchers attended the *Education for All* forum organised by Stonewall in April, 2004, at which further potential interviewees were identified.¹¹

Key informants reflected a range of organisational views including key unions relevant to education; the Qualifications and Curriculum Association; Ofsted; DfES and the Health Development Agency, together with organisations concerned with promoting the rights and inclusion of same-sex attracted young people and adults. In total, representatives from 28 organisations were consulted using a semi-structured discussion guide developed in close consultation with the DfES.¹²

Data from the literature review and interviews were analysed thematically in relation to the three review questions noted above. Published literature and interviews were used to identify whether and in what ways homophobia impacted upon schools. Figures relating to numbers of pupils or staff affected by homophobia were derived from published studies.

¹⁰ In this review we have drawn chiefly on studies published in refereed journals as well as on national and other key studies appearing in book chapters and in the 'grey literature'.

¹¹ For further information about Stonewall's Education for All campaign, see http://www.stonewall.org.uk/stonewall/current_campaigns/education_4_all.html Accessed 13 October, 2004

¹² A full list of organisations consulted can be found in Appendix 2. The discussion guide forms Appendix 3.

Findings

Extent of homophobic bullying in schools

Literature review

Homophobia, sometimes taken to mean ‘... an irrational fear or disgust towards lesbians or gay men’,¹³ has been defined by the Crown Prosecution Service as ‘Any incident which is perceived to be homophobic or transphobic by the victim or by any other person’ – this definition adopting the approach generally accepted for defining other types of hate incidents, such as racist incidents.^{14, 15}

Studies highlight that homophobic bullying can take a number of forms: name calling or verbal threats, forms of sexual harassment (such as being inappropriately touched), being continually ignored (due to one’s perceived sexuality) and physical violence – sometimes slight, and on other occasions, extreme.^{16, 17, 18}

In one study, the term ‘bullying’ barely seemed to capture the violence experienced by same-sex attracted pupils. Respondents reported their clothes being set alight, having chemicals thrown on them during science lessons, being urinated upon, burned with cigarettes while being held down, being dragged around a school playing field by the hair and being raped.¹⁹

Given the challenges of sampling same-sex attracted young people (and so generalising to wider populations), of operationalising concepts such as ‘homophobia’ and ‘bullying’, and because there has been no national survey or study to address these issues, estimating the prevalence and incidence of homophobic incidents in schools poses certain challenges.

¹³ Wilton (2000, p.4)

¹⁴ Definition adopted by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) in their *Policy for Prosecuting Cases with a Homophobic Element*. The policy goes on to note that ‘Not every incident that is reported amounts to a crime and even when a crime can be proved, there may be insufficient evidence to prove to a court that it was motivated by homophobia or transphobia.’ The full policy is available at: <http://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/prosecution/hmpbcrleaf.html> Accessed 22 October, 2004.

¹⁵ See also the definition provided by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS): ‘A homophobic incident is any incident which is perceived to be homophobic by the victim or any other person (that is directed to impact upon those known or perceived to be lesbians, gay men, bisexuals or transgender people. This includes verbal abuse, property damage, threats and actual assaults. Definition contained in the MPS *Understanding and Responding to Hate Crime Factsheets. Homophobic Violence*. Available online at: http://www.met.police.uk/urhc/ho_fact6.pdf Accessed 17 June, 2004.

¹⁶ Definitions of a ‘homophobic incident’ used in studies do not necessarily correspond to that of the CPS. Neither are they consistent across studies.

¹⁷ Kosciw (2004); Rivers & D’Augelli (2001); Kimmel & Mahler (2003); Ryan & Rivers (2003); Douglas et al (1997)

¹⁸ Although not necessarily violence directed against young people at school, Plummer (2001, p.15) notes that: ‘... for the last 20 years, homophobia has been a key factor in one quarter of all stranger murders in New South Wales [Australia], and it has also been involved in murders not involving strangers.’

¹⁹ Rivers (1996)

Available evidence suggests that between 2-9% of young people may have had some same-sex sexual experience.²⁰ Drawing on this, perhaps around 78,000 to 350,649 young people of secondary school age in England have had sexual experience with someone of the same sex.²¹

Drawing on findings from other sources, one survey of 5,854 pupils carried out as part of an evaluation of sex education provision in secondary schools in Scotland noted that 3.2% of pupils stated they were attracted to members of their own sex.²² If this is used as an average figure of same-sex attracted young people in England, and given there were around 3,896,000 pupils in mainstream maintained and independent secondary schools in England during 2003, around 125,000 pupils in these schools may be attracted to others of the same sex.²³

For young people in general at secondary school, rates of bullying are generally understood to be between 10-20% - although some studies have suggested that up to 60% of children and young people may have been bullied at one time or another.²⁴ Rates vary, in part, due to the definitions of bullying used and to differences in rates of bullying at different schools.

A number of surveys of young lesbians, gay men and bisexuals in the UK, USA and Australia, have routinely identified that between 30-50% have experienced some form of homophobic harassment in educational settings.²⁵

In England, given the estimate of around 124,672 same-sex attracted pupils in mainstream maintained and independent secondary schools, between 37,401 and 62,336 may have directly experienced homophobic bullying in England.

In one UK study, that compared the experiences of 1,200 lesbian, gay and bisexual people with 1,200 heterosexual men and women in the UK, lesbians and female bisexuals reported being bullied more often at school (30% and 35%) than young heterosexual women (20%). Gay men were bullied more often when young (51%) than heterosexual men (47%). Males reported being more likely to be physically

²⁰ Figures for numbers of lesbian or gay young people are based on findings from the National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (NATSAL) of nearly 19,000 people published in 2000. This asked respondents whether they had 'Ever had a sexual experience with a same sex partner?' or 'Ever had sexual intercourse/genital contact with a same sex partner?' – the percentages quoted here are for young people aged 16-24. Applying these figures to pupils under 16 whose sexual practices are likely to be different is problematic. However, the figure is likely to underestimate the numbers of young people who *identify* as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (or who think they might be) and who have not had same-sex sexual experience. For further information, see a summary of key figures from AVERT, available online at: <http://www.avert.org/hsexu1.htm> Accessed 28 May, 2004

²¹ Based on numbers of pupils in mainstream maintained and independent secondary schools in 2003. Figures available online at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/trends/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.showIndicator&cid=1&iid=2> Accessed 10 August, 2004.

²² Reported in Rivers & Duncan (2002)

²³ As noted, with no national survey to gauge the numbers of same sex attracted young people, only approximate estimates are possible.

²⁴ Thompson (2000)

²⁵ Rivers & Duncan (2002), Ellis & High (2004), King & McKeown (2003), Hillier et al (1998), Mason & Palmer (1996)

assaulted than females, and lesbian and bisexual women were more likely to report that no-one would speak to them while at school.²⁶

However, a recent national survey in the USA noted that of 887 lesbian, gay and transgender young people (drawn from 48 states) a little over 91% reported hearing homophobic remarks in educational settings, with 39% being verbally harassed 'frequently' or 'often' and a further 23% were 'sometimes' verbally harassed. Eleven per cent of respondents were physically harassed either 'frequently' or 'often', a further 12% were 'sometimes' physically harassed and a further 17% reported that they were physically harassed only 'rarely'.²⁷

When asked, teachers are commonly aware of homophobic incidents in secondary schools. In a survey responded to by 307 teachers in secondary schools in England and Wales, 97% reported being aware of instances of general verbal or physical bullying, 82% were aware of verbal homophobic incidents, and 26% were aware of physical homophobic incidents.²⁸

Key informants' views

All interviewees reported knowing of homophobic incidents in schools through personal experiences, professional activities or both. It was noted that pupils did not necessarily have to be lesbian or gay themselves, but might be subject to homophobia if perceived not to fit in with stereotypical ways of being a girl or boy, or if their parents or another relative were lesbian or gay, or merely in some way different. Respondents highlighted difficulties in gauging the prevalence and extent of the problem, and identified a number of reasons for this.

- There are a number of ways of defining and understanding homophobia. One respondent stated, 'We need to unpack homophobia and say what it is'.
- No national studies have reported how homophobia manifests itself across schools and in different contexts: urban/rural; geographical area; same sex and mixed sex schools; within schools (e.g. in different curriculum areas such as in PE and in Art); or in different locations on the school site.²⁹
- Many homophobic incidents in schools are likely to go largely unreported. Young people and adults need to feel both safe and confident that an incident will be responded to appropriately. As one respondent observed, 'there is little point in asking about it in schools – it is unlikely that victims will come forward'. Most bullying policies do not mention homophobic bullying as a distinct form of bullying and, therefore, do not provide a mechanism for monitoring it. Lesbian, gay and bisexual youth groups were said to be a good

²⁶ King & McKeown (2003).

²⁷ Kosciw (2004)

²⁸ Douglas et al (1997)

²⁹ However, a number of local studies have been carried out to assess homophobia in schools. One such study, commissioned by a county-wide partnership across Northamptonshire (involving the Northamptonshire County Council Education Department, The Healthy Schools Initiative, Northamptonshire Lesbian Gay & Bisexual Alliance and various agencies within Northampton Borough Council including the Police Hate Crime Unit) reported on the extent and scope of homophobic bullying within three schools in Northamptonshire as part of the partnerships remit to ensure that all schools in the County of Northamptonshire have in place policies, procedures, mechanisms and confidence to combat homophobia and homophobic bullying (Drake et al, 2004).

source of learning about the extent and impact of homophobic bullying within schools, although only certain young people attend these groups.

Drawing together findings from the literature review with views from informants, it appears likely that figures of the extent of homophobic bullying directly experienced by same-sex attracted young people in secondary schools will be underestimates of the real extent of homophobic incidents experienced and witnessed by all pupils in every type of school.³⁰ Special and primary schools are not taken into account in the above data. Furthermore, the definition of a homophobic incident provided by the Crown Prosecution Service is not used. Neither do estimates include homophobic name calling and/or abuse directed towards pupils who do not feel attracted to others of the same sex, including the routine use of the word 'gay' as a term of abuse in schools to mean something bad or 'naff'.³¹ Moreover, many of those who experience homophobic bullying are unlikely to report this to teachers or someone at home.³²

Impact of homophobic bullying in schools

Literature review

Homophobic bullying has implications for the immediate and longer-term emotional well being of young people and their ability to achieve at school. Harassment of same-sex attracted young people can contribute, among other things, to lack of sleep, loss of appetite, isolation, nervousness, being upset or angry, elevated rates of actual and attempted suicide and self-harm, absenteeism, truancy and limited achievement at school.^{33, 34} In a study of the long-term correlates of bullying, 53% of adult lesbians and gay men reported contemplating harming themselves as a result of being bullied at school, 40% indicated they had attempted to harm themselves or had attempted suicide on at least one occasion.³⁵

While not all same-sex attracted young people who are homophobically bullied will absent themselves from school (perhaps by feigning illness or truanting), a retrospective study found that around two thirds did. Absenteeism and isolation can impact on academic performance, particularly on 'A' level results and/or pupils' decisions to stay on at school post-16.^{36, 37}

³⁰ One survey, conducted in California, USA, has found that 7.5% (or 200,000) of *all* middle and high School students have reported being harassed due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation (O'Shaughnessy et al, 2004)

³¹ Epstein (1997), Nayak & Kehily (1996), Swain (2002)

³² Rivers (2001)

³³ Dyson et al (2003), Fineran (2002), O'Shaughnessy et al (2004), Rivers & D'Augelli (2001), Rivers (2001), Ryan (2003), Ryan & Rivers (2003); Warwick et al (2000), YWCA (2004)

³⁴ Findings from the Massachusetts Youth Survey, conducted biannually, note that among young people who have ever had sexual intercourse, lesbian, gay and bisexual young people are more likely to have become pregnant or got someone pregnant than heterosexual young people (27% vs 11%). However, the reasons for this, and the role of homophobia in affecting the sexual practices of same-sex attracted young people, have not been the focus of enquiry. Copies of the survey are available online at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/hssss/program/youthrisk.html> Accessed 24 July, 2004

³⁵ Rivers (2001)

³⁶ Among pupils more generally, bullying has been identified as one factor among a number that has an impact on school attendance and truancy. See Malcolm et al (2003)

³⁷ Rivers (2000), Trotter (2001)

The impact of homophobic bullying can extend to pupils other than those who feel attracted to others of the same sex.³⁸ Children and young people with lesbian mothers and/or gay fathers can be teased and bullied about the sexual identity of their parents.³⁹ Yet, for children with lesbian mothers at least, there appears to be little or no difference in the quality of their relationships with peers when compared to children with heterosexual parents. Furthermore, children with lesbian parents are equally as well-adjusted as those with heterosexual parents.⁴⁰

Young men in particular – whether or not they identify as gay – appear particularly sensitive to comments that call into question their heterosexuality and masculinity. Some, for example, react particularly violently and in ways that lead to serious injury and/or fatalities.^{41, 42}

In both primary and secondary settings, a range of in-depth studies have identified the importance to male pupils of having a positive identity, albeit one that might be based on a narrow understanding of being a boy or young man and how best to become one.⁴³ Findings from one study noted that as a way of gaining status, a number of young men – including some from Black and minority ethnic communities – may pursue ‘hyper’-masculine identities, including the overt display of violence and/or sexual prowess.⁴⁴

Competence in sporting activities, wearing the right sorts of clothes, and pursuing relationships with girls can confer on boys and young men a status denied to peers not involved in these activities.⁴⁵ However, close relationships with girls and young women can have contradictory consequences. On the one hand, such relationships may validate masculinity. On the other hand, they may lay a boy open to teasing, as being too close to girls can be perceived as sissy-ish.⁴⁶

Concern about the under-attainment of boys at school (the number of boys with five or more A*-C GCSE grades is around 10% less than girls) has stimulated research into the sorts of factors that might hinder boys’ achievement.⁴⁷ In-depth studies have highlighted that striving to be a particular sort of boy or young man can have an impact on achievements at school, with masculinity in some schools and among some young people being defined in opposition to studiousness, so limiting some male pupils’ will and capacity to learn.⁴⁸

³⁸ O’Shaughnessy et al (2004)

³⁹ Clarke (2001)

⁴⁰ Golombok et al (2003)

⁴¹ Thurlow (2001)

⁴² Kimmel (2003)

⁴³ Plummer (2001), Martino (1999), Nayak & Kehily (1996), Epstein (1997), Ashley (2003), Hillier & Harrison (2004), Swain (2003).

⁴⁴ Odih (2002), Phoenix et al (2003)

⁴⁵ Paechter (2003), Swain (2000), Ashley (2003)

⁴⁶ Renold (2000, 2003)

⁴⁷ See: *Using the National Healthy School Standard to Raise Boys’ Achievement*, London, HDA.

Available online at: <http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk/PDF/BoysAchievePO.pdf> Accessed 18 June, 2004.

⁴⁸ Renold (2001), Martino (1999)

While the public display of sexism and homophobia may confer upon some young men a certain *cachet*, in one-to-one conversations and small group discussions, more sophisticated understandings of masculinity can appear. In private, individual boys and girls may indicate that they disagree with the public expression of homophobia and anti-gay sentiment, while acknowledging its pervasive influence in schools.⁴⁹

For female pupils, too, understandings of what constitutes 'proper' femininity can influence how they behave and their participation in school life. Physically active girls can be particularly likely to have their heterosexuality questioned due to '... the traditionally assumed links between the "macho" image of sport and lesbianism.'⁵⁰ This not only limits some girls' and young women's willingness to participate in sports but also can affect their romantic relationships. Being teased or bullied for not going out with a 'proper girl' may encourage some boys to end the relationship.⁵¹

There are, as yet, no studies that have identified the scale of the impact of homophobic incidents on pupils in general.

Key informants' views

While most respondents could draw on their personal and professional experiences to provide accounts of how homophobia had made an impact on some schools and among some young people, they pointed out that there was no national picture of the nature and extent of harm caused by homophobia among pupils.

- Many respondents highlighted that, as yet, there is limited research so far undertaken on the impact of homophobic bullying in schools.
- One respondent noted that, although anecdotal evidence and individual case studies exist concerning the impact on young people's emotional and perhaps physical well-being, 'We do not really know about what effects homophobic bullying has on underachievement or carrying on to college or university...or about the talents we are losing to it'. Furthermore, existing studies were said often to be retrospective rather than contemporary.
- A few respondents stated that there has been a particular failure to understand the extent and impact of homophobia on young people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities. At policy, research and practitioner levels, little is known about how young people experience discrimination on the grounds of their gender, ethnic background *and* their sexuality. One respondent noted, 'The nature of the oppression or discrimination is not easily identifiable for the young person themselves and is very complex...therefore naming it or getting help for it can be very difficult for Black and Minority Ethnic young people'.

⁴⁹ Phoenix et al (2003)

⁵⁰ Cockburn & Clarke (2002, p.658)

⁵¹ Cockburn & Clarke (2002)

Addressing homophobia and bullying

Literature review

As is the case of more general forms of bullying, it has taken time for homophobic bullying to be viewed as a social and educational problem requiring attention and intervention.⁵² As with tackling bullying in general, preventing homophobic bullying requires action to be taken across the whole school.^{53, 54} Specific activities include providing continuing professional development for school staff, providing support services for pupils (or at least referrals to these), providing pupils with opportunities to voice their concerns, broadening the curriculum, and ensuring that texts, videos and other curriculum sources include realistic portrayals of same-sex attracted women and men.⁵⁵

Based on work in over thirty schools in the North West of England, an audit checklist has been developed to help those in schools identify areas that might need to be addressed. Key questions to be asked include:

- Whether the anti-bullying policy includes reference to homophobic incidents;
- Whether the equal opportunity policy makes reference to sexual orientation;
- Whether the senior management team support activities to address homophobic bullying;
- Whether the sex and relationship education addresses sexual orientation; and
- Whether there is training for staff to address issue related to homophobia and sexual orientation.

Prompting pupils to include homophobia within anti-bullying charters they have developed may also raise the need to address homophobic incidents.⁵⁶

Further elements of best practice to address homophobic bullying were identified in case study research conducted in seven secondary schools in England and Wales. The schools, drawn from urban and rural areas, some single sex, some co-educational, and some with religious affiliation, were committed to challenging homophobic behaviour. After identifying that homophobic bullying took place, each took a whole school approach to the problem and among other things, provided leadership to address this form of bullying, built partnerships with local community organisations, made changes to the curriculum and identified successes.⁵⁷ To date, however, the use of the resource in secondary schools has not been evaluated.

Some studies have noted the importance of addressing schools' predominantly 'heteronormative' cultures, which cajole, persuade or force pupils to conform to particular heterosexual identities and behaviours. Pervasive homophobia is seen to

⁵² Warwick et al (2001)

⁵³ Smith & Samara (2003); Oliver & Candapa (2003)

⁵⁴ Adams et al (2004)

⁵⁵ Anderson (1997), Marinoble (1997), Petrovic (2002), Walters & Hayes (1998), Warwick et al (2001), HDA (forthcoming),

⁵⁶ Mulholland (2003). See also the DfES' Charter for Action that highlights a number of ideas for schools to consider – including ensuring that instances of homophobic bullying are identified.

Available at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying/pack/CharterPoster_A4.pdf Accessed 5 October, 2004

⁵⁷ Warwick & Douglas (2001)

hinder learning and inclusion and may prepare the ground for more vindictive and violent forms of bullying.⁵⁸ Within such settings, staff, pupils and other members of school communities can, at best, fail to understand or appreciate the diversity of pupils' sexuality-related needs or, at worst, collude in the abuse of children and young people.⁵⁹ Given the broader contexts within which schools operate, teachers challenging homophobic behaviours may find their efforts forcefully challenged.⁶⁰ Some community members with strong religious beliefs may resist attempts to counter homophobia, viewing expression and discussion of same-sex sexuality as wrong.⁶¹

However, given that all of those in schools have a duty to protect pupils from abuse, encourage good behaviour and establish environments conducive to learning, it is to more inclusive frameworks that those concerned with education increasingly turn.⁶² These emphasise that *all* children and young people have a right to benefit to the full extent from education, and that homophobic bullying (like other forms of discrimination) undermines the fulfilment of this right.

Some teachers have reported being unprepared and lacking in confidence to teach about homophobia.⁶³ Others, however, have utilised the interactive teaching and learning activities gained from teaching PSHE and other subjects to address homophobia.⁶⁴ These sorts of interactive teaching and learning activities – perhaps coupled with readings, videos, and presentations by members of an expert panel – have been shown to be useful in assisting pupils learn about sexualities and homophobia, providing students with opportunities for reflection on the needs of their peers – including same-sex attracted young people – on their own sexuality-related values and understandings, and on the forms of support that might best provide for those encountering homophobia.⁶⁵ Encouraging reflection on what and how learning takes place has proved useful also in promoting effective learning generally, addressing gender discrimination, and raising boys' achievements.⁶⁶

A number of studies and resources suggest that tackling homophobia requires an explicit focus on lesbian and gay issues. However, given that homophobia is also associated with gender relations more generally, it is important that these are also addressed.⁶⁷ Striving to be a particular sort of boy or young man can also have an

⁵⁸ Dupper & Meyer-Adams (2002)

⁵⁹ Walters & Hayes (2001), Francis & Skelton (2001), Kosciw (2003), Epstein (1999), Buston & Hart (2001), Solomon (2004), Mills (2004)

⁶⁰ Atkinson (2002), Mills (1996), Warwick et al (2001)

⁶¹ Halstead & Lewicka (1998), Athanases & Larrabee (2003)

⁶² Buckell (2000), Martin (1996), Gill (1998), Dupper & Meyer Adams (2002), Keywood (2003), Warwick et al (2001)

⁶³ Douglas et al (1997)

⁶⁴ Warwick et al (2001), Buston & Hart (2001), Milton et al (2001), Forest et al (1997), Quinliven & Town (1999)

⁶⁵ Robinson & Ferfolja (2001), Milton et al (2001), Douglas et al (2001), Quinliven & Town (1999), Sears (1997), Van de Ven (1995), Van de Ven (1997)

⁶⁶ Younger & Warrington (2003), Assessment Reform Group (1999), Black et al (2002), Watkins (2001), Watkins et al (2002), Purohit & Walsh (2003). See also Braw et al's (2002) account of an anti-homophobic bullying forum undertaken in New South Wales, Australia

⁶⁷ Frank et al (2003), Epstein (1997), Nayak & Kehily (1996), Phoenix et al (2003)

impact on educational achievement. Masculinity may be defined by some as the opposite of studiousness, so limiting some male pupils' will and capacity to learn.⁶⁸

The intersections between race, gender and sexual inequality also need to be examined. As one national survey has found, people who are prejudiced against any ethnic minority are twice as likely compared to the population as a whole to feel prejudiced against lesbians and gay men (33% vs. 17%).⁶⁹ Working from a commitment to social justice and diversity can enable educators to link together different forms of discrimination and help build alliances among pupils to address a wide range of forms of intolerance and prejudice.^{70, 71}

When addressing bullying in general, the 'no blame' approach can be a useful practical strategy for teachers when working directly with bullies.⁷² Although teachers are likely to require further professional development opportunities to identify how best to address homophobia, sexuality and gender as part of this approach, facilitating the development of gay/straight and other alliances within schools can support pupils themselves to address homophobia, and provide support to others.⁷³

Key informants' views

Key informants noted that of paramount concern in classrooms, schools and local authorities is finding ways of ensuring children's and young people's safety and protecting pupils from homophobic incidents. Homophobia can be addressed by providing pupils with learning opportunities that encouraged reflection, changed attitudes and fostered acceptance. Advocacy groups have for several decades been attempting to raise the profile of homophobia in schools and to ensure the protection and support of lesbian, gay and bisexual members of the school community.

Key informants identified several factors that helped and hindered such work. These included:

- Inconsistencies of practice among school staff. Respondents talked about the fact that homophobic remarks are commonplace in some schools. They could be '...the insult of choice in the playground' and '...very pernicious and damaging. Despite this, they often go unchallenged and are not responded to consistently.
- Lack of commitment to addressing homophobia. To date, little priority has been given to addressing homophobic incidents. Leadership, guidance and a

⁶⁸ Renold (2001), Martino (1999)

⁶⁹ Citizenship 21 (2003)

⁷⁰ Robinson & Ferfolja (2001), Mills (1996), Ryan (2003)

⁷¹ An example of the inclusion of same-sex sexuality within a document addressing broader concerns is provided by the National Framework for Education about STIs, HIV/AIDS and Blood-Borne Viruses in Secondary Schools produced in Australia. Issues related to same-sex attracted young people, as well as gender, disability and ethnicity, are noted within a section addressing student diversity. Available at <http://www.ancahrd.org/pubs/pdfs/framework.pdf> Accessed 15 September, 2004

⁷² See <http://www.luckyduck.co.uk/approach/bullying> for further information. Accessed 6 October, 2004.

⁷³ Collins (2004), Shaw et al (2003). For further information about alliances in the USA, see, for example: <http://www.gsanetwork.org/>; and for their development in the UK see: <http://www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/?a=article&Id=13&articleId=208§ionId=24> Accessed 25 July, 2004.

sense of direction are needed at national and local levels. Inaction provides ‘tacit approval’ to homophobia in educational settings. The education sector itself has to take the lead in this respect. Key informants remarked that funding for anti-homophobia work, and particularly for the involvement of external professionals in schools, often came from health services, not education.

- Failing adequately to address the ongoing impact of Section 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act. This legislation, although not applying to schools, was said to have provoked confusion, fear and inertia, limiting professionals’ ability or willingness to address homophobic bullying. Many of those in schools were said to be unaware that Section 28 has been repealed.
- Failing adequately to address the needs of pupils from Black and Minority Ethnic communities. Existing guidelines and policies make little reference to homophobia. One respondent commented, ‘... You can’t list in the bullet points “this is how homophobia can present itself” without acknowledging or mentioning BME pupils and how these factors might impact on them’.
- Not translating policy into practice. School policies on equal opportunities, bullying and behaviour, alongside a commitment to inclusion and diversity, provide a sound framework for addressing homophobia. Making mention of homophobia in school policies is of little value if issues are not also dealt with in classrooms. Key informants wished to see a whole school approach taken, rather than ‘...sidelining work on homophobia into SRE, PSHE or Citizenship’.
- Building upon past success. Some respondents cautioned against the uncritical adoption of successful strategies for other equality fields (e.g. some anti-racism approaches), since the issues were not identical. Care should be taken to modify and adapt that which works, to address a new and equally challenging set of issues.
- Failing to provide adequate professional development. Current training for teachers and other staff on sexuality, sexual orientation and homophobia was felt to be inadequate. Consequently, homophobia was often ignored, responded to inappropriately, and frequently reinforced. Teachers were said not to know to which services young people might be referred for support and assistance. Moreover, resources used in schools, while ‘well intentioned’, have rarely been evaluated for effectiveness.
- This was seen to be of particular concern given guidance on Sex and Relationship Education (DfEE, 2000) which notes that ‘The Secretary of State for Education and Employment is clear that teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support.’ (p.13) and that ‘Schools need to be able to deal with homophobic bullying. Guidance issued by the Department (Social Inclusion: Pupil Support Circular 10/99) dealt with the unacceptability of and emotional distress and harm caused by bullying in whatever form – be it racial, as a result of a pupil’s appearance, related to sexual orientation or for any other reason.’ (p.13).

Recommended actions by key informants included:

- Clearer direction and leadership from government. This would ‘...give schools the confidence to combat homophobic bullying’.

- By addressing homophobia within the broader context of behaviour improvement and equal opportunities, schools will be better equipped to challenge homophobia across the whole school community.
- Making the most of the opportunities offered by the National Healthy School Standard. The NHSS was identified as a framework that could support homophobia-related work at national, regional and local levels through seminars and the development, review and sharing of good practice.
- Making the most of existing good practice. Respondents provided examples of resources, approaches and activities that could be made more accessible to schools.⁷⁴
 - Innovative work is taking place in Scotland. LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) Youth Scotland is working in close collaboration with the Scottish Executive, the Health Education Board for Scotland and the Education Department to support work to address homophobia in schools within certain authorities through INSET, initial teacher training and encouraging local authorities to take an authority wide approach to homophobic bullying.
 - Examples of good practice in addressing how race, gender and homophobia interact and overlap, should be built upon in future work.⁷⁵
 - Best practice in challenging homophobia requires partnership across a variety of agencies, including health, linked to wider initiatives such as Neighbourhood Renewal.⁷⁶
 - Through community safety and or crime and disorder partnerships, the police are a key partner agency in supporting school-based work. Certain police forces were identified as working especially well with schools to address homophobia.⁷⁷
 - Activities to address homophobia should not be ‘one-off events’, but elements of a broader local programme to support work in school.
- Building on local priorities. Within the context of work with young people, a few local authorities provide support services for same-sex attracted young people. In this kind of context, ‘When you decide to do work on homophobia in schools’ one respondent commented, ‘you are pushing against an open door’.
- Taking a whole school approach. Beginning at primary level, governors, teachers and the broader school community should be sensitised to ‘heterosexism’, homophobia and their effects. One respondent commented, ‘The broad idea that we need to address bullying doesn’t actually get you very

⁷⁴ Examples included theatre in education work; drama based videos; and participatory learning approaches to exploring attitudes and knowledge. Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (FFLAG) provides a resource for parents and their children about developing a better understanding of lesbian and gay issues. Resources are available in English, Urdu and Hindi. For further information see <http://www.fflag.org.uk/index.htm> Accessed 13 September, 2004

⁷⁵ South Yorkshire police force have formed a coalition with schools and other agencies to explore how multiple discrimination needs to feed into new strategies; Citizenship 21 Awards Project.

⁷⁶ Surrey LEA; Greater Manchester; and examples from Scotland were identified.

⁷⁷ These included the following police forces working in partnership with Local authorities and developing specific forums to address homophobic bullying: Avon and Somerset; Bedford; Sefton; Greater Manchester (including Bolton); the Metropolitan Police Service – and South Yorkshire police force that has a ‘safe for all’ initiative that has included input into teacher training. Leicester has a local authority anti-bullying officer employed by the County Council.

far, since it does not challenge the perception that there is no-one within school who is lesbian, gay or bisexual but they are elsewhere'. It needs to be acknowledged, sensitively, that some pupils, some parents and some staff will be sexually attracted to their own sex or will be uncertain about their sexuality. A respondent noted that, 'Even on the first days in schools, kids are asked to talk about their families, and the assumption is that they will have straight parents.'

- There may be value in identifying where in the curriculum realistic images of lesbian, gay and bisexual people could feature and, where necessary, challenge or remove unhelpful stereotypes. Celebrating diversity and the talents and successes of key figures in history, literature, the arts, sciences and sport could effectively achieve this. Signposting support services in school diaries and on noticeboards, websites and visual displays (such as posters) will provide support to young people.
- Strengthening initial teacher training and continuing professional development. Some respondents stated that training and development for teachers and other staff should be underpinned by the assumption that preventing homophobic incidents is '...part of your job as a teacher'. On-going support to this work could be provided through a peripatetic advisor or designated lead at LEA level, but that training needs to be authority-wide and not only in schools where it is 'on the agenda'. The focus needs to be on developing confidence among staff and not 'testing political correctness'. Teacher training agencies and institutions have to ensure that teachers meet the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status and are responsible for translating them into practice. The standards stress the importance of working within an equal opportunities framework. While this can be interpreted very broadly by universities and colleges, some choose to involve outside agencies to support training around aspects of equal opportunities as they relate to sexual orientation and homophobia, thereby equipping future teachers to address issues of homophobia in the classroom more effectively. A way forward may be to encourage all teacher training universities and colleges to adopt such an approach.
- Key informants also noted that professional development is needed for Connexions Service personal advisors and school counsellors.⁷⁸

Sexual orientation and discrimination within the school workforce

Literature review

With a workforce in 2004 of around 661,000 people, and drawing on figures from the National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles, around 2.6% may have had a same sex partner in the last five years (around 17,186 men and women). However, this is likely to be an underestimate of the numbers of same-sex attracted women and

⁷⁸ For information from Connexions about working with young lesbian, gay and bisexual people, see: DfES (2003) *Information and Guidance on Engaging Young Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People*, London, DfES. Available online at: <http://www.connexions.gov.uk/partnerships/publications/uploads/cp/LGBreprintfinal03.04.pdf> Accessed 19 June, 2004.

men as it does not include those who have had no same sex partner in the last few years but who nonetheless identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual.⁷⁹

Studies of the experiences of lesbian and gay teachers, mostly small-scale and in-depth in nature, have noted the challenges faced when working in ‘heteronormative’ settings. Historically, concerns have been expressed about the proximity of people who are attracted to their own sex for fear that children’s sexual innocence will be tainted and their (hetero) sexuality disoriented.⁸⁰ Even though being open about one’s sexual identity may benefit pupils – by ameliorating the isolation of those who are lesbian and gay themselves, and by raising awareness about the diversity of identities among all young people and those who work with and care for them – teachers who are attracted to their own sex are often fearful that this becomes publicly known, perhaps especially so in religiously affiliated schools.⁸¹

However, in a recent national survey of perceptions of prejudice, 62% of respondents stated that they would feel comfortable if their teacher (or the teacher of a close relative) was lesbian or gay.⁸² The proportion of people who would feel comfortable if their teacher (or teacher of a close relative) was lesbian or gay was higher among those in households with children, compared to respondents in households with no children (73% compared to 57%).

Pupils and staff who display a personal dislike of homosexuality can undermine the professional practices of lesbian and gay teachers. Pupils may disrupt classes through the use of homophobic taunts and harassment. Colleagues and school leaders may provide little support in protecting teachers from homophobic incidents – or even contribute to these, resulting in stress, lack of confidence, poor work achievements, being overlooked for promotion and resignations.⁸³

In a study of teachers’ careers that focused on discrimination and factors of age, disability, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, findings were somewhat mixed. Twenty two per cent of respondents regarded sexual orientation as of some importance in influencing promotion prospects, while 43% indicated that it was of no importance; four per cent of all respondents indicated that their sexual orientation had had a negative effect on their career, while two per cent felt it had had some positive impact. There were, however, few lesbian and gay respondents in the study and the reasons for the findings are left unexplained.⁸⁴

Prior to the 2003 Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations, lesbian, gay and bisexual teachers had to judge carefully whether and how best their sexual identity should be made known to colleagues and pupils.^{85, 86} On the one hand,

⁷⁹ This figure is based on findings from the National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (NATSAL) of nearly 19,000 people published in 2000. For further information see the summary published by AVERT and available online at: <http://www.avert.org/hsexu1.htm> Accessed 11 August, 2004

⁸⁰ Blount (2003), Wilton (2000)

⁸¹ Ferfolja (1998), Litton (2001), Irwin (2002)

⁸² However, around one fifth, 20%, of respondents stated they would feel uncomfortable and 175 had no opinion. See Citizenship 21 (2003)

⁸³ Irwin (2002), Ferfolja (1998)

⁸⁴ Powney et al (2003)

⁸⁵ Koschorek (2003)

choosing to be 'out' might not only compromise their own professional career, but may also might threaten other teachers who wish their sexual orientation to be kept secret. On the other hand, and working within a supportive context, such teachers may be in a stronger position to help challenge homophobia across a school.⁸⁷

As advocates for minority ethnic rights have found, leadership through local educational fora has been a necessary precursor to combat racism. Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals too, can influence whether the right sorts of policies are put in place to address homophobia in schools – thereby not only protecting staff from discrimination, but also contributing to the provision of a safe learning environment for all pupils.⁸⁸

In one study of factors that might help or hinder teachers' careers, calls for greater equality of opportunity were made. Whatever a respondent's background, certain key factors were perceived to enrich a teacher's professional life and career prospects: a positive school ethos (that addressed diversity and inclusion), the opportunity to work with enthusiastic and empathetic colleagues, and the support of head teachers.⁸⁹

While it is possible to highlight some of the concerns of individual lesbian and gay teachers, there exist no UK studies that have identified the extent, and in what ways, equity and diversity in relation to sexual orientation are being addressed within the school workforce. Neither do we know about the implications of such discrimination for recruitment, retention and promotion among teachers and other school staff.

Key informants' views

Key informants views about the difficulties encountered by school staff resonated with those found in published literature. They noted that staff found it difficult to voice their concerns about harassment and discrimination related to sexual orientation. Administrative and support staff in schools could be affected as much as teachers. Specific issues mentioned included

- The fact that a wide range of staff in schools are affected by homophobia including teachers, caretakers, lunchtime supervisors, learning mentors, play helpers and personal advisors.
- There was a commonly held view that '...if schools are not supporting staff they cannot work effectively with young people on these issues'. If staff felt protected from discrimination, they will be more able to address homophobic

⁸⁶ Information for employers about the 2003 Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations is available from Stonewall and is available online at:

http://www.stonewall.org.uk/docs/Employers_Guide_final.pdf Accessed 24 July, 2004

⁸⁷ Lugg (2003), Fraynd & Capper (2003)

⁸⁸ Wald et al (2002)

⁸⁹ Powney et al (2003)

incidents directed against young people. Yet mention of sexual orientation within schools, even in staff handbooks, was described as being ‘conspicuous by its absence’.

- The types of complaints and concerns brought by school staff to their unions included ‘gay-related insults and abuse’. However, respondents felt that most lesbian, gay or bisexual staff in schools had few, if any, opportunities to voice their concerns with school governors, headteachers and other managers.⁹⁰
- Where lesbian and gay teachers have found a ‘safe’ school in which to work, they tended to stay there indefinitely, rather than thinking about moving on. This was said to be ‘good for schools maybe, but not so good for teachers’ own careers’.
- A distinction needs to be drawn between discrimination in relation to recruitment and/or promotion, and bullying and harassment in the workplace. While there exists legal redress with regard to discrimination in recruitment and promotion, bullying or harassment are more complex and less likely to be addressed.
- In identifying ways forward, it will be important to take account of the range of cultural and religious perspectives (including those of a progressive or orthodox, traditional or conventional nature). Some forms of advocacy may hinder rather than help discussion of how best to prevent homophobic incidents and protect pupils and staff from the harms caused by homophobia and could ‘...end in clashes and obstacles rather than managing to move anything forward’.

⁹⁰ A number of unions have produced resources to address homophobia – see, for example, online documents from NASUWT, available online at <http://www.teachersunion.org.uk/Templates/internal.asp?NodeID=68379> , and from UNISON, available online at: <http://www.unison.org.uk/acrobat/B1278.pdf> (other documents are available through the document database: http://www.unison.org.uk/resources/docs_list.asp) and from the NUT, for example ‘Homophobic Bullying. An Issue for Every Teacher’, available online at http://www.teachers.org.uk/resources/pdf/Tackling_Homophobia.pdf?PHPSESSID=c8df54e732127af0a389963c869b08fe , (other resources are available on this website by using the term ‘homophobia’ in the site’s search engine). Accessed 24 July, 2004.

Summary and implications

Findings from this review highlight a series of issues that require consideration at national, local and school levels.

The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the 2003 Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations provide a sound legal underpinning for actions to address homophobia and associated forms of discrimination.

The recent Green Paper, *Every Child Matters*, offers a framework within which to engage with children and young people's circumstances and needs. Its emphasis on being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and not being prevented from achieving full potential, are at one with efforts to tackle the bullying and harassment that are frequently the expression of homophobia in schools.

Government initiatives such as the *Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners*, *Every Child Matters*, the Making a Difference Campaign and the National Healthy School Standard have set out to ensure that schools promote inclusion, respect diversity, listen to their communities and take steps to promote learning and achievement.

Together, the above offer the foundations for a fairer and more inclusive response.

Key findings

The extent of homophobic bullying

- A homophobic incident is any incident perceived to be homophobic by the victim or another person – and is in evidence if someone does something, or abstains from doing something, because s/he dislikes transgender people, bisexuals, gay men or lesbians
- Homophobic incidents include verbal harassment, ignoring others, criminal damage, theft, and physical violence including rape and murder.
- Homophobic incidents can be directed against same-sex attracted people, transgender people, heterosexual people, and/or those who are unsure of their sexuality.
- Many homophobic incidents in both primary and secondary schools are likely to be unrecorded and unreported.
- Estimates of general bullying among young people in schools are understood to be around 10-20% but can be up to 60% dependent on the definition of bullying used and schools sampled.
- It has been estimated that between 30-50% of same-sex attracted young people in secondary schools will have directly experienced homophobic bullying. In particular, bullying of lesbians and bisexual girls at school may be more prevalent than that experienced by heterosexual female pupils (30% & 35% compared with 20%).

- Among teachers in secondary schools in England and Wales, around 82% are reported to be aware of verbal homophobic incidents and 26% are aware of physical homophobic incidents.
- Among young people in general in the UK, there are no figures identifying the scale of homophobic incidents directly experienced or witnessed

The impact of homophobic bullying

- Homophobic incidents directed towards same-sex attracted young people are reported to have led to elevated rates of suicide and suicide attempts, absenteeism from school, truancy, limited achievement and the desire to stay on in education.
- In a study of the long-term correlates of bullying, 53% of adult lesbians and gay men reported contemplating harming themselves as a result of being bullied at school, 40% indicated they had attempted to harm themselves or had attempted suicide on at least one occasion. Nonetheless, better data is needed on the prevalence and incidence of the impact of homophobic incidents on young people.
- In developing a valued masculine identity, some boys and young men may learn to be homophobic, and display attitudes and behaviours that are antithetical to learning in general or about certain subjects in particular.
- These ways of being a boy or young man may contribute to boys' underachievement – for example, their 10% lower pass rate of five or more A*-C GCSE grades when compared to girls.
- Little is known about discrimination towards young people on the grounds of sexuality, gender *and* minority ethnic background
- No studies have identified the extent of the impact of homophobic incidents on pupils in general

Addressing homophobia and bullying

- There is emerging good practice in preventing homophobic bullying in schools. Evidence suggests that both a whole school approach and specific classroom activities are needed to prevent homophobic incidents and address heteronormative cultures in schools.
- Whole school approaches require, among other things, leadership at senior management level, a clear identification of the nature and extent of the problem, reference to homophobia in school bullying, equal opportunities and other policies (including anti-bullying charters), a positive school culture that rewards inclusivity and respect and learning, and which discourages bullying – whatever form it takes, giving pupils a voice and encouraging discussion of homophobia when addressing issues of social justice, providing support for pupils where needed, and providing staff with professional development opportunities.
- More specific classroom activities include
 - Encouraging pupils to reflect on issues of social justice, their own sexuality-related values and understandings, the needs of same-sex attracted young people, how best to prevent and respond to homophobia (including the development of anti-bullying charters that make reference to homophobia), and how best to support those who have experienced and/or witnessed a homophobic incident

- The use of approaches that have proved successful in encouraging learning about sexual orientation. These include drama-based videos, talks by external visitors (perhaps on panels), theatre-in-education, participatory and interactive techniques
 - Identifying and challenging unhelpful stereotypes of same-sex attracted people. Providing more realistic images including the contributions that lesbians, gay men and bisexual people have made to specific areas of the curriculum (in English, Science, Mathematics, Art and Music for example).
 - Identifying opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to reflect on rights, fairness and discrimination.
- Leadership at the national level is needed in order to:
 - State clearly that schools have a responsibility to address homophobia and support staff and pupils who are affected by it.
 - Support schools in developing policies and approaches to protect the safety and well-being of *all* pupils and teachers; encourage learning about diversity (including that related to gender and sexuality); promote non-discrimination (against any pupil or member of the school workforce); develop an inclusive curriculum (that speaks to the diversity found among boys and girls); address problem behaviours (and understanding the reasons for these); and raise standards and achievement in education.

Responding to diversity and preventing discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation within the school workforce

- Prior to the 2003 Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations, lesbian, gay and bisexual teachers have had to judge carefully whether and how best their sexual identity be made known to others, especially, perhaps, in religiously affiliated schools.
- Homophobic harassment by pupils and staff contribute to teachers' stress, lack of confidence, poor work achievements, resignations and being overlooked for promotion.
- Homophobia affects a wide range of staff: teachers, caretakers, learning mentors, play helpers and personal advisers.
- There are no studies to date that report in a systematic way on the extent of homophobic incidents and their impact on the recruitment, retention and promotion among the school workforce.
- Providing a context in which staff can be open about being lesbian, bisexual or gay encourages pupils and staff to become more fully aware of diversity, helps the development of policies to address homophobia and, among pupils especially, ameliorates feelings of isolation where attracted to another of the same sex.
- A recent survey of UK respondents reported that 62% of respondents would feel comfortable if their teacher (or the teacher of a close relative) were lesbian or gay.
- Factors that enrich a lesbian or gay teachers' professional life are similar to those for any teacher: a positive school ethos (that addresses diversity and inclusion), the opportunity to work with enthusiastic and empathetic colleagues, and the support of headteachers.

- Where staff themselves feel protected from homophobic incidents, they are more able to protect pupils from such discrimination compared to staff who feel unprotected.
- While the 2003 Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations offers protection to staff, and while complaints can be made to teacher unions, in a climate of silence and indifference, lesbian, gay and bisexual staff in schools have few opportunities to voice their concerns about homophobic incidents to governors, headteachers and other managers.
- In tackling homophobia, uncritically pursuing a ‘gay rights agenda’ may be less helpful than identifying how best to protect the rights of pupils and the workforce while concurrently taking account of a broad range of cultural and religious perspectives.

Next Steps

This review has sought to provide answers to the following three questions.

1. What is the extent and impact of homophobic bullying on pupils?
2. How is homophobia and sexual orientation addressed *both* within classrooms (issues relating to the curriculum) *and* as part of whole school approaches?
3. To what extent and in what ways are issues of equity and diversity in relation to sexual orientation being addressed among the school workforce and what implications does this have for recruitment, retention and promotion?

Based on the available evidence, only partial answers to these questions exist. We know about the nature of many homophobic incidents in schools – from mild verbal abuse to severe physical harm and violations. We know that homophobic incidents have an impact on pupils’ well-being, achievements and possibly attainment. Yet, we do not know the true nature or extent of homophobia’s impact on same-sex attracted pupils, nor on pupils more generally.

We know that homophobia and associated forms of bullying appear to be best addressed by not only taking a whole school approach, but also through specific classroom activities. It has also been shown that, before action can be taken, there needs to be a wide understanding amongst staff in a school of the potential harm to their pupils that homophobic bullying represents – thus laying the foundation for a series of actions that includes giving pupils a voice, providing support services and ensuring that appropriate CPD opportunities are put in place.⁹¹

We know, too, that through the leadership of senior management teams and the expertise of concerned teachers, pupils have been afforded opportunities by way of drama, video and participatory activities, to reflect on the nature of homophobia, its effects and what they might best do about it. Yet there is no set curriculum or a series

⁹¹ To help build this understanding, staff should record all serious incidents of homophobic bullying and disseminate information about levels and trends across the school. Periodic ‘snapshots’ of the routine use of homophobic comments – including the casual use of homophobic language or graffiti – could be taken to alert staff, pupils, governors and parents to the need to develop and maintain a more inclusive school ethos.

of lesson plans to teach about homophobia and its effects – although guidance on this could be developed.

We know that homophobic incidents have compromised the careers of some teachers attracted to their own sex. Yet we do not know the nature and extent of effects of discrimination on the school workforce as a whole. Importantly, however, the sorts of working environments thought to supportive of staff in general (in which, among other things, principles of diversity and inclusion are upheld) are likely to support lesbian, gay and bisexual staff.

Given what is known and what is not, it is timely to encourage answers to be found to these questions, to facilitate the introduction of measures to protect pupils and the school workforce from homophobia-related harms, and to improve the well-being and achievements of children, young people and school staff.

Five key steps in this process can be identified:

1. Creating opportunities for further dialogue
 - a. To enable key agencies and organisations to pool knowledge and resources
 - b. To raise awareness of innovative and good practice
 - c. To draw on the expertise of advocacy and lobbying groups and raise the status of this area of work
 - d. To identify how homophobia-related actions and activities might best be included as part of other initiatives and programmes in which organisations and agencies are involved,
 - e. To assist leaders achieve a degree of complementarity with that of other agencies in their work to tackle homophobia.
2. Identifying common principles of effective practice when addressing homophobia in schools
 - a. To encourage teachers and those who work with them, to develop, refine and share activities that contribute to real change within schools and classrooms.
3. Promoting research
 - a. To generate new and reliable knowledge about the extent of homophobic incidents in (and around) schools
 - b. To identify the nature and extent of the impact of homophobic incidents in (and around) schools among same-sex attracted young people, and pupils in general
 - c. To identify what approaches and activities to address homophobia work best in which educational settings
 - d. To identify the extent of bullying and harassment towards the school workforce and how this might best be tackled in and out of school
4. Communicating findings
 - a. To support the development of a shared understanding that, regardless of type of school, homophobic incidents can not only be successfully addressed, but also there are concrete steps to take when doing so.

- b. To raise awareness among staff and pupils (and parents and carers) that they have a right not to be discriminated against on the grounds of, among other things, their sexual orientation and, if they are, to know to whom and to where they can report homophobic incidents and get support.
5. Reviewing and feeding back progress about the new dialogue
- a. To identify areas of success – as well as those in need of further development – when building partnerships, identifying common principles, encouraging research and communicating findings. This will assist the DfES develop an ongoing plan of action to attend to homophobic incidents in schools and the harms they cause.

To help ensure that efforts to tackle homophobia are not dependent on one or two individuals, these steps could form the basis of a three to five year area of work – with a point of review after 18 months.

The range of initiatives outlined in the introduction to this report, draws attention to the numerous opportunities for addressing homophobia and promoting inclusion throughout the school community. There are many fronts on which action can be taken in a coherent and forward looking way.

Given that homophobia needs to be addressed across a range of contexts, new actions and activities are best tied into key policies, programmes and areas of work already underway. There are many of these of relevance at the present time – and we outline key issues that might be addressed to tackle homophobic bullying in Appendix 1.

Both nationally and locally, there is the will and expertise to do something positive about the present situation. Within advocacy, lobbying and other organisations, there exists the depth of expertise and the willingness to share that can contribute to a new dialogue concerned with both preventing and reducing homophobic incidents as well as raising standards and achievements in schools.

Ultimately, the goal should be that of enabling all members of the school community – both adults and young people alike – to stay safe, enjoy and achieve, and make a positive contribution that is recognised by all. This, no less and no more, is what tackling homophobia in schools is all about. And this is a task around which there exists growing national consensus.

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Appendix 1 – Key policies, programmes and areas of work through which homophobic bullying can be addressed

Key policies, programmes and areas of work through which homophobia in schools could be addressed

- The DfES *Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners* which states, among its goals, that
 - Every primary school should offer a broad and rich curriculum so that all pupils enjoy and achieve,
 - Every school should have clear rules and codes of conduct, and to subscribe to the DfES anti-bullying charter – which requires the headteacher, staff and pupils to sign up to clear responsibilities to prevent bullying
 - Every secondary school should offer excellent teaching, an exciting curriculum, and a positive and attractive environment, so that all pupils achieve their full potential.
 - Every school should become a healthy school in which any pupil in difficult circumstances would get the extra support they need – without stigma.
 - On leaving school, all young people should be well-equipped for adulthood, skilled work and further learning.⁹²
- The Green Paper, *Every Child Matters*, which aims to support the achievement of five key outcomes among children and young people:
 - Being healthy – enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle
 - Staying safe – being protected from harm and neglect
 - Enjoying and achieving – getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood
 - Making a positive contribution – being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour
 - Economic well-being – not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving full potential
- The development of the *Every Child Matters* inspection framework, the purpose of which is to ensure that relevant inspections properly evaluate and report on the extent to which services improve the well-being of children and young people. Among other things, inspections will
 - Apply to schools and colleges
 - Have the experiences of children and young people and outcomes for them at their heart
 - Ascertain and take into account the views of children and young people and their parents and carers, and look to involve them in inspections in other ways

⁹² For further information see: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/5yearstrategy/> Accessed 15 September, 2004

- Encourage rigorous self-assessment by the organisations inspected and make use of information from their processes of performance management
 - Evaluate the work of the inspected public bodies in eliminating unlawful racial discrimination and promoting equal opportunities
 - Be designed to promote and support improvement, linking with action to follow up recommendations
- The DfES Make a Difference Campaign aims to
 - Work with teachers' professional associations and the Anti Bullying Alliance to create a climate in which bullying in schools is not tolerated
 - Disseminate information about bullying, and how best to address it, to members of school communities
 - Provide resources and support to prevent bullying and support those who have been bullied.⁹³
- The Behaviour Improvement Programme (BIP), set up in July 2002 as part of the Government's Street Crime Initiative and a central element of the National Behaviour and Attendance Strategy. The objectives of this programme are to
 - Improve standards and overall behaviour
 - Reduce truancy
 - Secure lower levels of exclusion than in comparable schools
 - Ensure there is a named key worker for every child at risk of truancy, exclusion or criminal behaviour
 - Ensure the availability of full-time supervised education for all pupils from day one of either permanent or temporary exclusion
- The DfES anti-bullying resource *Don't Suffer in Silence*, which
 - Includes advice on establishing a whole school policy against bullying, as well as details of the practical intervention methods schools can adopt.⁹⁴
- The National Healthy School Standard, which
 - Aims to support the development of healthy schools in which pupils' physical and emotional health and well-being are promoted, so enabling them to do their best and build on their achievements.
 - Contribute to the Government's drive to reduce health inequalities, promote social inclusion and raise educational standards
 - Promotes partnerships across health, education and other statutory and voluntary services, and programmes tailored to local circumstances
- Developing Extended or Full Service schools so as to
 - Provide, on school premises, easily accessible family and community services such as childcare, study support, police, health and social services, breakfast clubs, after school clubs and adult, family and community learning. These schools are to be open, as far as possible, throughout the

⁹³ See <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying/>, <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying> & <http://www.ncb.org.uk/aba> for further information. Accessed 6 October, 2004.

⁹⁴ Further information about the bullying in schools and an online version *Don't Suffer in Silence* available at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying> Accessed 21 June, 2004

school day, before and after school hours, at weekends and during school holidays

- The Key Stage 3 National Strategy: Advice on Behaviour and Attendance, which aims to ensure that school behaviour and attendance policies identify how the school promotes excellent attendance and high standards of behaviour through,
 - Identifying and clarifying the underlying values and principles of the policy, such as supporting vulnerable pupils
 - Drawing up a code of conduct for pupils
 - Involving parents, carers and members of the wider community
 - Identifying how positive behaviour and regular attendance can be encouraged
 - Putting in place arrangements for implementing policy and supporting staff and pupils
 - Monitoring and reviewing the policy
- The Primary National Strategy, which has as its vision a sector where high standards are obtained through a rich, varied and exciting curriculum which develops children in a range of ways. This is to be achieved by, among other things:
 - Empowering primary schools to take control of their curriculum and develop their own character
 - Encouraging schools to network together and learn from others in sharing and developing good practice. Partnership with parents is an essential feature of helping children do as well as they can.
 - Strengthening leadership and providing professional development opportunities.
- Developing personalised learning and building a new relationship with schools with the aim of
 - Tailoring teaching and learning to a pupil's needs, talents and aspirations
 - Putting in place an accountability framework that puts a premium on ensuring effective and ongoing-self-evaluation in every school – and is combined with more focussed external inspection
 - Identifying a simplified school improvement process that is set against a clear picture of national priorities, is responsive to local needs, and has a focus on pupil outcomes
 - Improving information and data management with information being collected once and used many times.
- Promoting equal opportunities by
 - Providing good quality education for all pupils regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability etc
 - Being mindful of the difficulties that some groups can face and ensuring that any obstacles to them are removed
 - Being aware of personal prejudices and stereotypical views and avoiding labels related to these
 - Valuing each pupil's worth.

- Addressing gender and achievement in order to
 - Raise the performance of all under-achieving pupils but with a particular focus on boys. Ways of realising this include: creating a positive learning ethos, providing good teaching and classroom management, close monitoring of individuals and effective support for learning

- Building on and extending Initial Teacher Training, Continuing Professional Development and teachers' professional practice.
 - The Teacher Training Agency (TTA) is in the process of establishing an Initial Teacher Training Professional Resource Network (IPRN), a web-based mentoring system, through which newly qualified teachers (NQTs) can access resources and support. Most professional concerns of NQTs relate to behaviour management including bullying. Resources to support work on homophobic and other forms of bullying can in the future be promoted through the IPRN
 - The promotion of a set of core professional values that teachers should demonstrate, including
 - Holding high expectations of all pupils; respecting different social, cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic backgrounds; and being committed to raising educational achievement
 - Treating pupils consistently, with respect and consideration, and being concerned for their development as learners
 - Setting challenging teaching and learning objectives that are relevant to *all* pupils
 - Demonstrating and promoting the positive values, attitudes and behaviour that are expected from pupils
 - Communicating sensitively and effectively with parents and carers, recognising their roles in pupils' learning, and their rights, responsibilities and interests in this
 - Contributing to, and sharing responsibly in, the corporate life of schools
 - Understanding the important contribution that support staff and other professionals can make to teaching and learning
 - Improving their own teaching, by evaluating it, learning from the effective practice of others and from evidence; being motivated and able to take increasing responsibility for their own professional development
 - Being aware of, and working within, the statutory frameworks relating to teachers' responsibilities
 - Selecting and preparing resources that take account of pupils' interests and their language and cultural backgrounds, with the help of support staff where appropriate
 - Planning relevant opportunities for pupils to learn in out-of-school contexts, such as school visits, museums, theatres, field-work and employment-based settings, with the help of other staff where appropriate.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ For further information about core professional values for teachers see: <http://www.tta.gov.uk/php/read.php?articleid=460§ionid=110> Accessed 24 July, 2004

- The Personal, Social and Health Education Continuing Professional Development (PSHE CPD) programme, which is providing teachers and community nurses with professional development opportunities to enhance their knowledge, understanding and skills in PSHE in general, and SRE and drug education in particular
 - Guidance from the former DFEE (2000), which stated that, as part of Sex and Relationship Education (SRE), teachers should address issues related to sexual orientation. More recently, Ofsted (2002) has recommended that homophobic attitudes should not go unchallenged in line with the key values that are relevant to sex and relationships education.⁹⁶
- The Schools Standard and Framework Act (1998), which requires head teachers to develop policies and procedures to prevent all forms of bullying in schools.
 - The Children Act (1989), which places on schools a duty to ensure the safety and to protect the emotional well-being of every person in their care.
 - The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, which introduced new rights for employees, including teachers, protecting them from discrimination, victimisation and harassment in their place of work.
 - It is now generally unlawful to discriminate against an employee on the grounds of sexual orientation in relation to recruitment, pay, terms and conditions of employment, training, promotions, transfers and dismissal.
 - The NUT is currently setting up processes to enforce the new workforce regulations so that they are able to take up case-by-case examples that contravene them.
 - The National Agreement on school workforce reform, which aims to
 - Restructure the teaching profession and reform the school workforce to reduce teacher workload, raise standards, increase job satisfaction and improve the status of the profession.
 - Other initiatives underway and under development, including
 - The Stonewall Education for All campaign that works with national and devolved governments, local authorities, and the education, voluntary and community sectors (across England, Scotland and Wales) to develop and implement an action plan to ensure that all lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people can fulfil their potential, and that schools and education systems can prevent and respond appropriately to homophobia and LGBT issues.⁹⁷
 - The Chief Nursing Officer's review of the nursing, midwifery and health visiting contribution to vulnerable children and young people. This review recommends, among other things, that PCTs, children's trusts and local authorities be encouraged to work towards having a minimum of one full-time, whole year, qualified school nurse for each cluster or groups of primary schools and its secondary school. Nurses should lead and work in

⁹⁶ See also Osted (2003)

⁹⁷ For further information see:

http://www.stonewall.org.uk/stonewall/current_campaigns/education_4_all.html Accessed 13 October, 2004

‘skill mixed teams’ with youth workers, health promotion, young people, teachers, social workers and others.⁹⁸

- National Children’s Bureau (NCB) DfES supported work to develop HIV/AIDS learning resources for schools. The department has also asked the Sex Education Forum (at the NCB) to update a Fact Sheet called *Teaching about Sexuality*.
- Articles outlining the importance of tackling homophobia in primary and secondary schools that have recently appeared in the DfES magazine for the teaching profession, *Teachers*.⁹⁹
- A new section on tackling homophobia in schools that has recently been added to the TeacherNet website. This identifies actions to tackle homophobic bullying as a part of anti-bullying work, and is part of the DfES’ drive to tackle all forms of bullying.¹⁰⁰
- Speeches by Ministers and Department officials addressing the issue of homophobia.¹⁰¹
- Guidance from the NUT entitled *Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender students: An Issue for every Teacher*. This has been sent to all schools in England and Wales through union channels. Further support for schools is being planned.¹⁰²
- Work by the Healthy Schools national team to develop guidance for schools on preventing homophobic incidents in schools. This will include a checklist for schools to help them identify incidents of homophobia and how they should respond.
- Following the repeal of Section 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act, a DfES fact sheet reminding governors, senior managers and other staff in schools that they have a responsibility to address issues of sexual orientation.
- A resource pack for teachers and others working in educational environments on Islam and sexual orientation is being developed by Safra (a project working on issues relating to lesbian, bisexual and/or transgender women who identify as Muslim religiously and/or culturally)
- Efforts by the Association of Chief Police Officers to draw together information about resources and websites that address homophobia in and out of school, to be made available to police forces.

⁹⁸ Review available at: <http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/08/72/21/04087221.pdf> Accessed 15 September, 2004

⁹⁹ July 2004 edition. For further information go to: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachers>

¹⁰⁰ See: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/homophobia> Accessed 20 June, 2004

¹⁰¹ See, for example: <http://www.dti.gov.uk/ministers/speeches/hewitt240304.html> Accessed 20 June, 2004; <http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm200102/cmhansrd/vo020712/debtext/20712-02.htm> Accessed 20 June, 2004.

¹⁰² For further information see: <http://www.teachers.org.uk/story.php?id=3060> Accessed 12 October, 2004

Some ways in which homophobia could be addressed through key policies, programmes and areas of work¹⁰³

- The DfES *Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners*, through which
 - Primary schools will offer a broad and rich curriculum, This should acknowledge diversity of family life and promote opportunities for play and learning that question gender stereotyping
 - Secondary schools will provide excellent teaching and an exciting curriculum. This should acknowledge and cater for diversity among pupils – including that related to gender and sexuality – and build on their strengths and interests
 - All schools should provide same-sex attracted young people with opportunities to voice their concerns, needs and interests and, where necessary, provide extra support without stigma
 - On leaving school, all young people should be well-equipped for adulthood – including understanding and valuing sexual diversity – and feel able to enter skilled work or further employment without fear of harassment or bullying

- *Every Child Matters* – its principles and associated inspection framework
 - Addressing homophobic incidents will contribute to at least four of the five outcomes: helping children and young people enjoy good physical and mental health, protecting them from harm, helping them get the most out of life, and not engaging in anti-social and offending behaviour.
 - Within the context of the new inspection process being applied to schools, the views of children, young people (and their parents and carers) about homophobic incidents could usefully be sought. As the inspection process makes use of organisations’ own self-assessments, schools could be encouraged to collect information about such incidents, perhaps conducting a periodic survey or ‘snapshot’ of these, and feed them into the inspection process.

- The DfES Make a Difference Campaign and *Don’t Suffer in Silence* can be used to
 - Raise awareness about the commonalities and differences between different forms of bullying, including that related to gender and sexual orientation
 - Support school community members to consider how best they might address homophobia in schools – not only through whole school approaches, but also as individuals witnessing homophobic incidents
 - Make the most of the bullying resources to stimulate and support discussion and action related to all forms of bullying.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Few policy and programme areas mention the needs of young lesbians, gay men and bisexuals, or homophobic bullying. However, their general aims apply equally to young LGBT people

¹⁰⁴ See <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying> for further information. Accessed 5 October, 2004

- Developing personalised learning and building a new relationship with schools can help school community members to
 - Modify elements of the curriculum, or finding opportunities within the national curriculum, so as to make it more relevant to same-sex attracted young people and to question gender stereotypes may go some way to meeting all young people's needs, talents and aspirations.
 - Respond to national priorities includes ensuring the safety and protecting the well-being of *all* pupils (required under the Children Act) and developing procedures to respond to *all* forms of harassment in schools (required under the Schools Standard and Framework Act).
 - Assist with inspections carried out for *Every Child Matters*, minimise burdens of potential research about homophobia, and contribute to a schools' own development, incidents of homophobic bullying should be recorded and, on a periodic basis, a 'snapshot' of routine homophobic incidents and comments be taken, and become part of a school's data management system.

- The Behaviour Improvement Programme and DfES advice on behaviour and attendance can be used to
 - Identify and then preventing homophobic incidents to make schools safer places for same-sex attracted young people in particular, and other young people more generally. For all young people, attending to homophobic bullying – and considering its associations with particular gender roles and stereotypes – may make some contribution to improved standards and behaviour and reduced truancy.
 - Provide schools with access to trained and named key workers with expertise in preventing homophobia and supporting same-sex attracted young people and young men more generally.
 - Support pupils to draw up codes of conduct that include reference to homophobia.
 - Provide support services for pupils who are vulnerable to homophobic bullying and abuse should be put in place.

- The Primary National Strategy can be used to
 - Provide all children, whatever their background (which includes the sexual orientation of their parents and carers), with opportunities to achieve their full potential
 - Develop detailed parental involvement strategies – which are inclusive of lesbian, gay and bisexual parents and carers
 - Assist pupils to learn about respecting and caring for others, working cooperatively and avoiding conflict, and should include, among other issues, addressing issues related to sexual orientation and gender.
 - Use curriculum materials to develop the social and emotional lives of pupils, as well as their behavioural skills. These should make reference to children's own developing understandings of diversity with regard to emotional and sexual relationships.
 - Ensure that Continuing Professional Development programmes and activities are in place for *all* adults working in schools to help build a 'school team' approach. Programmes should be cognisant of sexual

- diversity within the school workforce and build on the strengths and areas for development of different members of staff when addressing issues such as diversity, inclusion and emotional well-being.
- Support schools to network with, and learn from, each other. Staff and governors should be encouraged to share best practice when addressing homophobia.
- The National Healthy School Standard and Extended or Full Service schools
 - Elements of the NHSS already encourage schools to identify and address homophobia as part of a whole school approach. This work could usefully be extended and developed further.
 - The existing NHSS infrastructure provides opportunities for dialogue at local level, means by which schools can be involved in anti-homophobia work, and mechanisms to disseminate information and promote learning among practitioners.
 - Extended schools may provide new opportunities for dialogue and partnership among those who already have expertise in addressing homophobic incidents – including the police, health and youth services.
 - Addressing equal opportunities, gender and achievement
 - There will be value in reporting on the ways in which boys, in particular, have learned about the limitations of gender stereotypes including some forms of masculinity, the contribution that different boys can make to the life of the school, and how best boys and girls can resist and challenge homophobia.
 - Improving Initial Teacher Training and Continuing Professional Development
 - Issues related to homophobia and gender stereotypes could be raised in relation to the set of core professional values that teachers must demonstrate, including:
 - Holding high expectations of all pupils while respecting their social and cultural backgrounds
 - Treating all pupils consistently, with respect and consideration, and being concerned for the development as learners
 - Demonstrating and promoting the positive values, attitudes and behaviour that are expected from pupils
 - Being aware of, and working within, the statutory frameworks relating to teachers' responsibilities.
 - There are a number of opportunities to address homophobia and gender stereotyping in the context of CPD. While specialist training could be provided by organisations with particular expertise in this area, teachers are also able to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills in this area via the PSHE CPD programme.¹⁰⁵ Standards through which issues of homophobia and gender could be addressed include:
 - Plan lessons to include strategies to meet the needs of *all* pupils

¹⁰⁵ Organisations with expertise in homophobia and schools include Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH), www.eachaction.org.uk (Accessed 22 June, 2004); and SchoolsOUT!, www.schools-out.org.uk (Accessed 22 June, 2004)

- Develop clear ground rules with classes and use them to maintain a climate of trust and mutual respect between yourself, pupils and visitors, and to maintain professional boundaries
 - Manage discussions of sensitive and controversial issues
 - Make good use of a range of teaching resources
 - Liaise with external agencies regarding PSHE and/or pupil welfare in order to inform practice
 - Address issues related to personal identity, gender roles, sexual orientation and their influence on sex and relationships
 - Address how to support pupils through physical and emotional changes, including promoting positive sexual health.¹⁰⁶
 - Attention could be paid to enhancing teaching and learning activities that promote reflection among pupils on the processes of whether and how new learning about homophobia (or other forms of discrimination) has taken place.
- School workforce reform and responding to The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations can be used to
 - Prevent homophobic incidents and create settings within which school staff can be open about their sexual identity (if they wish). This is likely to contribute to a supportive context that acknowledges diversity, promotes inclusion, increases job satisfaction and raises standards.
 - Ensure that employers and unions enforce regulations and raise awareness about whether and how the new regulations have contributed to school improvement.
 - Monitor the extent to which the new sexual orientation regulations are known about and responded to – including among religiously affiliated schools
 - Pay particular attention to identifying how best to support staff who experience homophobia-related harassment and bullying, whether perpetrated by colleagues, pupils or others.

¹⁰⁶ Further information about the PSHE CPD Programme (and an online version of the teachers' handbook) available at: <http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk/cat.php?catid=843&docid=7237> Accessed 22 June, 2004

Appendix 2: Key Agencies Consulted

1. Joint Action Against Homophobic Bullying (JAAHB)/Intercom Trust
2. Anti-bullying Alliance (National Children's Bureau)
3. Health Development Agency
4. NAZ Project
5. Schools Out
6. General Teaching Council
7. Teacher Training Agency
8. National College for School Leadership
9. Qualification and Curriculum Authority
10. National Employers Organisation for School Teachers
11. National Association of Head Teachers
12. School Heads Association
13. National Union of Teachers
14. London's Lesbian and Gay and Bisexual Community Safety Charity – GALOP
15. Association of Chief Police Officers
16. Friends and Families of Lesbians and Gay Men
17. National Children's Bureau
18. Office of Standards in Education
19. Stonewall
20. Educational Action Challenging Homophobia
21. Lesbian Information Service
22. Bolton Homophobic Bullying Forum
23. UNISON
24. Department for Education and Skills
25. Safra
26. LGBT Youth Scotland
27. & 28 Academics working within the field

Appendix 3: Discussion Guide

Review of homophobia and schools

Background

- The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) is keen to learn more about the impact of homophobia (and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation) on pupils and staff in schools.
- The DfES wishes, with key partners (including both statutory and voluntary organisations) to find out how best to assist schools to prevent and respond to homophobic bullying and discrimination related to sexual orientation.
- We would like to ask you about what you see as the key issues in this area. This should take around 30 minutes over the ‘phone.
- We are contacting around 25 key statutory and voluntary organisations, as well as a number of key individuals. Although we will list the organisations and individuals in the report, we will not attribute specific quotes to them
- With your permission, we would like to tape record the interview. This will help us later to write-up the themes and issues you highlight.
 - *Check that the interviewee agrees to the tape-recording*

For the review, the DfES wishes to find out what is known in relation to three questions:

- I. What is the extent and impact of homophobic bullying on pupils?
- II. How is homophobia and sexual orientation addressed **both** within classrooms (issues relating to the curriculum) **and** as part of whole school approaches?
- III. To what extent and in what ways are issues of equity and diversity in relation to sexual orientation being addressed among the school workforce and what implications does this have for recruitment, retention and promotion?

In response to each of these questions, we would like to find out from you whether there are key reports/studies you would recommend as valuable to this work, as well your own views about the key issues that the DfES and its partners might address to carry forward work in this area.

- 1) Extent and impact of homophobic bullying on pupils
 - a) Reports/studies you recommend
 - b) Your views about the key issues that the DfES (or its partners) might address to learn more about the extent and impact of homophobic bullying
- 2) Addressing homophobia and sexual orientation in classrooms and across the whole school
 - a) What, in your view are the key issues here?
 - b) Are there particular reports/studies you might recommend to help develop understanding of these concerns?

- c) What are your views about the key issues the DfES (and its partners) could address to assist schools respond to and prevent homophobic bullying?
 - i) *Prompt: recent examples of work that has helped schools move forward in this area*

- 3) Addressing issues of equity and diversity in relation to sexual orientation among the school workforce (with particular regard to recruitment, retention and promotion)
 - a) What, in your view are the key issues here?
 - b) Are there particular reports/studies you might recommend to help develop understanding of these concerns?
 - c) What are your views about the key issues the DfES (and its partners) might address to assist schools in this area?
 - i) *Prompts:*
 - (1) *All school staff (including support and other staff)*
 - (2) *Recent examples of work that has helped schools move forward in this area*

Thank you for your time

Copies of this publication can be obtained from:

DfES Publications
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Sherwood Park
Annesley
Nottingham
NG15 0DJ

Tel: 0845 60 222 60
Fax: 0845 60 333 60
Minicom: 0845 60 555 60
Online: www.dfespublications.gov.uk

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Produced by the Department for Education and Skills

ISBN 1 84478 346 4
Ref No: RR594
www.dfes.go.uk/research