



Queen Victoria School

Supporting Transgender, Non-binary and Gender Questioning Students

Guidance

Purpose: This guidance is intended to support staff to provide a safe and inclusive environment for **all young people** at Queen Victoria School (QVS), including those who are questioning their gender and those who identify as transgender or non-binary.

At QVS, we are committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment **for all of our young people**. We recognise and celebrate the diversity of our student body and we are committed to ensuring that all students, including those who are questioning their gender or identify as transgender or non-binary, are treated with respect and dignity. It sets out the steps that we will take to support and respect transgender and non-binary students at our school and takes account of the School's responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. The guidance also takes account of the May 2024 Guidance provided by the Care Inspectorate in Scotland.

Staff should create a safe and confidential environment for a young person to explore their gender identity, which provides access to relevant sources of support and allows them to change their mind in future if they wish to do so. Not all young people who are questioning their gender identity will go on to identify as transgender or non-binary, and staff should be mindful of any underlying reasons as to why a young person may be questioning their gender. As with all young people, staff should follow the GIRFEC¹ principles when supporting a young person in this context, and adopt a holistic approach where parents, carers and other professionals work together to consider whether any help is required, involve the services needed to support them and ensure co-ordination of services where beneficial through a single planning process. It is important that those with parental responsibility (referred to in this guidance as 'parents') are involved in any discussions concerning a change in gender identity and parents should only not be informed where QVS has evidence that there is a real possibility of significant harm if information is disclosed to parents.

¹ Getting it right for every child

General Guidance:

- All young people have the right to respect in relation to their gender identity.
- All staff are required to use the name and pronouns that correspond to a student's gender identity.
- Transgender young people's use of facilities will be agreed on an individual basis, while considering the needs of all users.
- Transgender young people's participation in sports and other activities will take into account considerations of fairness and safety for all participants involved and, where relevant, will be in line with the guidelines from each relevant sporting body e.g. Scottish Athletics, Scottish Rugby, Scottish Hockey, the Scottish Football Association etc.
- All staff and young people should report any incidents of discrimination or harassment against any young person to a member of staff or to the Child Protection Coordinator.

Guidance regarding a change in name and gender identity:

- A student may make a request that they be known informally by a first name that is different to their formal name on school records. This is known as the "preferred name" and can be recorded as such on 3SYS. Whilst the school will not normally refuse a young person's request to be known informally by a preferred first name, the name change should not take place without a parent being informed and them having the opportunity to offer guidance to the young person.
- If a young person wishes to change their name and/or gender on school records, they should complete a request form, provided by the school. Where the young person is under 16, the request should be with the consent of all those with parental responsibility for the young person.
- Parents of any young person under 18 will be informed of any request to change name or gender identity as they are the persons charged with providing guidance to those for whom they have parental responsibility. Parents should only not be informed where doing so would pose a real risk of significant harm to the young person, for which there is clear evidence.
- Once approved, the School will update the young person's records, including their name and gender identity as required, within our Information Management System.
- The school will inform all staff members of the young person's new preferred name and gender identity, and ensure that the young person is addressed using their chosen pronouns.
- The school will continue to provide the young person with appropriate support as these changes are taking place.

Guidelines for addressing transgender students by their preferred name and pronouns in QVS include the following:

- Where members of staff are not sure of a young person's pronouns or preferred name, they should check with the young person in private at an appropriate time.

- Encourage all staff and young people to use gender-neutral language where appropriate.
- Provide training for staff and advice for young people on the importance of respecting transgender young people's chosen names and pronouns.
- Provide support for all young people at all times, no matter how they identify.

Boarding arrangements:

- If a family requests that a transgender young person boards in an environment other than that of their sex at birth, the school will work closely with the family to consider whether the request can be met, when taking into account the best interests of the young person and all the young people that would be affected by the decision.
- Transgender young people will be allocated an appropriate boarding house after those discussions take place. A decision whether room-sharing or allocating a single room will be made during those discussions.
- If room-sharing is granted, communication with roommates and their families will be required. The terms of this communication will be agreed, as far as possible, between QVS and the family of the transgender young person. This is likely to involve the disclosure of the young person's transgender status.
- In the case of a young person identifying differently from the time they started at QVS, they may be asked to continue to board in the Boarding House they were initially allocated based on their sex at birth. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis considering all the circumstances and the best interests of the individual and all students affected by the decision.
- QVS will endeavour as far as possible to provide gender-neutral facilities for transgender and non-binary young people.

Privacy and confidentiality:

So far as is reasonable, appropriate and consistent with the guidance contained in this document, QVS will seek to respect the privacy and confidentiality of young people respecting their gender status. Nevertheless QVS reserves the right to share the status of a transgender young person where necessary and appropriate with others, particularly when room-sharing is involved.

QVS will make every effort to agree the terms of any communication between QVS and the family of the transgender young person. Any sharing of information regarding transgender status must be on a strictly need to know basis and any staff member who is unsure about what information can be shared and with whom, should check the position with their line manager before anything is disclosed.

Implementation:

- QVS will provide training for staff and young people on issues related to gender identity.
- QVS will review and update this guidance every 6 months.

The creation of this guidance has considered the following legislation and guidance:

1. [Guidance for CYP service on the inclusion of transgender including non-binary young people.pdf \(careinspectorate.com\)](#): This guidance provides advice and direction for boarding schools.
2. [The Scottish Government's Guidelines on Supporting Transgender Young People](#): This guidance provides advice on how to support transgender young people, including in schools. Schools in Scotland should be aware of this guidance and should have regard to this guidance in the formation of their policies and practices.
3. [Equality Act 2010](#): This legislation prohibits discrimination on the grounds of nine protected characteristics, which include sex and gender reassignment. Schools in Scotland are required to adhere to this legislation and should ensure that their policies and practices do not discriminate against transgender students, who may have the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.
4. [Gender Recognition Act \(2004\)](#): This legislation provides a legal process for transgender people to change their legal sex by obtaining a Gender Recognition Certificate. This legislation only applies to those aged 18 and over and is therefore unlikely to apply to a student at QVS. Specific advice should be sought if QVS requires to engage with a student who has a Gender Recognition Certificate.