Stonewall
EDUCATION GUIDES

Challenging homophobic language

education for all

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Foreword

Stonewall surveyed 1,145 lesbian, gay and bisexual secondary school pupils about their experiences of homophobic bullying for The School Report in 2007. They confirmed the endemic nature of homophobic bullying in Britain's schools. But the issue of more concern than any other was the use of homophobic language as an insult against gay students. 98 per cent of those LGB young people told us that they regularly hear the phrases 'you're so gay' or 'that's so gay' at school. Two years later 95 per cent of secondary school staff and three quarters of primary school staff surveyed by YouGov for The Teachers' Report told us that they were still hearing the same two insults in their schools.

Every day in schools across Britain homophobic language is undermining the confidence and self-esteem not just of young gay people, but of any student who studies too hard, is deemed different or isn't part of the gang. More often than not, school staff lack the support and confidence to tackle homophobic bullying and worry that they don't have the time to challenge every instance of homophobic language. Disturbingly, nine out of ten teachers in both primary and secondary schools admit to having had no training to tackle homophobic bullying.

Challenging homophobic language doesn't have to be time-consuming or difficult, and creating an inclusive school culture where homophobic language is not tolerated can stop it happening in the first place. That's why we've produced this guide. We hope it will help you to create an environment where all young people can learn free from fear of discrimination and bullying.

Ben Summerskill
Chief Executive, Stonewall

Contents

1 What is homophobic language?

'poof', 'lezzer', 'gay boy', 'batty boy', 'you're so gay'

Homophobic language means terms of abuse that are often used towards lesbian, gay and bisexual people, or those thought to be LGB.

However, homophobic language is also often used to refer to something or someone as inferior. Phrases such as 'you're such a lezzer!' or 'those trainers are gay!', for example, may be used to insult someone or something, but without referring to actual or perceived sexual orientation.

This language is often dismissed as 'harmless banter' and not thought to be particularly hurtful, especially where the intent is not to comment on someone's actual or perceived sexual orientation.

However, regardless of the lack of any deliberate intent, these terms liken being gay to something that's bad, wrong or inferior.

Homophobic language tends to be used without thinking and is often ignored by teachers and school staff because either they feel it is difficult to know how to respond or they believe the language is used without any homophobic intent.

2 **Why is it a problem?**

In secondary schools

- **98 per cent** of gay pupils hear 'that's so gay' or 'you're so gay' at school

- **97 per cent** of gay pupils hear derogatory phrases such as 'dyke' or 'poof' used in school

“I get called names all the time at school, especially 'poof' or 'faggot'. My stuff is always being ripped up or drawn on or stolen. Alan, 13, secondary school (Scotland)

- **95 per cent** of secondary school teachers report hearing the phrases 'you're so gay' or 'that's so gay' in their schools

- **eight in ten** secondary school teachers report hearing other insulting homophobic remarks such as 'poof', 'dyke', 'queer' and 'faggot'

“Use of phrases like 'that's so gay' have become commonplace.

Megan, administrative support, secondary school (East Midlands)

In primary schools

- **three quarters** of primary school teachers report hearing the phrases 'you're so gay' or 'that's so gay' in their schools

- **two in five** primary school teachers report hearing other insulting homophobic remarks such as 'poof', 'dyke', 'queer' and 'faggot'

Even if pupils are not in each instance deliberately commenting on any actual or perceived sexual orientation, they are inundated daily with messages that equate being lesbian, gay or bisexual with something negative.

Name-calling is the most common form of homophobic bullying.

A school culture that permits casual use of homophobic language makes it all the easier for pupils to suffer homophobic name-calling and bullying.

3 Who is subjected to homophobic language?

“ The majority of anti-gay remarks are directed at students who are (probably) not gay but the remarks are intended as insults to insinuate that they are gay. Anna, librarian, secondary school (West Midlands)

Teachers and school staff say that the pupils most affected by homophobic language are, in descending order:

- pupils who are thought to be lesbian, gay or bisexual

- boys for behaving / acting 'like girls'

- pupils who are openly lesbian, gay or bisexual

- boys who don't play sports

- boys who are academic

- girls for behaving / acting 'like boys'

- girls who do play sports

- pupils whose parents / carers are gay

- pupils who have gay friends or family

“ I think that the term 'you're so gay' is very commonly used to express dislike or scorn. Usually when challenged about these comments, pupils are either embarrassed or defiant, expressing their views that to be gay is 'gross'. Kim, teacher, secondary school (Yorkshire and the Humber).

It is not exclusively gay young people who experience homophobic name-calling or harassment. Homophobic bullying can affect any young person at any time during their education, including primary and secondary schools, as well as Further Education and sixth form colleges.

4 The impact of homophobic language

When homophobic behaviour and language go unchallenged, a culture of homophobia is created and can impact on young people's sense of belonging, self-esteem and attainment at school.

" If a teacher doesn't intervene when pupils use anti-gay language, it could go further the next time (more specific anti-gay bullying, for example).

Jessica, teacher, independent secondary school (Scotland)

- **nine in ten** secondary school teachers and more than **two in five** primary school teachers say pupils, regardless of their sexual orientation, experience name-calling and homophobic bullying at school

- almost **two thirds** of lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils experience homophobic bullying

- young people who have been homophobically bullied are **more likely** to leave school at 16

- **seven out of ten** gay pupils who experience homophobic bullying state that it has had an impact on their school work

- **half** of those who have experienced homophobic bullying have skipped school at some point because of it

" At one point it really got to me and I couldn't take it anymore. So I had to change my phone, and be taken from some of my lessons because it got so bad. Jay, 18, FE college (North East)

Intervening when young people use homophobic language, including the use of the word gay to mean inferior, creates a school culture where homophobia and homophobic bullying are not tolerated.

5 Responding to homophobic language

Gay pupils are three times more likely to feel that their school is accepting and tolerant if it responds to homophobic incidents, including homophobic language.

- **half** of teachers fail to respond to homophobic language when they hear it

- only **seven per cent** of teachers are reported to respond every time they hear homophobic language

> Where I have heard the phrase 'she's a lezzie' or something similar it has been said at some distance from me and did not lead me to believe that anyone was being hurt or upset by what was being said. It is a rare occurrence. Juliette, teacher, faith independent secondary school (East of England)

> I reported it and teachers said they couldn't do anything, and when they saw verbal bullying they'd just stand and watch then walk away.
>
> Ian, 17, secondary school (East Midlands)

Schools have a duty to safeguard the wellbeing of all young people in their care. Failure to respond to homophobic language can have an impact on pupils' confidence and self-esteem, as well as their attainment at school.

In the same way that they challenge racist language, school staff should feel confident to respond to homophobic language whenever it happens.

6 How can I respond?

from: *Safe to Learn: Homophobic bullying; DCSF, 2007*

A pupil makes a homophobic remark such as 'That's so gay' or 'Oi, pass me a pen you dyke'. **Does the school have an explicit policy stating homophobic language is unacceptable?**

NO → Staff can intervene more effectively and respond to homophobic language if it is part of policies and procedures.

YES

Tell the pupil that homophobic language is not acceptable in school. Explain that homophobic language is offensive. **Does the pupil understand?**

YES There may be some lapses, and you may have to say it again, but pupils begin to understand that homophobic language is unacceptable and it stops.

NO

The pupil continues to make comments, as does the rest of the class. Explain in more detail the effect that homophobia and homophobic language have on people and that like racist language, homophobic language will not be tolerated. **Does it stop?**

YES The culture of a school is changing. In the same way pupils understand racism is unacceptable, they begin to understand that homophobic language is unacceptable.

NO

Remove the pupil from the classroom and talk to the pupil in more detail about his/her behaviour and why it's offensive. **Does the pupil stop?**

YES It takes time to teach young people that homophobic bullying is unacceptable, especially if it has not been challenged in the past. Pupils who experience homophobic bullying will be more confident about discussing other incidents with you if the school is seen to tackle incidents.

NO

Involve senior managers. The pupil should understand the sanctions that will apply if they continue to use homophobic language. **Does this help?**

YES The involvement and support of the headteacher and senior management in tackling homophobic language sends a strong leadership message that homophobic language and behaviour will not be tolerated.

NO

Invite parents in to discuss the attitude of the pupil. Even if parents and pupils think gay people should be treated differently, **this does not mean homophobic language or bullying is acceptable.**

PARENTS RESPOND NEGATIVELY

Take time to explain to parents why this policy is important as part of the anti-bullying policy of the school. Explain that all pupils should be able to feel safe at school. Reiterate that they have an obligation to help schools uphold policies.

“ As we are a lower school with children up to age nine, I feel that this is an ideal opportunity to explain to any child who makes these comments that they are unacceptable. How I do this would depend on the child and their level of understanding. Saheema, teacher, primary school (East of England)

“ We stopped a mathematics lesson for a full class discussion/lecture on the issue of both the name-calling and what the issues were with actually being lesbian, gay or bisexual. Neil, teacher, secondary school (Scotland)

“ I spoke individually to the child involved and pointed out that insulting someone because of their sexuality is similar to insulting someone because of the colour of their skin. Kay, teacher, primary school (Yorkshire and the Humber)

Tackling homophobic language is a fundamental part of the whole-school approach to tackling homophobic bullying, which is endemic in Britain's schools. Pupils' use of homophobic language may or may not be linked to bullying, however verbal abuse is the most common form of homophobic bullying and can have a serious impact on young people's education and achievement in later life.

Where pupils' actions constitute bullying, teachers should follow their school's anti-bullying policies and sanctions.

7 'That's so gay!'

National Stonewall research shows that phrases such as 'you're so gay!' and 'that's so gay!' are the most common forms of homophobic behaviour, and often the most difficult to challenge. The information below will help you feel more confident to tackle the use of these particular phrases in your school.

The most insidious form of homophobic language in schools is the use of the term 'gay' as a generally derogatory remark or insult. Teachers can find this to be the most difficult to tackle because they don't feel pupils are deliberately being homophobic.

However, many secondary school teachers understand how permitting this language contributes to a harmful environment and challenge this language in their classrooms. Teachers handle this in a number of ways:

"A student used the word gay in a negative way, and we got into a conversation about inappropriate use of language, and how using it like that was offensive to people who were gay. I compared it to racism, and he understood exactly what I was getting at. Hailey, teacher, secondary school (West Midlands)

"Challenging a 'so gay' remark led to a discussion where the pupil intimated that it was because I was also gay. I asked if that would matter at all to which he replied no, so I asked why he felt it was a good 'put down'. He said actually he was being rather stupid and just wanted to apologise. As the lesson was a broad discussion we opened out the debate to all who generally felt that it really did not matter what anyone was.

Ian, teacher, state secondary school (East of England)

> I confronted a student who called another student gay as an insult and asked why he felt it appropriate to use such language as an insult. We discussed why being gay was not wrong or negative and so the word 'gay' should not be used as a term of abuse. Em, teacher, faith state secondary school (West Midlands)

Pupils in primary school may not necessarily understand that their comments are inappropriate. Taking this into account, primary school teachers have also found ways to address children who use the term gay in a derogatory manner.

> A pupil called another pupil 'gay' as a general insult. This was immediately pointed out as being inappropriate behaviour – just name-calling is bad enough! When asked if they knew what 'gay' meant, that pupil just said 'stupid'. Another pupil pointed out that it meant being in love with someone of the same sex, and also pointed out she had a family member who was gay and that she was pleased about that. That was the end of the discussion. Eve, teacher, primary school (East of England)

> I talked openly and honestly with the children about what 'being gay' actually meant and discussed why it was not very nice or relevant to use the word gay as an insult. Nikky, teacher, primary school (North West)

Comments such as 'that's so gay' are rarely referring to sexual orientation. Remind pupils what gay means; that it's not a negative thing; that it's hurtful to people who are gay and to young people whose parents and carers, family members, or friends are gay. Tell them it shouldn't be used as a negative term and it won't be tolerated in school. Challenging this language fosters a school culture where homophobia, homophobic language and homophobic bullying are not acceptable. Remember, schools always tackle racist language. The use of homophobic language should always be challenged in the same way.

8 Prevention

School staff should be given the confidence and support to challenge homophobic language when it occurs. However, there are a number of things teachers can do to cultivate a culture that discourages the use of homophobic language.

● **Include lesbian, gay and bisexual people in lessons** Naturally incorporating gay people and issues into the curriculum will encourage pupils to view lesbian, gay and bisexual people and relationships as an equally positive part of society. For example, discussing different families, gay characters in novels, plays or children's books, civil partnerships and relationship education are all ideal ways to allow discussion of LGB themes in a sensitive and appropriate manner.

● **Involve pupils** Young people want their schools to be diverse and welcoming places. Involve them in initiatives to promote equality and diversity that include tackling homophobic language and bullying. Set up communication channels through which pupils can address their concerns and collaborate with teachers and senior management – for example through the student council and other student groups or anonymous reporting.

● **Specific teaching on issues regarding homophobia** In the same way that schools discuss racism and other forms of discrimination, pupils should also be aware of homophobia and their school's policies concerning homophobic language and behaviour.

● **Assemblies** Use school assemblies to address homophobic language and behaviour. Also use key opportunities in the school calendar, such as LGBT History Month in February, to include gay people in a positive way.

● **Posters and displays** Use posters or displays to communicate to pupils positive messages on equality for lesbian, gay and bisexual people, such as Stonewall's 'Some people are gay. Get over it!' poster campaign.

Preventive measures are vital in ensuring that school culture is not permissive of such language and that the whole school community understands that homophobic language will not be tolerated.

Secondary School: **Wisewood Sports
and Community College, Sheffield**

Wisewood Sports and Community College in Sheffield has a
several-pronged approach to tackling homophobic language in
the school.

Equipping staff: The school issues guidance on working with
LGB young people to all new staff. The booklet was developed by
a Sheffield voluntary sector organisation working with LGB young
people. The school also has an inclusive anti-bullying policy that
covers homophobic bullying and language.

Tackling homophobic language head on: Staff directly
challenge homophobic language. One way of doing this is by
asking if students would use a racist word as an insult. As the
answer is usually 'of course not – it's racist', this makes it a lot
easier to challenge homophobic language for the same reasons.
Homophobic bullying is also monitored via the 'Cause for
Concern' slips in school. Pupils have been excluded for
homophobic abuse or for using homophobic language.

Awareness raising: There are displays around the school and in
many classrooms of the Stonewall 'Some people are gay.
Get over it!' posters. This year we had an LGBT History Month
display and there are plans to do more displays next year.
     The PSHE department does work about different kinds of
families, including same-sex parents, and makes the point clearly
that all kinds of families are normal. Because of the work on
bullying, the department specifically includes the use of
homophobic language and its damaging effects on everyone.
The school is very upfront about the fact that society is
diverse and interesting, and that everyone deserves to be treated
with respect.

One member of staff specifically commented that she heard almost no homophobic language around school now. She thought that tackling it head on, and also by raising the whole profile of PSHE by a creating specialist department, had been significant contributing factors.

case study 02

Secondary School: **Glenthorne High School, London Borough of Sutton**

This year **Glenthorne High School** has had two pushes on bullying.

The first was in November when a whole school assembly included a dramatic presentation by some pupils on cyberbullying, which led to the development of an anti-cyberbullying code. During this time we also reviewed our anti-bullying policy. The school council contributed to this review and created their own anti-bullying code based around the word 'STOP'.

In February we held an anti-bullying week. This started with a whole school assembly with a piece of drama on different types of bullying, including the inappropriate use of the word 'gay'. We then spoke to the school about this and as a school it was made unacceptable to use the word 'gay' in this way. Everyone signed the anti-bullying charter and the idea was launched that everyone within the community is responsible to protect victims and report bullying. This had an immediate impact on misuse of the word 'gay', and pupils were completely supportive. There was a lot of discussion around the school and it is now extremely unusual to hear the word 'gay' used in this way. During the week the pupils had two further assemblies. One was held in dual year groups where an extremely hard-hitting drama performance was staged about a bullying-related suicide, including references to the use of the word 'gay'. The other was held within year groups, explaining bullying issues including homophobic bullying. We also launched an anti-bullying poster competition for Key Stage 3 students, suggested by the school council.

To ensure that the school continues to move forward in

addressing bullying, anti-bullying is a fixed agenda item at all Head of Year meetings and Year Team meetings. It has been written into next year's calendar that once a term the whole school will dedicate tutor time to discussing how effective the pupil contribution is to reducing bullying and what more should be done.

case study 03

Primary School: **Dobcroft Junior School** and **Dore Primary School, Sheffield**

It became clear about four years ago that the inappropriate use of the word 'gay' in the primary playground had become rife with children who used it as an insult but with little or no understanding of the implications behind its usage. They intended to hurt and others were hurt by it. We felt we needed to tackle this head on in order to stop the trend and then treated this name-calling as seriously as racist comments. We began to report to parents any incident where inappropriate use of the word 'gay' was used. In school, we unpicked the issue as we would any behavioural incident and made it clear that this language is unacceptable. We also logged homophobic bullying in our robust incident and 'children of concern' recording system. This in due course was passed on through the Sheffield City Council reporting system.

As Deputy Headteacher at **Dobcroft Junior** and now as Headteacher at **Dore Primary School**, I operate a 'Values and Mottos' system which underpins our school ethos and leads our work in GUS (Growing Up Skills) along with PSHE and SEAL. Our school values (of which there are twenty) such as cooperation, responsibility, understanding, trust and thoughtfulness give a common core vocabulary to use within the curriculum and in dealing with issues. They are promoted to parents with the idea that the whole community speaks the same language and gives the same messages. The 'Values and Mottos' system is working very effectively in these two schools, giving a very strong framework to build on as we educate the 'whole child'.

At Dobcroft Junior School during Anti-Bullying Week we launched a 'Code of Respect' to support the 'Values and Mottos' system but also specifically to tackle the issue of homophobic language. We promoted a culture around language of respect, and told the children that the use of the word 'gay' in order to upset or hurt somebody would always be investigated if reported and that parents would be told so that they could help explain why it is unacceptable. We spoke of respect as 'care and consideration' and that the way we talk (words we use), the way we act (actions we take) and the way we look (body language) are all part of our behaviour and affect the way we respect others.

There was an immediate effect in the community and parents offered support. The inappropriate use of 'gay' is now rare. The 'Values and Mottos' system and 'Code of Respect' are proving to be a powerful aid in establishing a strong anti-bullying ethos and have significantly reduced homophobic language in both schools.

case study 04

Primary School:
St Matthew's Primary School, Cambridge

St Matthew's Primary School is a large, diverse primary school in the middle of Cambridge city. There are over 40 languages spoken and it serves a socio-economically wide catchment area.

We have been recording racist incidents and empowering our school community to challenge racist behaviour and language for a number of years, but have become increasingly aware of the use of homophobic language among the children.

Over the past two years, we have been working in partnership with SexYOUality, a local charity that supports LGB young people, and Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service, to challenge homophobic language in our school community.

We recognised the importance of involving all staff, so began our project with a whole staff training session which was delivered jointly with SexYOUality. This raised awareness of the issues and gave teachers and support staff the opportunity to

explore and discuss how they might respond to homophobic language and incidents.

SexYOUality then provided a workshop for Year 6 pupils enabling the children to look at language and some of their behaviour from a different perspective. Pupils commented on how much they had learnt and how they would behave differently in future and challenge homophobic language when they hear it.

At the same time, we started recording homophobic incidents in the same way as we record racist incidents. Children and families were made aware of this.

We are also addressing homophobia and heterosexism across the curriculum, not just in PSHE. For example, in a Year 5 literacy module, the children have looked at old picture books and identified things that were missing or that have changed over time – for example, there was less ethnic diversity in the older books, while gender stereotyping and heterosexism were commonplace. The children then read books which challenged these stereotypes and used them as models to write their own picture books. Finally they took their books to a Year 2 class and shared them with the younger children.

We recognised the importance of normalising homosexuality through the curriculum and the school's PSHE coordinator contributed to a national SEAL development project. The focus of the project was on strengthening the diversity dimension of the primary SEAL programme and the PSHE coordinator developed a unit of work for Reception aged children around the theme of anti-bullying. This included the use of stories featuring diverse family groupings, including same-sex families. This has been published locally and nationally and will be used again this year with our Reception classes.

We have shared our anti-homophobia work with other primary schools at a county conference and continue to challenge homophobic language around the school so that being a member of our community can be a positive experience for all our children and families.

9 What the law says

A range of legislation supports schools in their work to tackle all forms of bullying including homophobic bullying, protecting both students and staff from homophobic behaviour.

Education and Inspections Act

Schools have a legal duty to respond to bullying under the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Headteachers, with the advice and guidance of governors and the assistance of school staff, must identify and implement measures to promote good behaviour, respect for others, and self-discipline amongst pupils, and to prevent all forms of bullying. Ministers have made it clear that this includes homophobic bullying.

For further information see the DCSF Safe to Learn guidance at
www.stonewall.org.uk/guidance

Sexual Orientation Regulations 2007

The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2007 outlaw discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in the provision of 'goods and services' which specifically includes the provision of education in schools. The Regulations came into effect on 30 April 2007 and cover both the private and public sectors.

In practice it means, for instance, that a pupil could not be refused entry to a school on the grounds that they were, or were thought to be, lesbian, gay, or bisexual or because they had gay relatives. It would also mean that privileges, such as being a prefect, could not be denied to lesbian or gay pupils. Furthermore schools that do not treat homophobic bullying with the same level of seriousness as other forms of bullying could face legal action. The Regulations should have no direct effect on the teaching and curriculum in schools. However the subject of sexual orientation should still be approached in an appropriate manner in line with existing guidance.

Guidance for schools on their duties and responsibilities under the Sexual Orientation Regulations can be found at: **www.stonewall.org.uk/guidance**

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

These laws protect all staff in a school against discrimination or harassment on the grounds of their sexual orientation.

- **Discrimination**, either direct or indirect, involves treating one person less favourably than another on the grounds of their sexual orientation.

- **Harassment** is unwanted conduct which violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading or humiliating environment. If employers do not take action to stop such behaviour against staff they run the risk of legal challenge.

The laws also cover perceived sexual orientation (if someone bullies because they think a person is lesbian, gay or bisexual even though they are not) or association (such as harassing a person over a friend or family member who is lesbian, gay or bisexual). Creating a culture of respect where difference is valued is important and heads and governors therefore have a key role in ensuring all members of staff, including those who are lesbian, gay or bisexual, are treated fairly.

For further information on the 2003 protections visit **www.stonewall.org.uk/workplace**

Section 28

Section 28 (Clause 2A in Scotland) of the Local Government Act 1988 confused many schools with regards to what could be said in relation to homosexuality. Section 28 was repealed in 2003 (2000 in Scotland) and is no longer law. There are no, and never have been any, legal barriers to teachers and staff discussing issues around sexual orientation in the classroom and responding to, and preventing, homophobic bullying.

For more information on Section 28 visit **www.stonewall.org.uk**

Taking proactive steps on equality

New Government proposals, being considered by Parliament, could see the existing 'public equality duties' that apply for disability, gender and race replaced with a single integrated duty, which will also extend to sexual orientation. This would apply to schools as well as public services like health services and police forces. It would require schools to make sure that they think in advance about any barriers that might face lesbian and gay pupils or staff. It's intended to focus on practical outcomes – such as making sure that anti-bullying policies take account of homophobic bullying. It's intended that this comes into force in Spring 2010.

For more information visit **www.stonewall.org.uk**

Stonewall's top ten recommendations for tackling homophobic language

1 TEACHERS AND SCHOOL STAFF MUST CHALLENGE HOMOPHOBIC LANGUAGE EVERY TIME THEY HEAR IT Language such as 'lezzer' and 'gay boy', as well as 'gay' as a term of disapproval of someone or something, must be challenged in each and every instance to send the message that homophobic language is unacceptable.

2 MAKE SURE THAT PUPILS UNDERSTAND WHY HOMOPHOBIC LANGUAGE IS OFFENSIVE Pupils will be less likely to use homophobic language when, like racist language, they understand the implications of what they say.

3 INCLUDE HOMOPHOBIC LANGUAGE IN ANTI-BULLYING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES Teachers are able to challenge homophobic language more effectively when it is included in school policies.

4 INVOLVE SENIOR MANAGERS IF HOMOPHOBIC LANGUAGE PERSISTS The involvement of headteachers and senior management proactively as well as in response to the use of homophobic language sends a strong anti-homophobia message to the school.

5 INVOLVE PARENTS IF PUPILS PERSIST It is important for parents to help ensure that all school policies are upheld. All pupils deserve to feel safe at school. Whatever their attitudes towards lesbian, gay and bisexual people, parents can play an essential role in ensuring young people are protected from homophobic bullying.

6 **INCORPORATE LESBIAN, GAY AND BISEXUAL PEOPLE INTO THE CURRICULUM** Including themes around LGB people in lessons makes young people more aware of the LGB community and reduces homophobic behaviour.

7 **ADDRESS HOMOPHOBIA AND LGB EQUALITY IN YOUR LESSONS** Teaching about homophobia and equality will discourage homophobic language and bullying in schools.

8 **USE ASSEMBLIES TO ADDRESS PROBLEMS OR PROMOTE POSITIVE MESSAGES ABOUT GAY PEOPLE** Assemblies can be an ideal opportunity to tackle issues regarding homophobic language or bullying particular to your school or to incorporate positive messages about gay people, for example during LGBT History Month.

9 **USE POSTERS AND PUBLIC DISPLAYS** Poster and public display campaigns can be used to communicate positive messages regarding lesbian, gay and bisexual people and to tackle homophobic language and bullying.

10 **INVOLVE PUPILS** Pupils want their schools to be safe and welcoming places. Ask pupils how they feel about homophobic language and bullying in their school and involve them in initiatives to tackle the problem.

Stonewall's **Education Champions** Programme provides bespoke support and guidance to local authorities in tackling homophobia and homophobic bullying with their local schools. Local authorities work with Stonewall and each other to establish ways in which they can address homophobic bullying and promote a safe and inclusive learning environment for all young people.

If you would like more information on Stonewall's Education Champions Programme please visit **www.stonewall.org.uk/educationchampions**

Supported by The Lehman Brothers Foundation

Education for All is Stonewall's national campaign to tackle bullying in Britain's schools

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