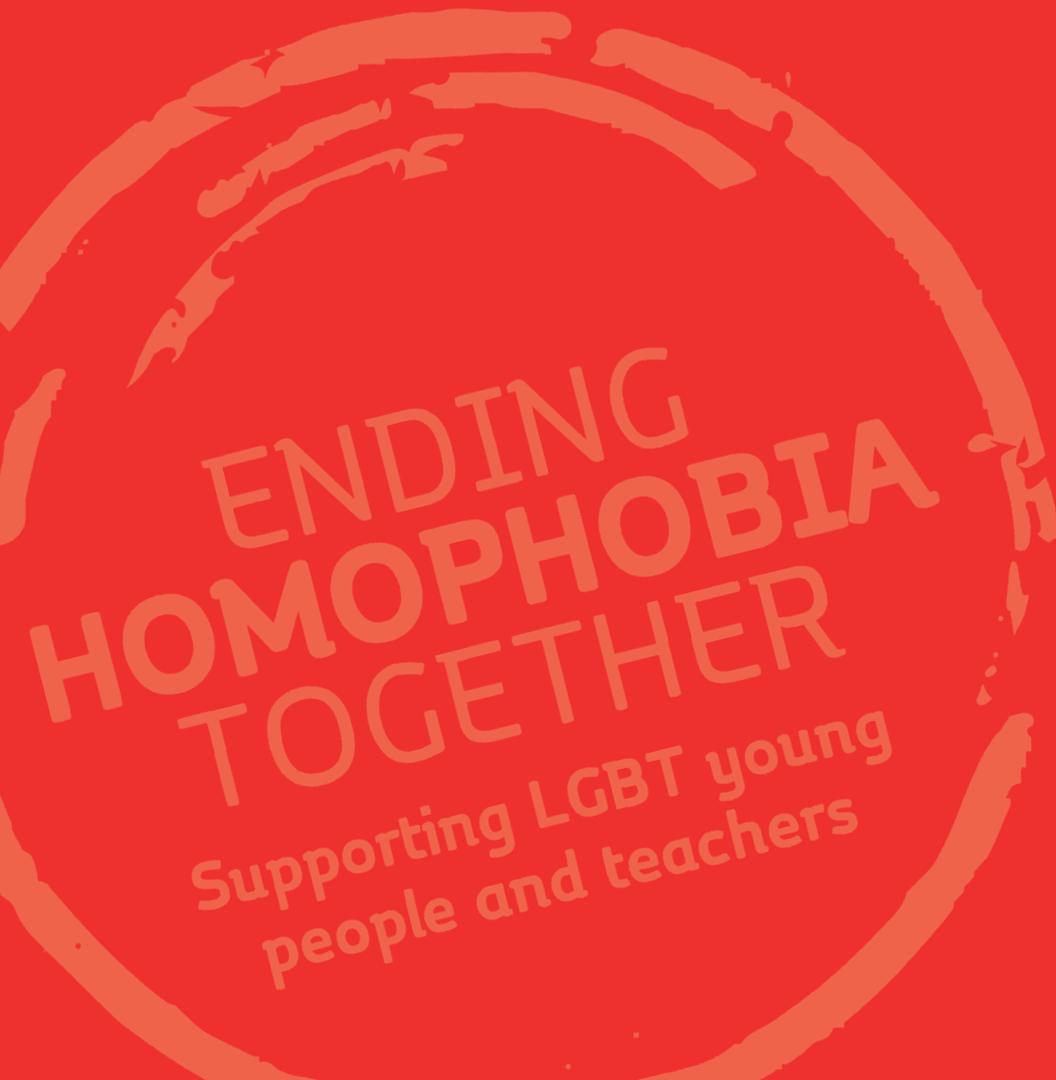


# ENDING HOMOPHOBIA TOGETHER

Supporting LGBT young  
people and teachers



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# FOREWORD

## Tristram Hunt

Of all the advances in equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people enacted by the last Labour government, the repeal of Section 28 was perhaps the most important. The chilling effect of this pernicious piece of legislation left teachers feeling unable to discuss LGBT issues in the classroom and ill-equipped to tackle prejudice-based bullying.

Since then, we have seen remarkable progress throughout our education system: from student-led anti-bullying initiatives to recognition of LGBT pioneers like Virginia Woolf and Alan Turing in the curriculum.

But there can be no room for complacency. Bullying of LGBT young people – or young people who are simply perceived to be different – remains widespread. It is having a serious, detrimental impact on school standards, young people's achievement and their mental health. I was horrified to read some of the research findings around the prevalence of self-harm and attempted suicide amongst LGBT young people.

As a parent, I want my children to be educated in an environment that keeps them safe, nurtures their talents and fosters a culture that celebrates the

diversity that makes Britain great. And as Labour's Shadow Education Secretary, I am determined that our education system will be geared towards getting the very best out of every young person, preparing them to flourish and succeed in 21st century Britain. They are, after all, this country's richest resource and our future success depends entirely upon harnessing the full breadth of their talents.

A great education system should inspire its young people with the ethic that hard-work and dedication will allow them to achieve all their aspirations. It is this simple idea which gives education its emancipatory power and from William Lovett's Chartist Schools to Andrew Adonis's Sponsored Academies, we in the Labour Movement have long placed our faith in its ability to spread freedom and opportunity to all.

But the freedoms bestowed by education should be universal and inclusive. No young person should ever feel that their sexuality or gender identity prevents them from fulfilling their potential. That's why tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying will be a priority for the next Labour government.



**Tristram Hunt MP**

Shadow Secretary of State for Education

## FOREWORD

### Gloria De Piero

Equality and social justice are values that lie at the very heart of our Party. The advances made for LGBT equality under the last Labour government are a legacy I am incredibly proud of, just as I'm proud of the role played by Labour MPs and Peers to make sure that the final piece of the legislative jigsaw – equal marriage – got through Parliament.

Without the tireless work of campaigners and activists, and the courage of politicians like Chris Smith and Angela Eagle to speak out and come out, this would never have happened.

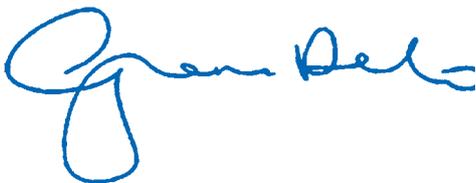
But we know the work isn't done. The next Labour government has much more to do to make sure that LGBT people experience equal treatment: as users of public services, in the workplace, in our communities and across the world. Key to delivering this progress will be working with colleagues in every Department to

ensure that equality is a priority across every area of Government.

But though it doesn't always feel like it to those of us in Parliament, changing the law is a lot easier than changing hearts and minds.

That process has to start with education. That's why it is absolutely right that Tristram and Labour's Shadow Education team have committed to tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying as a priority.

Until every child can go to school to learn in an environment free from bullying and discrimination and until every LGBT person can be proud of who they are and who they love without fear or prejudice, our fight goes on.



**Gloria De Piero MP**

Shadow Minister for Women and Equality

## WHY THIS MATTERS

### Homophobic bullying remains widespread

Research conducted by the University of Cambridge, published by Stonewall in The School Report, found that 55 per cent of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people had experienced homophobic bullying and virtually all of them – 99 per cent – hear homophobic language, like using the word ‘gay’ in a negative way on a frequent basis <sup>1</sup>.

It’s not just LGBT young people who experience this form of prejudice-based bullying. A recent YouGov poll of teachers found that young people perceived to be different are targets of homophobic bullying, for example boys who don’t like playing football or pupils with family who are LGBT. Worryingly, one in three teachers report hearing homophobic remarks from other school staff <sup>2</sup>.

Staff are also victims. The Teacher Support Network and teachers’ unions have all expressed concern about bullying experienced by LGBT staff because of their sexuality or gender identity<sup>3</sup>.

All workplaces should be free from bullying and discrimination. Schools should be no exception. Unless LGBT teachers feel safe to be themselves at work, we won’t get the best out of them and we won’t be able to create a safe environment for learners.



55 per cent of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people had experienced homophobic bullying



99 per cent hear homophobic language



44 per cent of LGBT pupils who experience homophobic bullying skip school because of it

1 The School Report, Stonewall, 2012 [http://www.stonewall.org.uk/documents/school\\_report\\_2012\(2\).pdf](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/documents/school_report_2012(2).pdf)

2 The Teachers Report, Stonewall, 2014 [http://www.stonewall.org.uk/documents/teachers\\_report\\_2014.pdf](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/documents/teachers_report_2014.pdf)

3 <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2012/nov/26/gay-teachers-homophobia-stonewall-research>

### **It is damaging standards and holding young people back**

Unsurprisingly, when young people experience bullying, it distracts from their studies and enjoyment of education. This impacts directly on key areas like attendance, attainment and future career choices.

As a result, young people are more likely to skip lessons – or school altogether – disrupting their education. Stonewall's School Report found that 44 per cent of LGBT pupils who experience homophobic bullying skip school because of it, three in five say it impacts on their school work and one in three change their future educational plans as a result.

Britain already faces an enormous battle to secure its prosperity in an increasingly competitive century - that 45 percent of state school children do not get good five GCSE passes is already catastrophic for both productivity and social justice.<sup>4</sup> We can only succeed as a nation if our education system harnesses the talents of all young people. Therefore, we simply can't afford to alienate young people from the pursuit of excellence just for being themselves.

### **It is harming young people's mental health**

Shockingly, a majority of LGBT young people self-harm, which can include deliberately cutting or burning themselves, and one in four attempts suicide. It's believed that self-harm and suicide rates amongst trans people are even higher. This represents a crisis in young people's mental health and demonstrates why LGBT bullying can't be dismissed as 'banter' or under the old adage of 'sticks and stones break bones, but names can never hurt'<sup>5</sup>.

One of the key challenges is that many young LGBT people don't have someone at home or at school they feel they can speak to, leading to loneliness, isolation and, in some cases, depression with serious consequences for the health and wellbeing of young people.

### **The response is patchy and inconsistent**

While some schools are leading the way in tackling prejudice-based bullying, too many incidents of LGBT-based bullying are occurring without an appropriate response from teachers and support staff. More than half of secondary school teachers, for example, say they don't challenge homophobic language every time they hear it.

Encouragingly, surveys consistently show that the overwhelming majority of staff in primary and secondary schools believe they have a duty to prevent and respond to homophobic bullying. However, very few teachers in primary schools – fewer than one in ten – and barely one in five teachers in secondary schools have ever received training to do so.

### **The world doesn't stop at the school gates**

Family life in Britain is changing. There are now 13,000 same sex couples with dependent children. It is not uncommon for children at school to have LGBT relatives. We need to make sure that these children and their families are made to feel welcome at school.

It's also important that all children are equipped to succeed in life in the 21st century, where respect for civil rights and LGBT equality is enshrined in the law.

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4 [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/366556/SFR41\\_2014\\_provisional\\_GCSE\\_and\\_equivalents.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/366556/SFR41_2014_provisional_GCSE_and_equivalents.pdf)

5 The School Report, Stonewall, 2012 [http://www.stonewall.org.uk/documents/school\\_report\\_2012\(2\).pdf](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/documents/school_report_2012(2).pdf)

# TACKLING HOMOPHOBIC, BIPHOBIC AND TRANSPHOBIC BULLYING IN SCHOOLS – A LABOUR PRIORITY

Labour is committed to making sure that the LGBT equality we enshrined in law becomes a reality for all LGBT people in our country. This must start in our schools, through:

- 1. Training for every teacher and zero tolerance of bullying in every classroom**
- 2. Compulsory and inclusive sex and relationships education**
- 3. Teaching a 21st century curriculum that celebrates difference**
- 4. A focus on mental health and wellbeing**
- 5. Empowering young people to make a difference**

## **1. Training for every teacher and zero tolerance in every classroom**

We know that staff in schools want to tackle bullying, but they need the right tools to do the job. Ofsted now look at what schools are doing to tackle prejudice-based bullying, but there is a disconnection between what Ofsted expect teachers to do and what teachers are trained to do. The overwhelming majority of staff have not been trained to tackle anti-LGBT bullying in every school.

We will require all initial teacher-training providers to prepare teachers to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying. We will also expect

schools to take a 'whole school approach', providing continued professional development opportunities for all their staff – including support staff and governors – so that everyone working with children in schools has the opportunity to access the training they need to create a safe and inclusive environment for all young people.

We would expect the putative College of Teaching to include a network for LGBT staff, which would help raise the quality of support and professional training in schools as well as providing professional guidance on better supporting LGBT staff in the workplace. No member of staff should suffer bullying or discrimination because of their sexual orientation or gender identity and we will work closely with head-teachers and trade unions to stamp this out in every school.

We will support schools in combating transphobic bullying and make sure every school has access to a member of staff equipped to support trans students.

We will make sure Ofsted continues to look at schools' efforts to tackle prejudice-based bullying as part of the inspection framework and we will update guidance from the Department for Education to make clear our

expectation that schools should have a zero-tolerance approach to incidents of prejudice-based bullying. We will make it clear that this includes homophobic and transphobic language.

We will not support calls by some campaigners to make bullying a criminal offence. This would be a disproportionate response.

Guidance from the Church of England and the Catholic Education Service on tackling homophobic bullying is welcome. We will work with all faith groups to make sure that all faith schools take this agenda seriously.

## **2. Compulsory and inclusive sex and relationships education**

Labour believes that sex and relationships education is essential in order to keep our children safe, which is why we will make it compulsory in every state-funded school, including faith schools and academies.

We also believe all sex and relationship education needs to be inclusive and age-appropriate. We will make sure Ofsted inspects this as part of its assessment of whether a school is delivering a broad and balanced curriculum that prepares young people for the 21st century.

Some of the best performing primary schools are already acknowledging difference and diversity through looking at families in the curriculum. This approach not only makes children with same-sex parents or LGBT relatives feel more welcome and included in schools, it has also gives confidence to children who are adopted, fostered or living in single parent families to talk about family life. It's also a great way of encouraging children to understand people from different cultures, faiths and backgrounds.

In secondary schools, we know that technological progress and the changing world around us poses risks to young people, making discussion around topics like consent, abuse and online safety absolutely key to keeping teenagers safe. Research shows that without a safe environment to learn about different aspects of same-sex relationships, young people are more susceptible to risky behaviour; from accessing inaccurate information online about safer sex to meeting strangers via the internet and mobile phone applications.

In this context it is absurd that the statutory guidance for sex and relationship education has not been updated since 2000. It has been overtaken by legislation covering relationships, such as the 2004 Civil Partnership Act and Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013, and is out of touch with modern concerns about consent, premature sexualisation, gender identity, cyber-bullying, grooming and internet pornography. Research from the National Union of Students reveals that fewer than one in five LGBT students have ever received sex and relationships education <sup>6</sup>.

That's why we will swiftly update the statutory guidance so that compulsory sex and relationships education deals more effectively with 21st century challenges and is inclusive of all LGBT people and those with same-sex parents.

## **3. Teaching a 21st century curriculum that celebrates difference**

Our history, culture, science and civic life has been shaped by LGBT people, from the works of Oscar Wilde and Virginia Woolf, to the scientific breakthroughs of Leonardo da Vinci and Alan Turing. In schools that teach and address LGBT issues positively, incidences of prejudice-based bullying are far lower. Yet a third of secondary school teachers have never addressed LGBT issues in the classroom and just one in four say that LGBT people are included across the wider curriculum.

Having positive role models is an important part of childhood development and we have seen from the school visits organised by Diversity Role Models and Stonewall that visits from stars of screen and stage like Sir Ian McKellen and Gok Wan, or everyday volunteers from a variety of workplaces, helps LGBT young people to raise their own confidence and aspirations. It also helps other pupils to better understand the diversity of modern Britain and inculcates the value of respecting others.

We will support the development of a national best practice toolkit in partnership with expert practitioners and signpost schools to resources, curriculum guides and opportunities for role model visits and extra-curricular activities.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.nus.org.uk/en/news/students-turn-to-porn-to-fill-the-gaps-in-their-sex-education/>

#### 4. A focus on mental health and wellbeing

Though Section 28 is long gone, its legacy still casts a long shadow over our schools to the detriment of the health and wellbeing of too many young people. The prevalence of depression, self-harm and attempted suicide among lesbian, gay and bisexual young people is shocking - and it is even worse for trans young people. The latest figures from the NHS reveal that 5.6 per cent of the population have attempted to take their own life at some point, but Stonewall research found that this increases to one in four for LGB young people. Research from PACE revealed that nearly half of trans young people have attempted suicide <sup>7</sup>.

This should send a shiver down the spine of any parent and represents a systemic failure to keep all young people safe and well. We have committed to making mental health a priority for the next Labour government. This will extend to LGBT young people.

As universal services, schools have a duty to play their part in tackling this challenge. We will make sure that school nurses can support LGBT young people and signpost them to relevant support services, and will make sure all initial teacher training equips teachers with the ability to do the same. This will be complemented by our expectations for initial teacher training providers to prepare teachers to tackle anti-LGBT bullying (outlined in section one).

More broadly, Labour believes that all children should be able to access professional, qualified counselling and therapy services in their school or college in age-appropriate form. This is a long-term aspiration, but in government we will set out a strategy for achieving it, with schools, local authorities and the NHS working together to deliver it.

The evidence shows that schools that tackle prejudice-based bullying effectively and create an inclusive curriculum achieve better outcomes for their pupils and lower incidences of mental ill-health. That's why our commitment to a zero-tolerance approach to homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and our commitment to an inclusive curriculum is so important. Prevention of mental ill-health is better than cure.

#### 5. Empowering young people to make a difference

Young people lead some of the most effective and inspiring examples of initiatives to tackle homophobic bullying and celebrate difference. By giving young people ownership over setting standards and expectations for their own behaviour, some schools have seen some significant reductions in incidents of prejudice-based bullying.

Initiatives like the Diana Award's Ambassador Programme and Stonewall's No Bystanders campaign demonstrate the effectiveness of fostering a culture where individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for tackling prejudice and creating a welcoming, inclusive environment.

Our updated sex and relationship statutory guidance will encourage schools to involve young people in the design of anti-bullying initiatives and will encourage them to put young people in the driving seat when designing programmes and campaigns to tackle prejudice-based bullying.

We will also work in partnership with local government to look at local youth provision and support for LGBT young people, to make sure that young people have access to support and peer networks in a safe, secure environment within their local communities.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB02931/adul-psyc-morb-res-hou-sur-eng-2007-rep.pdf>; The School Report, Stonewall, 2012 [http://www.stonewall.org.uk/documents/school\\_report\\_2012\(2\).pdf](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/documents/school_report_2012(2).pdf)

# LABOUR'S RECORD

## We're proud that the last Labour government:

- achieved an equal age of consent;
- ended the ban on LGBT people serving in our armed forces;
- ended discrimination against Lesbian & Gay partners for immigration purposes;
- gave LGBT individuals and couples the right to adopt children;
- scrapped the homophobic Section 28 (Clause 2a in Scotland);
- became a signatory of the Treaty of Amsterdam, which gave the EU powers to end discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation;
- banned discrimination in the workplace and in vocational training with the introduction of the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations;
- created the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) which gives LGBT people statutory body protection;
- included homophobia in the definition of hate crimes;
- increased sentencing for homophobic hate crimes;
- removed outdated offences such as gross indecency and buggery;
- produced and implemented the Gender Recognition Act, allowing Trans people to have their true gender recognised in law;
- created the Civil Partnerships, allowing LGB people to have their loving relationships recognised by law and have the same benefits as married couples;
- outlawed discrimination in good and services (with no exceptions);
- launched a campaign in the UN for the Decriminalisation of Homosexuality focusing on the nine countries where it is still punishable by death;
- awarded statutory rights for fertility treatment for Lesbians on the NHS;
- introduced the Equality Act.

## More LGBT Candidates than ever before

**Andy Adams** - North West Hampshire  
**Louise Baldock** - Stockton South  
**Clive Betts** - Sheffield South East  
**Cllr Stefano Borella** - Bexleyheath & Crayford  
**Cllr Ian Boulton** - Filton & Bradley Stoke  
**Rt Hon Ben Bradshaw** - Exeter  
**Emily Brothers** - Sutton & Cheam  
**Rt Hon Nick Brown** - Newcastle-Upon-Tyne East  
**Chris Bryant** - Rhondda  
**Braden Davy** - Gordon  
**Cllr Matthew Dorrance** - Brecon & Radnorshire  
**Stephen Doughty** - Cardiff South & Penarth  
**Angela Eagle** - Wallasey  
**Todd Foreman** - North East Somerset  
**Katrina Gilman** - The Wrekin  
**Cllr Gerald Jones** - Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney  
**Dr Peter Kyle** - Hove  
**Gordon Marsden** - Blackpool South  
**Kevin McKeever** - Northampton South  
**Cllr Sean Morton** - Moray  
**Jordan Newell** - Colchester  
**Cllr Tristan Osborne** - Chatham & Aylesford  
**Cllr Chris Oxlade** - Crawley  
**Andrew Pakes** - Milton Keynes South  
**Luke Pollard** - Plymouth Sutton & Devonport  
**Steve Reed OBE** - Croydon North  
**Lloyd Russell-Moyle** - Lewes  
**Cat Smith** - Lancaster & Fleetwood  
**Charles Smith** - Maidenhead  
**Cllr Michael Sparling** - Torridge & West Devon  
**Cllr Wes Streeting** - Ilford North  
**Cllr Hanna Toms** - Truro & Falmouth  
**Stephen Twigg** - Liverpool West Derby

## Introducing Emily Brothers

We're proud that Emily Brothers is standing as the first openly trans candidate in the London constituency of Sutton and Cheam. Emily has spent her career campaigning for civil rights and equality, most recently at the Equality and Human Rights Commission and prior to that with the Disability Rights Commission and RNIB.

# THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We'd like to thank to the following organisations, whose research, guidance, best practice and advice we have drawn upon:

Association of Teachers and Lecturers  
Diversity Role Models  
Educate and Celebrate  
GIRES  
LGBT History Month  
LGBT Labour  
NASUWT  
National Union of Students

National Union of Teachers  
Samaritans  
Schools Out  
Stonewall  
Teacher Support Network  
TUC LGBT Committee  
University College London  
University of Cambridge  
Young Labour

