

Motion: Gender neutral school uniforms

Conference notes:

1. School uniform policies can potentially enforce negative gender stereotypes where pupils are required to change their appearance based on their gender.
2. Negative gender stereotypes are detrimental for an individual's liberty and gender identity.
3. Uniform policies that only accommodate binary genders are severely detrimental and exclusionary for non-binary and transgender pupils. According to statistics from Stonewall, 64% of transgender pupils experience bullying at school (2017). Binary uniform policies encourage exclusion and may contribute to bullying.

Conference believes that:

1. Non prescriptive gender neutral uniform policies are more inclusive to all genders, decrease gender stereotyping and encourage pupils to challenge negative gender roles.
2. Non-binary students deserve equality. This cannot be achieved without providing suitable school uniform policy.
3. Teaching children that their gender should not define their choices is an important step towards gender equality.
4. Giving girls the more practical option of trousers will encourage participation in physical activities and decrease the harmful focus on "ideal" feminine body image.

Conference calls for:

1. Government to update guidance to reflect a gender-neutral approach to school uniforms.
2. Government to support schools to provide inclusive, non prescriptive, gender neutral uniform policies. This should include uniforms for physical exercise.
3. Government to provide support and advice to schools adapting or changing their policies to make them more inclusive.
4. Training for school staff to raise awareness of the detrimental effect of gender stereotyping on girls, and to a heightened extent, on transgender and non-binary pupils, and for reviewing and improving school uniform policies.