

Transgender child:
I am unhappy because I do not feel like the gender I was assigned at birth.
This affects everything in my life.
I do not feel like myself.
I want to express my gender in a different way
Will people laugh at me?
Will I be pointed at?



Parents of Transgender child:
Might be accepting of child
Might be in disagreement with child
Might be embarrassed
Might be worried of reaction of other parents and children for their children and themselves
Playground (social media) comments
Media interest



Questions of the children:
My friend is dressing differently.
Why? Can I?
My friend has changed their name.
Why? Can I?
Are they different? I am not sure how to respond? How will my grown up react when I tell them?



Questions of the children's parents:
Will my child be influenced?
What conversations will I now have to have because of this child?
What if my child wants to express themselves differently?
What does the Catholic Diocese say?
If I disagree, what do I do?



Statement from the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales 2018

"We recognise that there are people who do not accept their biological sex. We are concerned about and committed to their pastoral care. Through listening to them we seek to understand their experience more deeply and want to accompany them with compassion, emphasising that they are loved by God and valued in their inherent God-given dignity. There is a place of welcome for everyone in the catholic Church. As we continue to reflect on these issues, we hope for a renewed appreciation of the fundamental importance of sexual difference in our culture and the accompaniment of those who experience conflict in their sense of self and God-given identity. We all have a duty to protect the most vulnerable."

To provide pastoral support of a child with specific needs in such a sensitive area of their personal development does not diminish the regard we have as a Catholic school to the Church's legitimate concerns regarding 'gender ideology' and so called 'trans activism'.



St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Gender and Sexuality in School

Our Single Equalities Policy at St Mary's makes clear that we believe that equality at our school should filter through all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. Equality is a key principle for treating people with dignity and respect irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation as recognised protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Gender and Sexuality in School

During the time children are at primary school, they will develop as individuals in a variety of ways. This development is supported through the school mission statement of Live Love Believe and underpinned by the seven Catholic virtues.

Children will explore their sense of self and may identify themselves in the ways that can be seen elsewhere in society including sexuality and gender. Within our school **all** children are respected and loved as the individuals they are.

Some children will express themselves as a different gender to their birth gender. This means that if they were born a girl they might express themselves as a boy. If they are a girl, they may express themselves as a boy. This is known as gender dysphoria. Around one in 100 children deals with gender dysphoria in some form, and the number of child referrals to the NHS is rapidly rising.

From just 17 young people referrals in 2009-10, there were 314 referrals in 2012-13, 697 in 2014-15 and over 8,000 in the latest data from 2018-19. This is not a remote or abstract issue; it affects many young people in schools.

In primary school the way a child may choose to express this is by wearing clothes of the gender they consider themselves to

be rather than their birth gender. They may also choose to use a different name from the name they have used previously.

Children may also identify their sexuality in a variety of ways. In primary school sexuality is supported through the Relationships Education policy. It focuses on the sense of self and respect for ourselves and others.

The children also bring to school their own life experiences of sexuality that they have from their own families. The model of families within our community may include same sex relationships, families that have two homes, families that have extended or additional family members as well as families who have a mum and a dad at home. No judgements are made by the school on any family dynamic. Our focus remains on the child and their development as individuals.

What would happen if a child wants to express their gender in a way that is different to their birth gender.

We ask that families meet with Mrs Langridge. At this point the parents will have the opportunity to explore with her the needs of the child. Following this it may be that the child will attend school wearing different clothes (within the school uniform expectations) and may choose to use a different name. This is not a decision taken



lightly by anyone and responds to the needs of the child to express who they believe themselves to be.

It is also important the children in the class have the opportunity to understand this change and the children will have PSHE learning in class where age appropriate discussion about this will take place. Children will explore that some people want to express themselves in a different way and may therefore wear clothes of the gender they are expressing and change their names. The children will understand that this is a decision that the school and home grown-ups have reached together.