

The below is a consultation response for the forthcoming Hate Crime Action Plan.

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I'm 13 years old, a pisces, gender neutral and pansexual. I want 'gender neutral' and 'pansexual' to get the same reaction as my age and star sign. But, currently, this shows no sign of happening.

Gender neutral means I do not fit into the category of boy or girl and use the pronouns they/them, and pansexual means that I go for personalities over genitals ('pan' means 'all').

So now we've got that cleared up, I want to talk about the LGBT+ community, discrimination, pronouns, and what I think should happen.

For Sex Ed in schools, children are taught that being heterosexual (i.e. straight) is normal and all outside of hetero sex isn't. (I should stress that this isn't all schools, however). Even in my extremely accepting school, teachers ask the girls about which *boys* they fancy and vica versa. Now, as I prefer those who identify as girls/non-binary, this makes me feel uncomfortable and alienated. I think that if being gay was presented as normal as well, many people would feel more comfortable with their own sexuality.

LGBTQA stands for: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Asexual/Agender. I knew nothing about this until I watched a programme about a transgender model. She spoke about the disgusting hate crime committed against her, her teachers refusing use her correct pronouns, and how she coped with the bullies. She was attacked in the street when she was just 7 years old by two fully grown men, just for having long hair and wearing a dress. She said that "All the boys used to bully me, making snarky comments about my appearance and hormone tablets, like 'nice *girl* hair' and 'nice *girl* tablets.' Now they all just say '...Nice.'"

Sometimes, man will love a man, a woman will love a woman, a woman will be born a man, a man will be born a woman, one person might not be any gender, whilst another might be all genders.

How hard was that to understand? Not at all. How hard would that be to teach to children that? Not at all. Do you see where I'm coming from?
Let's talk about bisexuality.

It's not an even 50-50 spilt between 'I like girls!' and 'I like guys!'. It varies from person to person. Some people will be 20% for girls and 80% for boys, whereas others will be 90% for girls and only 10% for boys. I prefer those who identify as girls/non-binary, but that doesn't mean I can't find guys attractive. It's just the same for people who are asexual (those who do not experience sexual attraction).

There are so many subsets of gender, but they all need to be taught. For example, genderfluidity means that you experience gender fluidly, surprisingly. (One day a boy, one a girl, one day both, one day neither. It's not limited to days, either. Hourly, weekly, monthly or just randomly. It can get extremely confusing) Bigender or trigender mean that you are two or three genders at once, and agender means that you have no gender. What gender you are is completely different to what sex you are. Sex is if you have a penis or a

vagina, gender is what you are. Gender is up here in your mind, not down there in your pants.

Many people are homophobic because of the Bible. Well, the bible says that you shouldn't trim the hair around your temples, or get tattoos, and says that you should sell your daughter as a slave. Do you think that they've kept to those rules too? I don't.

Pronouns are a particularly important issue. I use the pronouns they/them, and every time I am called 'she', 'girl', 'daughter' or 'sister', it's a real punch in the throat. I know this is echoed across the trans community (trans is the umbrella term for everyone who doesn't agree with gender assigned to them at birth). You should never, *ever* assume someone's gender. If you are unsure of someone's preferred pronouns, then simply ask them "Hi! What are your preferred pronouns?" Believe me, they will appreciate it way more than you misgendering them; I speak from experience.

Let's address the big, scary issue. Homophobic hate crime. Gay is still being used an insult, even in 2016. Being gay is still illegal in over 10 countries. Only just recently, gay marriage was legalised across America, Ireland, and England.

Get your pride flags out, because love wins, love will always win (case and point, Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows. The 'good side' won because they knew love and friendship, whereas Voldemort and his army didn't. See? J.K. Rowling knows what she's doing).

People are bullied in school because they had the courage to come out. The same goes for those with mental illnesses. If someone has the courage to say 'I am gay' or 'I have depression' don't you *dare* turn your back on them or start to bully them. One 16 year old boy had his nose, three of his ribs, and his wrist broken because he kissed another boy. There are still people with hateful signs standing next to pride parades. The best thing do in that situation is to grab your partner or other consenting person (preferably of the same gender) and full-on movie star kiss them. It gets the best reactions ever.

What I want to happen.

I want gay sex ed taught in schools. I want people to say 'gents, gals and non-binary pals' instead of 'ladies and gentlemen'. I want talks on mental illness in school. I want LBGT+ to be seen as normal. I want all hate crime to end. I want people to open their minds. But this won't happen all at once, so we have to build it up over time. The homophobes will never see us coming.

(name removed), your favourite non-binary, pansexual pal xx