

# LGBT+ inclusion:

## Guidance for LGBT+ members

### **It's always me talking about LGBT+ inclusion while my colleagues are silent on this issue. What can I do?**

It's hard when you feel like you are the lone voice. Identifying and maintaining allies is really important because you are more powerful together. Speak to your union representative. If there are no allies within your school community, look to your district office, the NEU Adviceline and peer networks including your regional LGBT+ organising forum members.

Making the connections between LGBT+ inclusion and other equality areas and preparing resources that integrate related areas of equality may help win over some of your colleagues.

Suggesting training for staff, leaders and governors on the rights of LGBT+ employees and the responsibilities of employers and colleagues towards their LGBT+ colleagues is also an important step. This may be standard diversity and inclusion training or something bespoke based on your school community's needs.

### **I am being treated badly by my colleagues because of my sexual orientation and/or gender identity/expression. What can I do?**

The NEU has guidance on sexual orientation [discrimination](#) and [harassment](#), [trans discrimination](#) and [harassment](#), and a [trans members toolkit](#) with advice and guidance on transitioning at work.

If you are not sure if your experiences could be

categorised as discrimination or harassment, speak to the NEU advice team or your local rep to get someone else's opinion. Reaching out on WhatsApp groups and other networks to other LGBT+ members for practical and emotional support is also a really good idea.

"For me so far it's not been a very positive experience. Parents here are very much against the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). I tried to arrange something on tolerance for LGBT+ History Month and was shot down by parents and governors. I haven't felt very comfortable at work since, as it seems to be me versus the parents. My head tries to support but she is fairly and lost as well. I would be lost without my local NEU team and the regional office."

### **Conversations in my school about LGBT+ inclusion make me feel uncomfortable or unsafe. What can I do?**

Look again at the guidance about harassment and discrimination as your discomfort may be because you are being treated unfairly.

Many LGBT+ people do not feel safe to come out at work. Some members express feeling pressured to come out because of discussions around LGBT+ inclusion in their workplace. It is a decision that is your choice and yours alone. There are lots of ways you can talk about LGBT+ inclusion without having to put yourself in the picture.

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Building the evidence-based case, building a network of supporters and focusing on the needs and rights of children and young people are all effective strategies for advocating for LGBT+ inclusion that do not require a staff member to be out at work.

It is often the most unpleasant voices that we hear the loudest and whether you are out at work or not, it can be extremely isolating being a lone LGBT+ staff member. There will be people in your school community who are on your side, they just might not be that easy to find. Seek out like-minded peers and engage with local LGBT+ networks inside or outside of your community to balance the feelings of isolation.

**Contact your NEU school rep for advice and connect online to the creative and powerful campaigning being led by LGBT+ members.**