

# **Beyond binary discourses: making LGBTQI+ identities visible in the curriculum**

Carrie Paechter

<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3050-5571>

## **Abstract**

In this chapter I argue that changes in wider social understandings of gender and sexuality, including the increased acceptance and legal recognition of LGBTQI+ identities and relationships, along with changes in discourses around gender, require major changes across the curriculum. In particular, an increase in the number of children, young people and adults identifying in different ways as transgender require us to make significant changes in the curriculum to include LGBTQI+ parented families, and LGBTQI+ children and young people, fully into school communities. After an overview of historical debates about gender and education in England and Wales, I examine changes in assumptions about gender and schooling and discuss schools' relationships to the heterosexuality. Through an analysis of school policies in two English Local Authority areas, I examine how school policies about what should be taught fail to represent the greater diversity about gender and sexual orientation in contemporary society, and conclude that there must be considerable change in both the official and hidden curriculum in order to rectify this.

## **Introduction: gendered curriculum forms**

In this chapter I am going to consider different discourses and priorities in gender and education throughout the 20th century and today. I will argue that changes in wider social understandings of gender and sexuality, including the increased acceptance and legal recognition of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex<sup>i</sup> and other (LGBTQI+) identities and relationships, along with changes in discourses around gender, require major changes across the curriculum. In particular, an increase in the number of children, young people and adults identifying in different ways as transgender require us to make significant changes in the curriculum to include LGBTQI+ parented families, and LGBTQI+ children and young people, fully into school communities. I will focus mainly on England and Wales.

I will argue that in order to include LGBTQI+ people in their communities, schools need to reflect LGBTQI+ lives across all appropriate areas of the curriculum. After an explanation of the historical debates about gender and education in the UK, I will examine some of the underlying assumptions about gender and schooling. After this, I will discuss some of the findings from a mixed methods study of LGBTQI+ parented families and schooling, carried out with Anna Carlile (Carlile & Paechter, 2018). This research included examination of a large number of school policies having potential bearing on LGBTQI+ parented families, a media survey, interviews with parents and children, and an evaluation of a programme of interventions into English primary and secondary schools. I will mainly focus on the research on school policies, though I will also mention some of the findings from our interviews.

It is important to note here that ‘curriculum’ is generally used by UK scholars to refer to both the overt, taught curriculum, and what is termed the ‘hidden curriculum’. The overt curriculum may or may not be written down, and focuses on what is taught, rather than how this takes place (this is generally seen as ‘pedagogy’). The hidden curriculum is concerned with more covert and often unacknowledged messages conveyed to students through the schooling process. In this, what is not included in the overt curriculum is as important as what is, and such things as teacher attitudes also play a part. In this chapter I will focus mainly on the overt curriculum, and, in particular, what is included, though I will also argue that the exclusion of LGBTQI+ people and, in particular, parents, is an important aspect of the hidden curriculum in English and Welsh schools.

### **Historical debates about gender and education in England and Wales**

The Education Reform Act of 1988 was an important marker in curriculum provision in England and Wales. Arising out of ideas in the previous ten years around the importance of an ‘entitlement curriculum’, giving children and young people the right to study a full range of subjects, the Act introduced for the first time a compulsory National Curriculum for those age 5-16 in state education. The National Curriculum, then, as now, specified what should be taught: both the subjects that children must study and the content of those subjects. Teaching methods remained in the control of schools, and there are no compulsory textbooks. Although the provisions have been

considerably reduced since then, and never applied to children in non-maintained schools, the National Curriculum represented a turning point in English and Welsh approaches to gender and education, with effects that continue today. Although the provisions in the National Curriculum were not explicitly intended to address gender issues, they did have a strong gendered effect (as I discuss below), possibly, and paradoxically, by ignoring the previous century's debates about gender and education. These debates were strongly binary with respect to gender, and, to some extent, to social class (Paechter, 1998).

Discussion about what might be a suitable curriculum for girls had been ongoing since the establishment of girls' secondary schools in the mid 19th century. Girls' school pioneers had to consider whether it was better to provide a curriculum that had originally been devised for men, or one that was adapted for the perceived needs of women, but which would then necessarily be considered inferior (Fletcher, 1984). These debates continued through much of the 20th century. For mainly middle-class girls in selective secondary education, they were framed by assumptions about women's social roles as focused around a choice between domesticity and long-term professional spinsterhood (Dyhouse, 1977; Summerfield, 1987). In the context of a 'marriage bar' which excluded married women from several areas of work, including teaching and the Civil Service, until well into the 20th century, this was a dilemma facing many educated women. At elementary school level, such pressures led, in the early 20th century, to a curriculum for girls which was overwhelmingly focused on domesticity, in preparation either for wifedom and motherhood or for domestic service, to the extent that girls were frequently taught needlework while the boys studied elementary arithmetic (Attar, 1990; Turnbull, 1987).

Central to these early 20th century debates was the place of science, and, in particular, whether it would be better to have a specifically female-oriented science, 'domestic science' taught to girls in place of physics and chemistry. While this was resisted by heads of the elite girls' schools, who thought their students should receive an equal education to boys, domestic subjects of one kind or another persisted, particularly in schools with largely working-class intakes. Indeed, girls could, right up to the introduction of the National Curriculum, make curriculum choices which left them spending up to half their time in the last two years of compulsory schooling in what was by then called Home Economics, comprising studies of food, textiles and child

development (Attar, 1990). Grafton et al (1983) also note that even as late as 1972, 50% of 587 secondary schools surveyed offered a gender-specific curriculum, with the most common reason given for the exclusion of girls from 'boys' subjects' was teachers' refusal to have girls in their classes. The introduction of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 prevented this overt discrimination. Many schools, however, continued to offer craft subjects to boys and domestic subjects to girls, interpreting the Act to require them only to make exceptions in response to specific requests (Attar, 1990)

The introduction of the National Curriculum cut across these debates and biases by making the study of ten subjects compulsory for all children up to age 16 (from age 11 for modern foreign languages). Over the course of the few years in which it was introduced, young people who had previously expected to give up subjects along strongly gendered lines found that they had to continue them to examination level. Although the requirements (and particularly the subject breadth) have been considerably watered down in the intervening years, this has not led to a substantial move back to gender segregation pre-16. Nevertheless, boys remain less likely to continue with a modern foreign language or English, and girls to persist with mathematics (especially further mathematics) and physics beyond this (Joint Council for Qualifications, 2017). Vocational subjects remain strongly gendered, with the Women's Engineering Society (2016: 2) reporting that 'in 2013/14, women accounted for only 3.8% of Engineering apprenticeship starts and 1.7% of Construction Skills starts'.

### **Underlying assumptions about gender and schooling**

In reflecting on these shifts in curriculum, we must consider the underlying assumptions about both gender and schooling. Most obvious is the binary understanding of gender differences as being between males and females as coherent and completely different categories. In the 19th and most of the 20th century this division was discussed in terms of biological differences between two distinct binary sexes. Curriculum provision was tailored to what were perceived as men's and women's future roles. This was influenced by social class: working class girls were not considered to require the level of education that middle-class girls did, even if both groups were mainly expected to become wives and mothers. Furthermore, girls'

overall lower levels of performance, for much of this period, in subjects such as mathematics and science (Askew & Wiliam, 1995), were treated as arising from innate differences in ability, and therefore remained unquestioned.

Towards the end of the 20th century, however, feminist moves to separate sex, as being about the body, from gender as pertaining to the social, led to changes in emphasis, including attempts to encourage greater female take-up of, and attainment in, mathematics and science. Nevertheless, gender as a concept remained tied to sex, and consequently to bodies, and much of the work on gender and education carried out in the late 20th and early 21st century assumes close correspondence between sex and gender, even when gender is treated as socially constructed (Francis & Paechter, 2015). Except in a few cases, a female body is associated with a female gender identity, presentation and expected role (Butler, 1990). Because it is assumed that there are two and only two sexes (Fausto-Sterling, 1993, 2000), it is also assumed that there are only two genders. This has led discussions around gender and curriculum, and gender and education more broadly, to be couched almost entirely within a sex-based gender binary.

Butler (1990, 1993, 2004) and Wittig (1980/1992, 1989/1992) have argued that binary genders are constructed within a presumption of heterosexuality. Such heteronormativity is strongly implicated in many formal social structures which have only recently been broadened to include LGBTQI+ people. Education remains heteronormative in many ways, although, as we shall see below, there has been some change with regard to school policies and inspection practices (Office for Standards in Education Children's Services and Schools, 2014).

Within wider British society, however, there has been a gradual unpicking of the heterosexual assumption over the last twenty years, with increased statutory protection for LGBTQI+ people, legalization of gay marriage, availability of reproductive technologies and adoption to LGBTQI+ people, and the increased visibility of LGBTQI+ people in the community, including as parents. This move away from heteronormativity is leading to a parallel undermining of the gender binary. Once heterosexuality is no longer a taken for granted requirement for

participation in fundamental social institutions such as marriage and family life, the necessity for the two binary genders that make up the heterosexual couple is also brought into question. The increased visibility of LGBTQI+ people, and the gradual loss of force of stereotypes concerning how they should live and behave (Weeks, 2007), has led to a broadening of possibilities for life more generally. It is also gradually leading to wider acceptance of the whole range of LGBTQI+. Assumptions not just about sexual orientation but also about gender are being questioned, contested and undermined. This suggests that educational discourses about gender and curriculum need to move from earlier preoccupations about what boys and girls should study and achieve, to considering how we can include these more recently recognized gender identities and sexualities. This may require a shift as radical as the introduction of the National Curriculum.

### **Schooling and heterosexuality**

Despite these changes in wider society, it remains the case that schools are overwhelmingly heteronormative institutions (Carlile & Paechter, 2018). Heterosexuality is treated as the norm both in curriculum provision and in how schools work with children and young people. This affects how gender has been, and remains, an issue within schools.

In the late 20th century, the heteronormativity of mainstream schooling was reinforced in Britain by the introduction of Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988, which ruled that:

- A local authority shall not—
- (a) intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of promoting homosexuality;
- (b) promote the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship. (Her Majesty's Government, 1988)

Although this only applied to local authorities, and not to schools themselves, it was widely interpreted as preventing schools from discussing or supporting LGBTQI+ students or families at all. This section of the Act was repealed in 2003. However, its effects continue. Some schools did little or nothing to change their policies on the issue (Carlile & Paechter, 2018). There is also considerable evidence that, until

recently, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying has gone unchallenged in many schools, and the use of ‘gay’ as a generic playground term of abuse remains common (Bradlow et al, 2017). This suggests that, in these respects, schools may have a way to go to catch up with broader social trends.

One way to consider how schools acknowledge LGBTQI+ people within their communities is to examine how they are portrayed in school policy documentation, including policies regarding the curriculum. The discourses found in such documents give an insight into the extent to which a particular school is heteronormative in its approach to who is included in school life and the curriculum and how it is likely to react to the presence of a trans or non-binary student or parent. As part of my multi-method research with Anna Carlile (Carlile & Paechter, 2018) into LGBTQI+ families’ relationships with their children’s schools, I analyzed the websites of all non-private schools in two contrasting local authority areas: a mainly rural county in Eastern England and an English West Midlands metropolitan authority. For each of the 169 schools in these two areas I examined the equality policy, any policy for sex and relationship education (SRE), and any policy concerning bullying. When I could not find these, I examined the behaviour policy. These policies are generally about how the school as an organization behaves towards staff, students and parents, and what is expected of them in return, although SRE policies usually specify what should be taught and at what age, and anti-bullying policies usually define different kinds of bullying and lay down procedures and sanctions for dealing with it. My intention was to consider the discourses with which schools talk about LGBTQI+ individuals and families and the extent to which LGBTQI+ people are visible in the curriculum and in school life more generally. In this respect, SRE policies were frequently the most illuminating, especially when they specified what would, and what would not, be taught.

The presence of policies does not, of course, guarantee engagement with the people and ideas on whom those policies are focused (Ahmed, 2012; Martino & Cumming-Potvin, 2011). What appears on school websites is related to the national policy and legal context (Braun, et al, 2011), which, in the UK, includes the Equality Act 2010, which protects people from discrimination on the basis of eight ‘protected

characteristics’, including gender reassignment and sexual orientation. Schools are also subject to the Public Sector Equality Duties, which require that they ‘actively promote equality’ (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2014), and they are inspected in relation to this. It is therefore important to consider not just the discourses to be found in the policies themselves but, where it is apparent, their origins and the extent to which members of the school community have been involved in their development, maintenance, and execution. This is especially the case when we consider that the British LGBTQI+ campaigning organization Stonewall found that, out of 3713 LGBT young people aged 13-19 who responded to an online questionnaire, 45% had been bullied at school for being LGBT, and that only 29% of these said that teachers present during a bullying episode had intervened (Bradlow et al., 2017).

The pressure on UK schools to have policies on a wide range of issues seems to result in widespread reliance on templates, particularly for equality policies, supplied by local authorities, campaigning organizations and other schools. While this is fine where a school then fully engages with adapting a policy to its own situation, many of those I looked at had not. Several schools had not replaced sections from model policies in which they were expected to add their own particular features, or say what steps they had taken so far: in many cases these were simply left blank or with the original wording and/or highlighting indicating this. It is unlikely that schools which take such minimal steps to comply with their legal obligations in this respect will understand, let alone implement, the need for greater inclusion within the curriculum or the everyday life of the school. These model policies also tended to be so generic that they simply listed all the protected characteristics, without considering how addressing the different areas might differ, or, indeed, the extent to which they would be likely to apply to their students (several nursery policies, for example, claimed not to discriminate against pupils on grounds of pregnancy).

Specifically written or fully adapted policies, on the other hand, often drew attention to particular features of their local area, such as the SRE policy from one school in the metropolitan authority which mentioned the above national average teenage pregnancy rate. Church schools appeared to be more likely to have internally written

or adapted policies, which often reflected their religious ethos. Mainly this resulted in an increased stress on fostering marriage and family life through the curriculum, though there was little indication that this was anything other than heteronormative. Some schools used the opportunity to emphasize particular inclusions or exclusions. At one extreme was a Roman Catholic primary school whose 'Family Life Policy' was aimed at 'the formation of right attitudes in our children' and which stated specifically that homosexuality, masturbation, oral sex, contraception, abortion and rape would not be 'discussed in detail'. Given that homosexuality is sometimes equated with sexual activity, and that some children are already aware of their sexual orientation at primary school, this could result in the complete curriculum exclusion of LGBTQI+ issues and individuals (Martino & Cumming-Potvin, 2011). At the other extreme were church schools whose specially written policies explicitly included LGBTQI+ people, and, in one case, families. One Roman Catholic secondary school stated at the start of its Family Life Education Policy that 'sexuality is essential to our personal identity and is God's gift to us', and said that 'sexual identity' was taught to older students. A Church of England primary school's SRE policy not only covered same-sex relationships in the curriculum for older students, but also explicitly claimed to teach 'how do families with same-sex parents have babies'. Given that some of the children in our wider study of LGBTQI+ parented families and schools complained of ignorance on this latter question among their primary school peers (Carlile & Paechter, 2018), this is something that should be taken up more widely.

One thing that several church primary schools appeared to be struggling with was striking a balance between inclusivity and not wanting to teach explicitly about sex. This is reflected in the Church of England's policy document *Valuing All God's Children* (The Church of England Education Office, 2017: 20), which states that:

It is not appropriate that a primary school's strategy for combatting HTB bullying should focus on any aspect of differing sexual practices (i.e. what people do with their bodies sexually, although human reproduction may be an element of the science curriculum). An exploration of differing sexual activity would serve to counter a primary school's responsibility to safeguard the latency of childhood.

While it is understandable that any school would be reluctant to thrust explicit details of adult sexual activity on younger children, those at or approaching puberty at the

older end of a primary school may well be exposed to considerable (mis)information from elsewhere, particularly around non-heterosexual sex. This therefore amounts to an abdication of responsibility on the part of the Church of England, particularly given that children in our study were asked explicit questions about their families and how they themselves came to be conceived. Most ten year olds are aware, at least to some extent, of how babies are conceived in heterosexually-parented families, and a refusal to discuss the ways in which children in LGBTQI+ parented families are differently conceived does little to include the latter. Nevertheless, the bespoke nature of church schools' policies could have some benefits: it was striking, for example, that they were the only schools to mention 'love' in a policy title.

I found when going through the school websites that schools that might have a relatively basic model-based equality policy could have an extremely well thought out ones for specific other things, such as Gypsy and Traveller children, young carers, refugees, or separated parents. It appears that where a school identifies a need for a particular policy they may go to some trouble to devise one that fully suits their circumstances. This suggests that it is only when a school has to deal explicitly with a particular kind of student, family, or set of circumstances that it devises or amends policies so that they are inclusive and work effectively in practice. Unfortunately, this 'after the fact' approach gives no reassurance to LGBTQI+ parents or students that schools will take their concerns seriously or include them in the curriculum.

Stonewall's survey (Bradlow et al., 2017) found that 45% of LGBT pupils who experience HBT bullying never report it to anyone, and, of those, 39% gave as a reason that they thought teachers would do nothing about it, and 59% were afraid that it would 'out' them as LGBT. This suggests that the lack of a well-publicized and properly designed policy inhibits LGBTQI+ students from being out at a particular school, making it, as part of a vicious circle, less likely that the school will carry out the work needed to devise and implement a strong and inclusive approach to LGBTQI+ people, including full curriculum inclusion. The almost complete invisibility of trans and non-binary people from all the SRE policies I analyzed also suggests that schools are not including any teaching of gender identities in the curriculum. While teaching regarding same-gender relationships is gradually coming into schools, education about LGBTQI+ identities does not appear to be making much

headway.

The discourses found in school policies regarding LGBTQI+ students and families construct the ways in which these groups are perceived (Maguire et al, 2011). School policies regarding LGBTQI+ issues position LGBTQI+ people in particular ways, which will have different effects both in terms of their visibility as members of school communities, and of how they are regarded. The discourses of the documents found in schools in the two local authority areas I examined positioned LGBTQI+ parents and students either as invisible or as victims.

Most of the policies had their main emphasis on LGBTQI+ students, more rarely on staff, and hardly ever on parents. This is quite possibly due to the use of model policy documents focusing very directly on legal obligations, but does nevertheless reflect the overall invisibility of LGBTQI+ parented families in school contexts, and therefore in the curriculum. A school might have an SRE policy that is inclusive of same-sex love when considering students' current or potential relationships, but which discusses family life in such vague terms that teachers are not prompted to include LGBTQI+ parented families when teaching. SRE policies might, therefore, refer to such things as 'why families are special for caring and sharing' or state that they would 'emphasise the role and value of family life', but say nothing about how those families are constructed (Martino & Cumming-Potvin, 2011). This sort of indirect statement may give an illusion of inclusion where none exists in practice (Jones & Hillier, 2012). Indeed, many SRE policies were vague about the extent to which a school taught or encouraged a positive attitude to LGBTQI+ identities and relationships, leaving a gap between the content of their equality policies and what they claimed to cover in the classroom. There was no suggestion, for example, that students should be taught about LGBTQI+ historical figures, or that teachers should mention the LGBTQI+ status of a poet whose love poems are being studied.

The second discourse surrounding LGBTQI+ students and families focused on them primarily as victims, within anti-bullying documentation. Given the continued prevalence of HBT bullying in schools (Bradlow et al., 2017), this is clearly needed, but it is hardly a positive portrayal, and could be seen as a hidden curriculum of

victimhood. In contrast to their invisibility in sex and relationships education, members of LGBTQI+ parented families did sometimes appear in anti-bullying documentation. Most of the anti-bullying policies, where they mentioned particular categories of bullying, included homophobic bullying, usually in the context of protecting LGBTQI+ students or combatting homophobic language, particularly the use of ‘gay’ as a term of abuse. Generally, however, policies focused on students being bullied about their own sexual orientation and rarely mentioned that students might have LGBTQI+ parents or other family members. Furthermore, if the only place that LGBTQI+ people feature in school policies is in lists of people with ‘protected characteristics’ under the Equality Act or as potential victims of bullying, this presents a picture of LGBTQI+ life as problematic, painful and in need of special protection, rather than as another variant of human identity, sexual orientation and/or living arrangements.

This discourse in which children from LGBTQI+ parented families are presented as victims arises in part from the heteronormative world of the school. This means that they only appear at all in relation to LGBTQI+ students defined as requiring protection or being bullied, rather than as people in their own right. Because there is good evidence that LGBTQI+ students are frequently the victims of bullying, and because casual use of homophobic language remains an ongoing problem in schools, children from LGBTQI+ parented families are assumed, by association, to be both closeted about their parents and victimized because of their parents’ LGBTQI+ status. This is not something that was borne out by our study: only one parent (a woman of trans history) said that her child’s school did not know of her status, and only one child (whose parent was a different woman of trans history) said that they had been bullied. Most children were open about and proud of their families, some even gaining kudos among their peers from having LGBTQI+ parents (Carlile & Paechter, 2018). This acceptance should be reflected in much greater inclusion in the curriculum.

Evidence from the Stonewall survey (Bradlow et al., 2017), furthermore, suggests that, policy inclusion notwithstanding, trans (including non-binary) students in particular are not well supported in schools. Problems reported by trans young people include: not being allowed to use their preferred name and pronoun in school; not

being given access to preferred toilets or changing rooms; not being protected from anti-trans bullying; not being allowed to play on the sports teams with which they feel comfortable; not being allowed to wear a school uniform in line with their gender identity. While this is likely in many cases to be due to ignorance on the part of schools, increases in children and young people identifying as trans or non-binary (The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust, 2018) mean that such ignorance is likely to cause problems to increasing numbers of students. Schools' lack of understanding of trans issues and the invisibility of trans people within SRE policies also suggests that well-informed teaching about the fluidity of gender, for some people, or about the possibilities of a disjunction between bodies and identities, is likely to be extremely rare.

### **Conclusions and implications**

The introduction of the National Curriculum from 1988 brought about a transformation in curriculum expectations and provision around gender. It removed, at least for students age 5-16, a set of divisions between young women and men which had left many working-class students in gender-segregated classrooms being taught domestic or craft subjects for a considerable proportion of curriculum time, and girls opting out of studying sciences, boys of modern foreign languages, from age 14. Despite many changes since, the resulting improvement of girls' uptake of, and success at, mathematics and sciences beyond compulsory education has persisted, and we have a much more equal curriculum offer and experience. We now need to have a similar revolution with regard to curriculum provision around non-heteronormative, and especially non-binary, understandings of gender and sexual orientation.

In our study of LGBTQI+ parented families and schools (Carlile & Paechter, 2018), Anna Carlile and I found that parents did not generally feel that their families were included in the school curriculum. While they themselves were almost always visible in the school community, taking and collecting younger children, attending parents' evenings, taking up membership of governing bodies and parent-teacher associations, they complained of a lack of books and images reflecting their families in primary school classrooms, a lack of acknowledgement of the contribution of LGBTQI+ people to society, and a focus on penis/vagina sex to the exclusion of all other forms

in SRE. A teenager in our study complained that, while lesbian and gay orientations were discussed in secondary school, bisexual ones were ignored, while young people in the Stonewall survey (Bradlow et al., 2017) reported a lack of information in lessons about safer sex, consent or violence in the context of same-sex relationships. It is clear from these accounts that the presence in school policies of LGBTQI+ people and families only as potential victims of bullying has ongoing effects in terms of inadequate curriculum provision.

Echoing the previous approaches of campaigning groups encouraging girls to engage with and succeed at mathematics and science, we need a new drive towards a fully inclusive curriculum that includes an informed discussion, across the curriculum, of gender, sexual orientation and heterosexuality. We need to introduce curriculum provision that supports children, in age-appropriate ways, to understand the ways in which gender is socially constructed, that some people do not identify with the gender they were assigned at birth, or, indeed, with any specific gender, and that families come in a wide variety of forms. This will require primary schools to have books about a full range of family forms available for children to look at, read, and discuss, and to teach children about conception through a range of different methods, including donor insemination and IVF. It will require secondary schools, and the older classes in primary school, to acquire and use materials about sex and relationships that reflect the full diversity of our society, and to ensure that young people are fully informed about identities and sexual orientations beyond a taken-for-granted heteronormativity.

Such changes may seem radical, but they have been taking place in some schools for some time (Barnes & Carlile, 2018) to varying degrees. Some parents in our study (Carlile & Paechter, 2018) pointed out, for example, that simply having LGBTQI+ inclusive posters in entrance halls and corridors made them feel more welcome and less invisible. Although such informal strategies are an important aspect of the hidden curriculum, developing the overt curriculum must go way beyond this if it is to be fully inclusive. The No Outsiders Project, research which focused on introducing a more LGBTQI+ aware curriculum into English primary schools (Cullen & Sandy, 2009; DePalma & Atkinson, 2009) did considerable work in this area, including

compiling a list of inclusive story books, and various campaigning groups have produced a wide range of resources for schools to call upon. What now needs to happen is for all schools to take inclusivity seriously, to understand that including LGBTQI+ people is not just about preventing bullying, and to work to reflect the entire school community across all appropriate areas of the curriculum, including sex and relationships education and education about identities. We need, in many ways, a new national curriculum for inclusivity.

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<sup>i</sup> I am treating intersex as a gender identity. This reflects the fact that some people who are biologically intersex identify as male or female, while others identify as intersex. This distinction is important because those who identify as male or female prefer to be treated as such in all but very specific medical contexts, and those for whom intersex is also a gender identity prefer to have this recognised.