

Inspiring equality in education grant evaluation : final report

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**INSPIRING EQUALITY IN EDUCATION
GRANT EVALUATION:**

FINAL REPORT

2016

***Eleanor Formby, Ben Willis and Anna
Stevens***

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Disclaimer

This research was commissioned by EACH. The findings and recommendations are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the Government Equalities Office (GEO) or government policy. The GEO does not guarantee the accuracy, completeness or usefulness of the information in this report.

Glossary of terms

ABA: Anti-Bullying Alliance

CAMHS: Child and adolescent mental health services

CEIR: Centre for Education and Inclusion Research, Sheffield Hallam University

CSE: Child sexual exploitation

DfE: Department for Education

EACH: Educational Action Challenging Homophobia

FGM: Female genital mutilation

GEO: Government Equalities Office

HBT: Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic

ICT: Information and communication technology (in schools)

IEIE: Inspiring Equality in Education

LGB: Lesbian, gay and bisexual

LGBT: Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans

LGBT+: Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans, with the + symbol representing a range of diverse gender and sexual identities which may also be included within this grouping

LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex and asexual, with the + symbol representing a range of diverse gender and sexual identities which may also be included within this grouping

OtRB: Off the Record Bristol

PE: Physical education (in schools)

PSHE: Personal, social, health and economic education (in schools)

RE: Religious education (in schools)

SEN: Special educational needs

SLT: Senior leadership team (in schools)

SMSC: Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (in schools)

Executive summary

1. Introduction

In 2015, Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH) led a successful consortium proposal to the Government Equalities Office (GEO) and Department for Education (DfE) for a homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying grant. This involved the Anti-Bullying Alliance, EACH, Off the Record Bristol, the PSHE Association, and Sheffield Hallam University's Centre for Education and Inclusion Research as the independent evaluator. Named *Inspiring Equality in Education (IEIE)*, the project was based in the South West of England, and involved in-depth work with ten 'partnership' schools, three standalone training events, and the development of new resources aimed at addressing HBT prejudice in schools.

2. Evaluation methods

The evaluation involved a range of activities: in the partnership schools, 'pre' and 'post' project surveys were conducted with school pupils and staff, ten in-depth interviews were undertaken with school leads, and five focus groups were undertaken with pupils (47 young people). In addition, there was an evaluation survey of (standalone) training event participants, and five in-depth interviews with consortium partners/staff.

3. Whole school surveys

In total, there were 167 completed questionnaires from primary staff (76 pre and 91 post), and 1045 from primary pupils (482 pre and 563 post). In secondary schools, 771 staff completed questionnaires (471 pre and 300 post), as did 4691 pupils (2615 pre and 2076 post).

Primary school staff survey results

- Slightly more staff reported knowing 'a lot' about matters related to lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) identities or relationships in the 'post' survey than the 'pre'
- Notably more staff in the post survey thought their school taught 'a lot' or 'a little' about 'different' families and relationships, LGBT identities and relationships, homophobia and/or gender-based bullying
- A notably higher proportion of respondents indicated that homophobic and gender-based name-calling and bullying was dealt with well at the post survey stage, with 55% saying 'very' or 'quite' well in the pre survey, to 85% saying 'very' or 'quite' well in the post survey
- Confidence levels varied between pre and post surveys: 53% felt 'very' or 'somewhat' confident before, and 68% felt 'very' or 'somewhat' confident towards project end
- A markedly higher proportion of staff said they would be likely to include LGBT identities or relationships in their teaching/support of others' teaching towards project end (63%) than in the beginning (31%).

Primary school pupil survey results

- There was an increase in pupils hearing LGB identities or gender discussed at school, though gender was more likely to be discussed than LGB identities
- More pupils reported school talking about homophobia in the post survey than in the pre survey
- Fewer pupils observed homophobic name-calling or bullying and negative use of the word 'gay' in the post survey than the pre survey.

Secondary school staff survey results

- A slightly higher proportion of staff thought their school taught ‘a little’ about LGBT identities or relationships, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia towards project end than at the beginning
- Staff said they heard pupils using the word ‘gay’ negatively slightly less in the post survey than in the pre survey
- Though more staff thought they dealt with HBT bullying better in 2016 than they had previously, 21% still felt they dealt with ‘general’ bullying better than HBT bullying.

Secondary school pupil survey results

- A slightly higher proportion of pupils said they would be happy to be friends with an LGBT person in the post survey than in the pre survey
- Pupils were somewhat more likely to indicate that their school taught ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ about LGBT identities or relationships towards the end of the project than at the beginning
- In the post survey, over two thirds thought biphobia and transphobia were still not taught about ‘very much’ or ‘at all’, though some pupil focus group data suggested that teachers were addressing problematic/homophobic language use more recently than they had in the past
- Pupils thought other young people used the word ‘gay’ negatively slightly less towards the end of the project than they had previously.

4. Partnership schools: Staff perspectives

Perspectives on activities undertaken

- Participants suggested that the baseline evaluation surveys were beneficial in identifying needs, raising awareness, and opening up discussion
- Partnership school networking meetings were also useful in facilitating the exchange of ideas and experiences
- A key element of IEIE was staff development, which was universally praised
- Where training was voluntary within a school, this does not appear to have been as effective than in schools where it was compulsory
- Participants noted that ideally training involved all staff, not just teaching staff.

Impact on professional practice

- Where IEIE was embedded within wider anti-bullying measures in schools, it was not easy to separate HBT bullying elements from this other work
- IEIE was transformative in some schools where they *“had never discussed LGBT issues... [and] didn’t have anything for LGBT at all”*
- Impacts on staff included increased staff knowledge, awareness and confidence about HBT bullying and/or LGBT identities, including thinking about student needs, and *“family set-ups”*
- In primary schools, IEIE (and support for the project from senior leadership team (SLT) members) was seen as giving staff ‘permission’ to use *“the language of sexuality”*
- There was also evidence of impacts on school policy and practice outside the classroom (e.g. how they dealt with or recorded bullying, and supported individual students)
- A number of schools adopted the use of ‘safe space’ stickers (for staff to demonstrate their approachability) as a result of hearing about them during the IEIE project
- IEIE was also thought to have encouraged or facilitated school signposting (e.g. in ‘equalities boards’ displaying *“outside agencies that people can contact... if they are questioning their gender or their sexuality or if they’ve got family members that are in the same position”*)

- Gender identity was commonly identified as an area that school staff felt less ‘familiar’ or ‘comfortable’ with, but one that was increasingly becoming an ‘issue’ in schools as more young people ‘come out’ as trans or gender questioning.

Impact on the school environment

- Most interviewees felt that it was too early to document wide-scale changes to the school environment, given the short timescales of the project
- Around half of school leads suggested ways in which IEIE had impacted upon pupils, including increased awareness and willingness to engage in discussion
- School-based LGBT or equality groups (in four of the ten schools) had developed or been established during the course of IEIE
- Work in this area was thought to engender more ‘open’ school environments long-term, which can support students wanting to ‘come out’ about their identities.

Reflections on the project, and the future

- Broader challenges were identified beyond the scope of IEIE, for example addressing HBT bullying was understood as having to ‘compete’ against other agendas in school, which can lead to its de-prioritisation
- Echoing themes in broader research (Formby et al, 2010), concerns about parental objections or lack of support were apparent
- It was thought that IEIE resources and guidance would become more embedded in schools in the future
- Participants called for DfE to increase anti-bullying guidance, and make PSHE statutory.

5. Partnership schools: Pupil perspectives

Perspectives on activities undertaken

- Pupils identified that LGBT visibility had been increased in their school during the time of IEIE, through posters and notice boards, themed assemblies and other one-off events (often linked to anti-bullying week and/or LGBT history month), and formal curriculum content
- IEIE was thought to have contributed to increased awareness amongst pupils
- Where student-led groups had initiated activities this led to some confusion and/or scepticism among the wider student body, and could be perceived to indicate that the school were not themselves willing to engage in action.

Perspectives on the school environment, and suggested ways forward

- Across both primary and secondary schools, the discourse of bullying was prevalent, with some pupils calling for more bullying prevention work, as well as greater punishment
- Supporting existing research, pupils identified that bullying could be used to ‘regulate’ young people’s behaviour or ‘difference’ (see also Davies, 2011; Formby, 2013, 2015; Rawlings and Russell, 2012; Thornberg, 2011; Walton, 2011)
- Problematic or homophobic language use and ‘bullying’ behaviours were often explained as immaturity or ignorance rather than malice
- Misunderstandings about gender amongst both staff and students were highlighted
- School provision of LGBT/equality groups and/or numbers of pupils who were ‘out’ about their identities was often taken as a sign that their school was a more ‘accepting’ environment
- Reporting bullying was problematic, with fears about being called “a snitch”, even where school activities had explicitly focussed on ‘bystander’ reporting

- Some pupils thought teachers were addressing problematic/homophobic language use more than they had in the past
- Ideas from pupils about how (their) schools could become more LGBT-inclusive included: more frequent bullying-related assemblies; more LGBT curriculum coverage throughout the school year and for all year groups; greater use of external/guest speakers; increased support for those who experience bullying; improved teacher training, and greater support with family relationships if/when needed.

6. Training event evaluation

- Over 80% of participants thought that the training had increased their knowledge and awareness about matters related to LGBT identities or relationships
- Over 75% of respondents reported feeling more confident to incorporate LGBT identities or relationships into their teaching or support of others' teaching as a result of the training
- Prior to the training, 81% of respondents said they did not include LGBT identities or relationships in their teaching/support of others' teaching, but following the training, just under three quarters thought they would include more about LGBT identities or relationships
- Before the training, over three quarters of respondents said they included 'not very much' or 'nothing at all' about homophobia, biphobia or transphobia within their teaching/support of others' teaching; as a result of the training, 74% said they would include more
- Overall, 96% of respondents found the training 'very' (69%) or 'a little' (27%) useful.

7. Reflections from consortium partners

Perspectives on activities undertaken

- Consortium partners discussed a range of resources developed during IEIE, including a literature review, guidance briefings, a short animated film, and a suite of materials launched at the final showcase event. The resources were thought to address specific gaps in current materials on disabled young people's HBT bullying experiences, and (trans)gender identities
- Consultation with young people and partnership schools was seen as an integral and important element of IEIE resource development.

Reflections on the project, and its impact on professional practice and the school environment

- Consortium partners identified impacts on staff awareness and confidence
- The opportunity to work with(in) primary settings, and explore how HBT bullying affects disabled children and young people, were identified as particular strengths of IEIE
- The short timescales of the project were identified as challenging, as were the wider pressures that schools currently face (e.g. regarding resources and a perceived "*narrowing of the curriculum*")
- Most partners suggested that the continued non-statutory status of PSHE does not support the development of LGBT-inclusive school environments (see Formby, 2015 for further discussion)
- There were calls for DfE to release guidance on trans inclusion in schools, as it was believed the absence of this inhibits progress.

8. Conclusions

- The evaluation could not 'prove' that the project had impact (because of the lack of control/comparison group, and because the surveys did not have exactly matching samples), but a range of observations can be made with implications for future policy and practice

- Overall, there was less variation between pre and post surveys at secondary level than at primary, which might relate to some of the challenges identified by interviewees
- However, evidence suggests that staff training can increase knowledge, awareness and/or confidence about discussing LGBT identities or 'diverse' family relationships, and support challenges to problematic/homophobic language use among pupils (and staff)
- Providing individual support to pupils, particularly those who may be questioning their gender identity, was commonly described as a growing issue for schools, and one which staff were (at least initially) often less familiar or comfortable with, highlighting the important role of training and/or external support
- School-based LGBT/equality groups were thought to be addressing gaps left by declining (LGBT) youth service provision (due to funding cuts)
- Teachers are more likely to respond positively to interactive training focussed on potential classroom activities and responses, rather than broader 'awareness-raising' delivery, but compulsory training for both teaching and non-teaching staff is more likely to facilitate greater impact in schools
- Ofsted and safeguarding were identified as important agendas to support this work
- SLT support was often identified as crucial in giving staff the confidence and 'permission' to address these issues in their practice, particularly given the pressures and 'competing' agendas that interviewees identified within schools.

9. Implications for practice

- Given the volume of 'diverse' gender and sexual self-identities among secondary pupils (and numbers of primary pupils identifying as 'tomboys'), survey data indicate that schools need to engage with, and keep abreast of, these developments, and there was support for greater inclusion of LGBT identities within both secondary pupil surveys and focus groups
- According to secondary pupils, biphobia, transphobia, bisexuality and trans identities are less likely to be included within schools than homophobia and/or gay identities, which was a cause for concern, and could be addressed in future delivery
- Secondary schools advertising groups or services for LGBT young people was relatively uncommon, which could be improved in future school practices (e.g. through the use of 'equality boards' to signpost and disseminate information). Where schools do not signpost or provide relevant information, evidence shows that pupils will look elsewhere, which might be problematic
- School-based LGBT or equality groups can support identities and/or information distribution, but care is needed to ensure these do not operate in isolation and/or without appropriate support
- Use of the baseline evaluation surveys to target and tailor school support was seen as a particular strength of IEIE, which might be something for organisations to consider in future
- Most staff valued the opportunity to network and share experiences or practice suggestions with other schools, suggesting that in future local networks (whether formal or informal) could facilitate and support further work in this field, supported where possible by external specialists
- Thought also needs to be given to the diversity of school pupil backgrounds, with school support and training tailored appropriately
- Consideration needs to be given to project timescales, in order to allow maximum time for input development, and impact generation
- Participants called for greater support from DfE, for instance by making PSHE compulsory and/or publishing guidance on school-based support for trans and gender questioning pupils, which could bolster support, and send a message that HBT bullying is, and should be, 'high on the agenda'.

1. Introduction

In 2015, Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH) was successful in leading a consortium proposal to the Department for Education/Government Equalities Office for homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying grant monies. This consortium involved the Anti-Bullying Alliance (ABA), EACH, Off the Record Bristol (OtRB), the PSHE Association, and Sheffield Hallam University’s Centre for Education and Inclusion Research (CEIR) as the independent evaluator. The project, known as Inspiring Equality in Education (IEIE), was based in the South West of England, and had three components:

- in-depth work with ten ‘partnership’ schools (where a range of activities took place, see below)
- three standalone training events
- the development of new resources aimed at addressing HBT prejudice in schools.

The broad roles of each partner are set out in the table below:

Consortium partner	Roles and elements involved in
ABA	Project planning and promotion Resource development
CEIR	Project evaluation
EACH	Lead partner Partnership work with schools Project planning and promotion Training delivery Resource development
OtRB	Partnership work with schools Project planning and promotion Training delivery Resource development
PSHE Association	Project planning and promotion Resource development

Work with the partnership schools built on the findings of the baseline evaluation surveys (see Chapter 2). EACH staff members subsequently met with partnership school lead contacts to offer in-school staff training and support. The timing and specific subject matter for the training was negotiated individually, and led by the schools. Most schools chose to facilitate an afternoon or twilight training session lasting between 50-90 minutes, delivered by EACH and OtRB. Partnership schools were also provided with existing resources from IEIE consortium members to support pupil awareness-raising. In addition, three partnership schools requested a dedicated pupil awareness-raising session delivered by EACH and OtRB.

In each of the ten partnership schools, one or two designated leads were nominated to participate in two networking seminars to share ideas with other partnership schools. These leads predominantly comprised of senior and/or pastoral staff (see Chapter 4 for further detail).

This report documents the evaluation findings, drawn from a range of quantitative and qualitative methods employed (see Chapter 2 for further detail on evaluation methods). Chapters 3-5 relate to

the partnership work with schools, whilst Chapter 6 reports on the training events, and Chapter 7 offers reflections from consortium staff. Data is drawn together in Chapter 8, the conclusion to the report. It should be noted that, following the focus of the grant, IEIE and the evaluation were focussed on HBT bullying and LGBT identities, but some participants involved did mention or discuss issues about a broader range of identities that might be included in other/longer acronyms, such as LGBT+ or LGBTQIA+, and these comments have been included as relevant and important.

2. Evaluation methods

The table below outlines the different evaluation methods used and their relationship to the different IEIE components. All evaluation activities were undertaken by the report authors (Formby as lead researcher, Willis as second researcher, and Stevens as statistician), and the project received research ethics approval from Sheffield Hallam University Research Ethics Committee. All the schools have been assigned a code to preserve anonymity: P1-3 are primary schools and S1-7 are secondary schools.

IEIE component	Evaluation methods
'Partnership' school work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Pre' and 'post' project surveys of school pupils and staff (i.e. 8 online self-completion surveys) • In-depth interviews with school leads in the 10 schools • Focus groups with pupils in 5 of the 10 schools
Training events	Post-training evaluation survey of participants
Resources	In-depth interviews with consortium partners (i.e. 5 members of staff)

The 'pre' project surveys were conducted in May/June 2015 with the support of the partnership school leads: CEIR disseminated the survey links and schools facilitated a range of pupils (Key Stage 2 and above) receiving the survey online (largely in class time) and distributed the other survey to staff (and sometimes school governors¹) via email. Results were then analysed and separate baseline reports produced for each school to inform their work within the IEIE project. In late December 2015 to early February 2016 'post' project surveys were undertaken in the partnership schools (using the same questionnaire). Results from both surveys are presented in this report in aggregate form (see Chapter 3). It is important to note that the two surveys did not track individual participants so they are intended to document perspectives on the school environments over time rather than individual experience or 'behaviour change'. In January-February 2016 qualitative research was undertaken in/with schools, involving school leads and pupils (see Chapters 4 and 5 for more detail).

For the training component, all participants were given an evaluation questionnaire at the end of the session. As these were in hard copy, data was inputted, and then analysed (see Chapter 6).

Consortium partners were also interviewed in February 2016 (see Chapter 7). This was to gather perspectives on the conduct and success of the project, and in particular allowed the evaluation team to understand the process of resource production in greater detail. All qualitative evaluation data was digitally recorded, written-up, and subsequently analysed thematically.

A range of factors may influence attitudes towards LGBT identities and relationships in schools, of which IEIE project input is only one, meaning that a relatively small-scale and short-term evaluation cannot categorically evidence IEIE impact without comparison groups or schools. However, the report does provide useful data for IEIE consortium partners, including in particular the ten partnership schools, to inform their future working. It may also offer broader insights for policymakers and practitioners working to address HBT prejudice in school environments more generally.

¹ Because there were low numbers of governor respondents we will refer to 'staff' throughout.

3. Whole school surveys

This chapter presents the results from the 'pre' and 'post' surveys carried with staff and pupils in the three primary and seven secondary partnership schools involved in the IEIE project work. It is important to note that whilst the 'pre' survey offered informative baseline information, the 'post' survey was issued prior to the completion of the project, therefore limiting the potential to document impact across the full period. Total numbers of respondents are provided below.

Survey	Pre survey	Post survey
Primary school staff	76	91
Primary school pupils	482	563
Secondary school staff	471	300
Secondary school pupils	2615	2076

Primary school staff survey

Profile of respondents

The pre and post surveys had broadly similar respondent profiles, as shown below. This means that whilst the respondents were not matched on an individual basis, the profile of respondents in terms of demographics was relatively similar.

Q: What is the name of your school?

School	Pre (%)	Post (%)
P1	52	54
P2	45	38
P3	3	8

Q: What is your role at the school?

Respondent role	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Member of SLT	13	12
Member of support staff	33	34
Member of teaching staff	45	52
School governor	9	3 ²

Q: What is the main subject area that you teach?

Main subject taught	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Arts	0	20
Computing, design and technology or ICT	0	20
Citizenship, PSHE or RE	25	0
Humanities	25	20
Maths/numeracy or science	50	40

² Figures may exceed 100% due to rounding.

Q: How many years teaching experience do you have?

Years teaching experience	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Up to 2 years	32	16
More than 2 years to 5 years	18	18
More than 5 years to 10 years	9	14
More than 10 years to 20 years	21	29
More than 20 years	21	22

Q: How would you describe your gender?

Gender (from a longer list supplied)	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Female	86	82
Male	14	14
Prefer not to say	0	4

Q: Do you, or have you ever, identified as trans?

Very small numbers had ever identified as trans.

Q: Please could you let us know your age.

Age	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Under 25	3	5
25-29	25	14
30-39	21	23
40-49	24	23
50 or over	24	27
Prefer not to say	3	6.5

Q: How would you describe your sexuality?

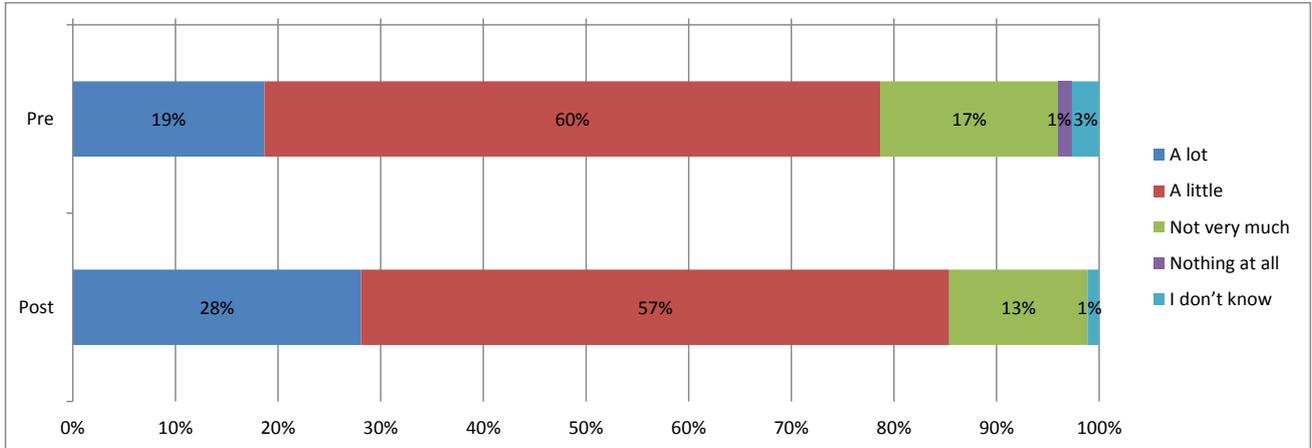
Sexuality (from a longer list supplied)	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Heterosexual or 'straight'	90	92
Gay	2	0
Lesbian	2	1
Prefer not to say	6	7

Q: How would you describe your ethnicity?

Ethnicity (from a longer list supplied)	Pre (%)	Post (%)
White British	91	94
White Irish	0	1
Any other white background	3	0
Prefer not to say	6	5

Knowledge and awareness

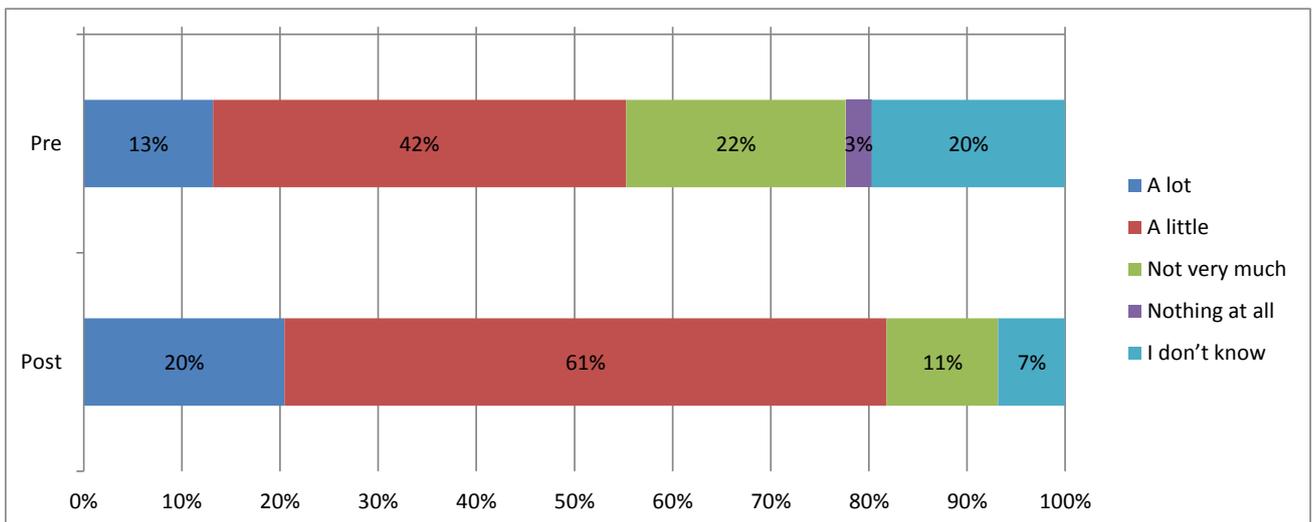
Q: In general, how much do you think you know about matters related to lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) identities or relationships?



The chart above shows that a slightly higher proportion felt they knew ‘a lot’ towards the end of the project than at the beginning. When asked about friendships with LGBT people, results did not vary much as they were nearly all positive to begin with.

Perspectives on the school environment

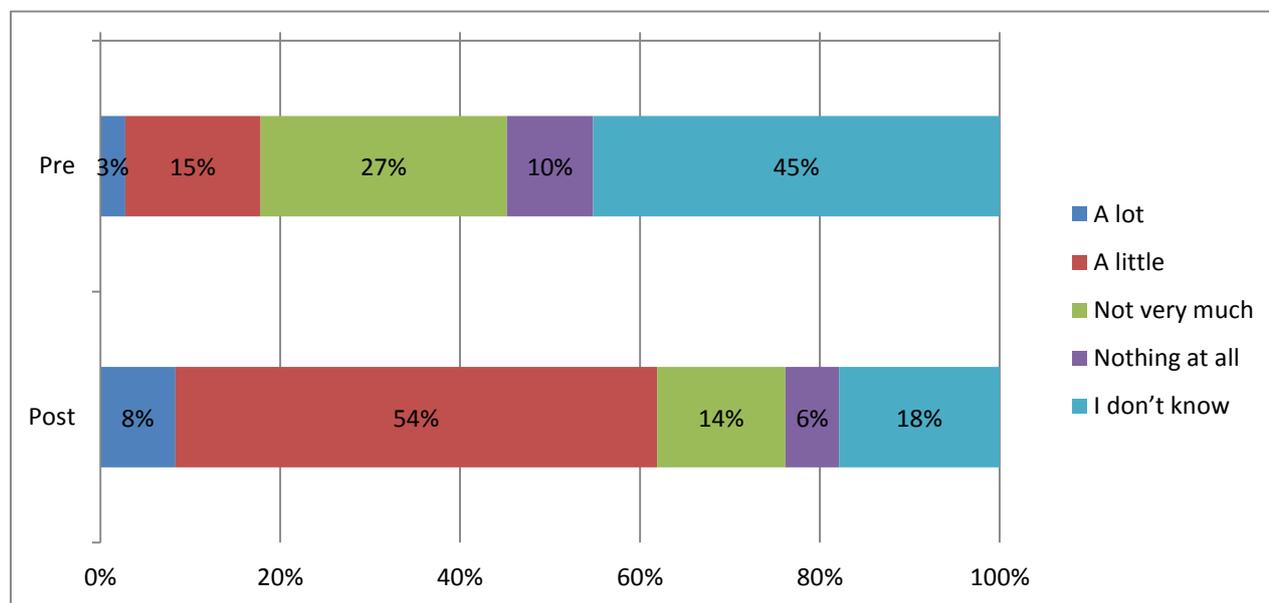
Q: To your knowledge, has your school ever taught pupils about different families and relationships? For example, how some children have a mum and a dad, some have step-parents or step brothers and sisters, some children have two mums or two dads, some children have one parent, and so on.



The above chart suggests that a notably higher proportion thought their school taught ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ about family diversity towards the end of the project than at the beginning. In total, 81% indicated that their school taught ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ at the post survey stage, compared with 55% at the pre survey stage.

Q: To your knowledge, has your school ever taught pupils about lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans identities and relationships?

The chart below shows that at the post survey stage a markedly higher proportion thought that their school taught 'a lot' or 'a little' about LGBT identities and relationships (62% compared with 18% pre).

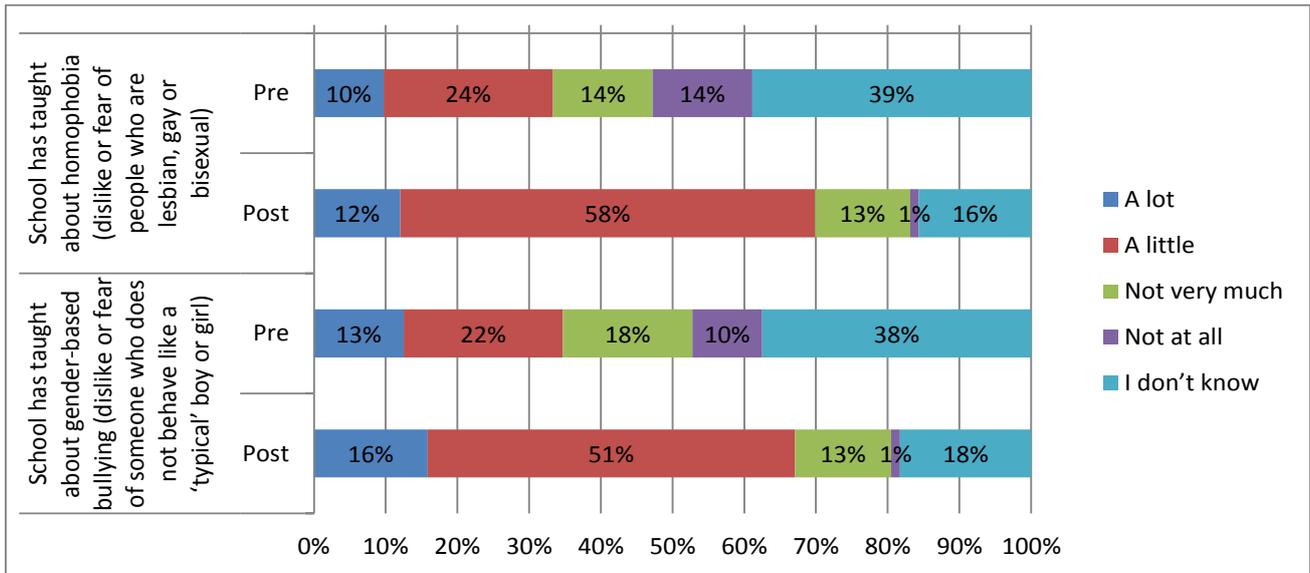


In terms of approaches to teaching, slightly more people reported that their teaching was directive or informative rather than interactive at post survey stage, representing an increase of 7 percentage points (p.p.). There were greater differences regarding other aspects, for instance:

- more people felt the teaching delivered in this area was useful to pupils (an increase of 15 p.p.)
- somewhat more people felt that teachers involved were mostly well-informed (71% at post survey compared with 53% at pre survey)
- more people (an increase of 18 p.p.) felt school leadership supports staff delivering in this area
- more people (an increase of 20 p.p.) felt confident teaching about this subject area in the post survey (45% overall)
- more people (an increase of 22 p.p.) felt pupils seemed engaged in the subject area (which as 62% did not know before, might suggest greater delivery rather than greater engagement)
- more people thought external speakers seem to know a lot, and seem confident (increases of 39 and 35 p.p. respectively), representing the greatest variation within this question (as 69% and 67% did not know before, this is likely to relate to greater contact with external speakers, rather than changing perspectives on their expertise).

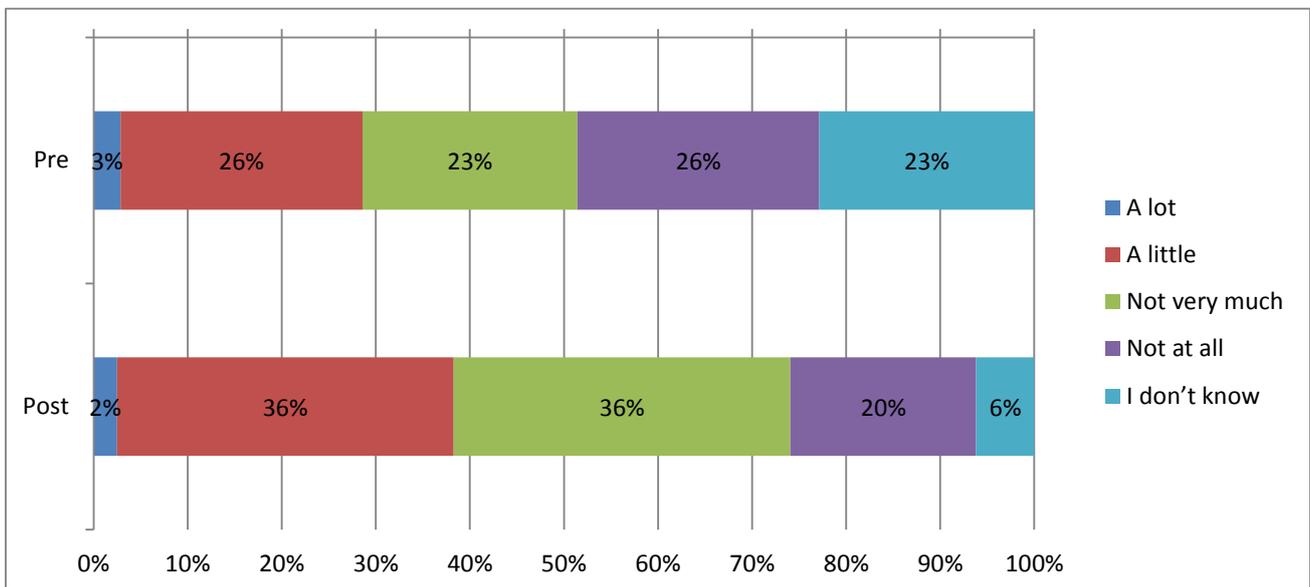
Q: To your knowledge, has your school ever taught pupils about homophobia or gender-based bullying?

There were notable differences concerning teaching about homophobia and gender-based bullying (see below): 24% thought there was 'a little' on homophobia pre and 58% 'a little' post; 22% thought there was 'a little' on gender-based bullying pre and 51% 'a little' post.



There was little difference regarding whether people thought their school should include more about LGBT identities: 62% said more pre and 60% said more post.

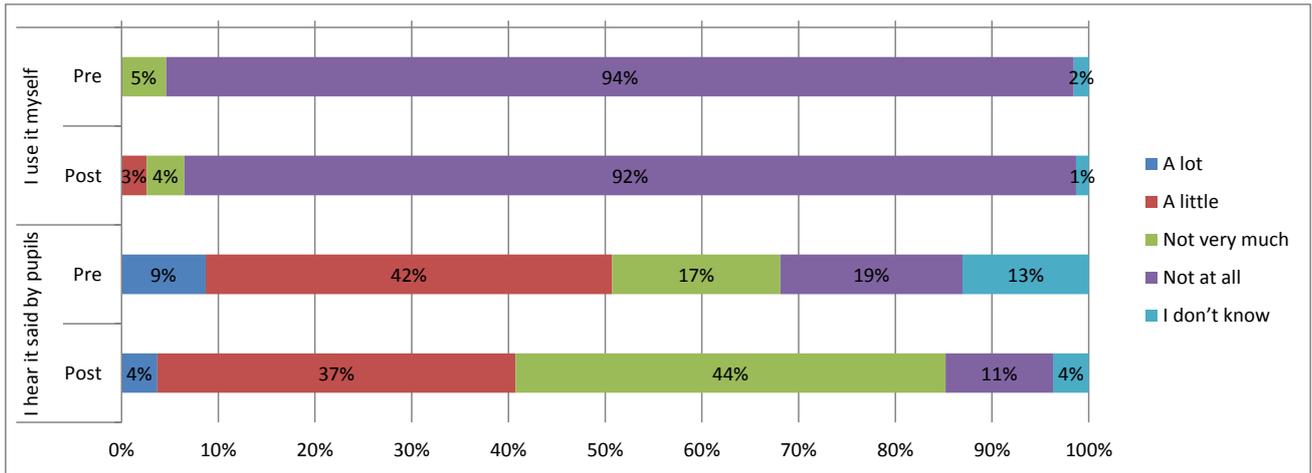
Q: In your school, are you aware of any homophobic or gender-based bullying or discrimination amongst pupils? This could include, for example, using the word gay as an insult (e.g. "You're so gay"), spreading rumours that someone is gay or excluding someone who identifies as LGBT, is thought to be LGBT, or has a family member or friend who identifies as LGBT.



The chart above indicates that reported uncertainty about homophobic or gender-based bullying or discrimination decreased (23% reported not knowing pre, compared to 6% post). It is hard to ascertain whether there has been more or less bullying or discrimination over the period, as increased awareness may lead to higher levels of reporting (a slightly higher proportion felt aware of 'a little' in the post survey). Conversely, slightly greater numbers also felt there was 'not very much' or 'none at all' (56% post compared to 49% pre).

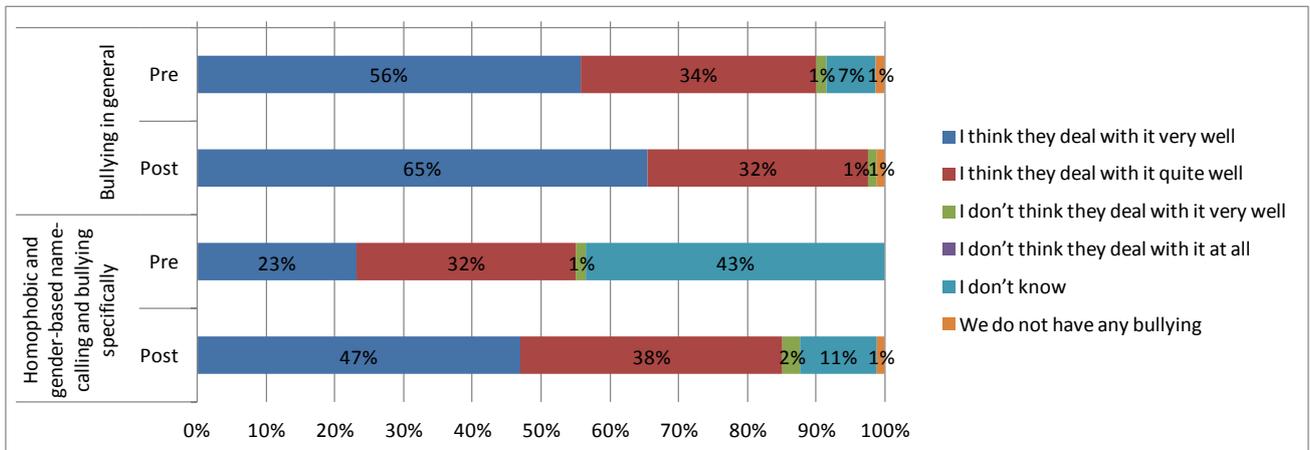
Q: The word 'gay' can sometimes be used to mean something is bad or stupid (e.g. "That's so gay"). Does this ever happen at your school?

There was little difference regarding staff members' negative use of the word 'gay': 94% said they did not use it before and 92% said they did not use it towards project end. Hearing pupils saying it differed somewhat more: 51% said they heard it 'a lot' or 'a little' pre whilst 41% said they heard it 'a lot' or 'a little' post; similarly, 36% reported hearing it 'not very much' or 'not at all' pre which increased to 55% post.



Q: How well do you think your school deals with bullying in general, and homophobic and gender-based name-calling and bullying in particular?

When asked how well they thought the school dealt with bullying, little variation was evident regarding bullying in general, as most people thought this was dealt with 'very well' pre (56%) and post (65%). Dealing with homophobic and gender-based name-calling and bullying specifically had greater variation, changing from 55% saying 'very' or 'quite' well pre and 85% saying 'very' or 'quite' well post.



Q: In general, do you think STAFF at your school do any of the following about homophobic or gender-based bullying?

Q: In general, do YOU do any of the following about homophobic or gender-based bullying?

There was little variation regarding specific approaches to responding to bullying, though in general more people in the post survey thought ‘most’ staff, and they themselves, would intervene if they witness this kind of bullying amongst pupils, encourage young people to report this kind of bullying, try to prevent this kind of bullying, discipline young people who bully others in this way, and try to look after young people who have experienced this kind of bullying.

Q: Do you think that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs (SEN) are any more likely to experience HBT bullying at your school?

Awareness of disablist bullying did not vary much between pre and post surveys: 58% thought that disabled and/or SEN pupils were no more likely to experience HBT bullying in the pre, and 59% in the post.

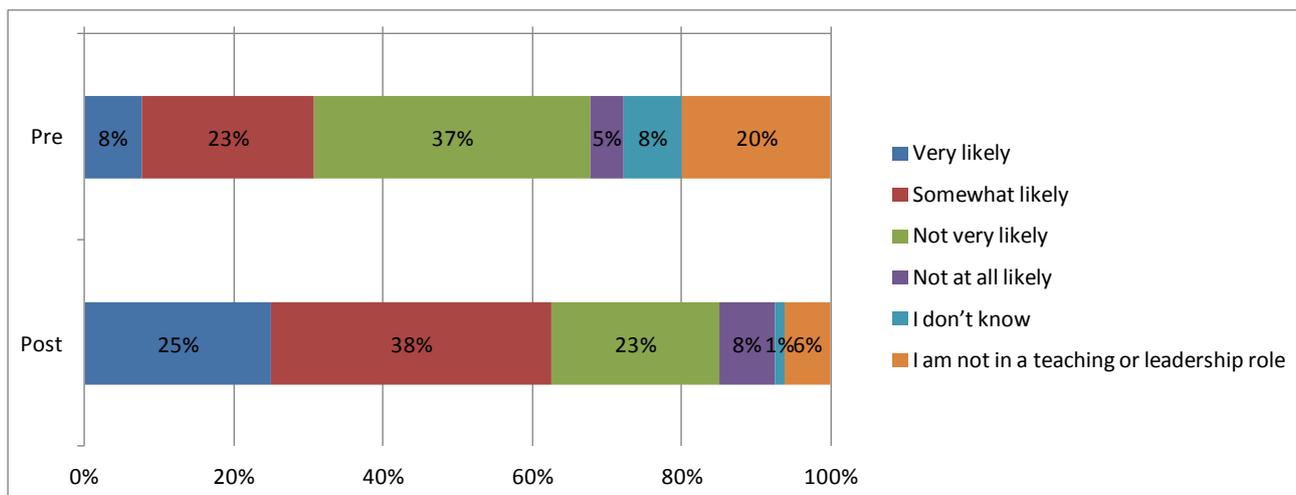
Professional practice

Q: Would you personally feel confident teaching (in an age-appropriate way) about LGBT identities or relationships?

Confidence levels varied somewhat between pre and post surveys: 53% felt ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ confident before whilst 68% felt ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ confident towards the end of the project.

Q: At the moment, how likely are you to include LGBT identities or relationships in your teaching or support of others’ teaching?

The chart below indicates that more staff said they would be likely to include LGBT identities or relationships in their teaching or support of others’ teaching than in the pre survey (63% said they would be ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ likely to include compared to 31% before).



However, there was still interest in training on LGBT identities or relationships: 58% said they would like some pre and 62% said they would like some post.

Similarly, there was increasing interest in resources on LGBT identities or relationships: 76% wanted some before whereas 81% recently said they would like some.

Overall, results from the 'post' survey suggest increases to staff knowledge and confidence about LGBT identities or relationships. Staff also felt their school dealt with homophobic and gender-based name-calling and bullying better than they had done, and planned to include LGBT identities or relationships in their teaching or support of others' teaching more in the future than they had prior to IEIE.

Primary school pupil survey

Profile of respondents

The pre and post surveys had broadly similar respondent profiles (shown below), meaning that although the respondents were not matched on an individual basis, the profile of respondents in terms of demographics was relatively similar.

Q: What is the name of your school?

School	Pre (%)	Post (%)
P1	30	42
P2	35	27
P3	34	30

Q: What year are you in?

Year groups represented were broadly similar across the two surveys, as demonstrated below.

Year	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Year 3	19	27
Year 4	25	23
Year 5	26	27
Year 6	30	23

Q: Which of these words best describes you?

Gender was relatively evenly spread across the two surveys, though it is interesting that of the additional open text responses provided (where participants ticked 'neither of these'), a relatively large proportion said 'tomboy'.

Gender	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Boy	47	50
Girl	47	45
Neither of these	6	5

Q: Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

No pupils self-defined as disabled or having SEN in the pre survey; a small number did in the post.

Q: Please tell us about your family.

In the pre survey, of the range of options provided, 80% reported living with their Mum and Dad; in the post survey 77% did so. Additional open text responses revealed that a number of children split their time between living with their Mum and living with their Dad.

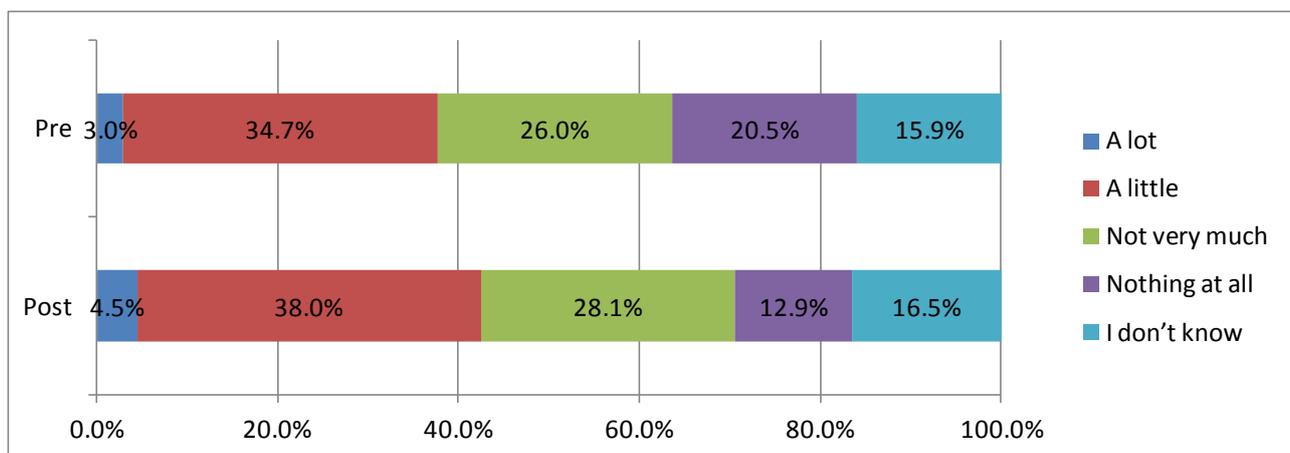
Q: How would you describe your ethnicity?

Ethnicity (from a longer list supplied)	Pre (%)	Post (%)
White British	85	79
White Irish	2	2
Any other white background	3	4
Mixed / multiple ethnic background (sub-categories combined)	3	4
Asian or Asian British (sub-categories combined)	5	8
Black or black British (sub-categories combined)	2	3

Perspectives on the school environment

Q: At your school, has your teacher ever talked about different families and relationships? For example, how some children have a mum and a dad, some have step-parents or step brothers and sisters, some children have two mums or two dads, some children have one parent, and so on.

As shown below, there was a slight increase in pupils reporting discussion of diverse families and relationships, from 38% stating 'a lot' or 'a little' pre to 42.5% stating 'a lot' or 'a little' in the post survey. There was also a slight reduction in those saying 'not very much' or 'nothing at all' (46.5% pre to 41% post).

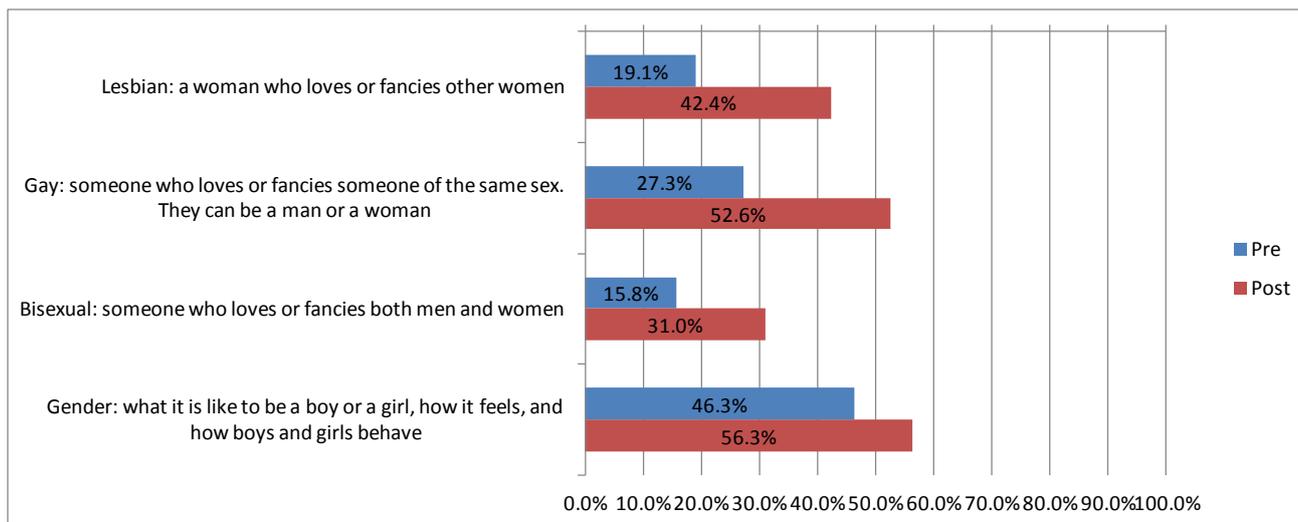


Q: What did you think about this teaching?

Responses to this teaching were largely positive: in the post survey 69% thought it was ‘interesting’ (compared with 51% pre) and 75% thought it was ‘useful’ (compared with 63% pre).

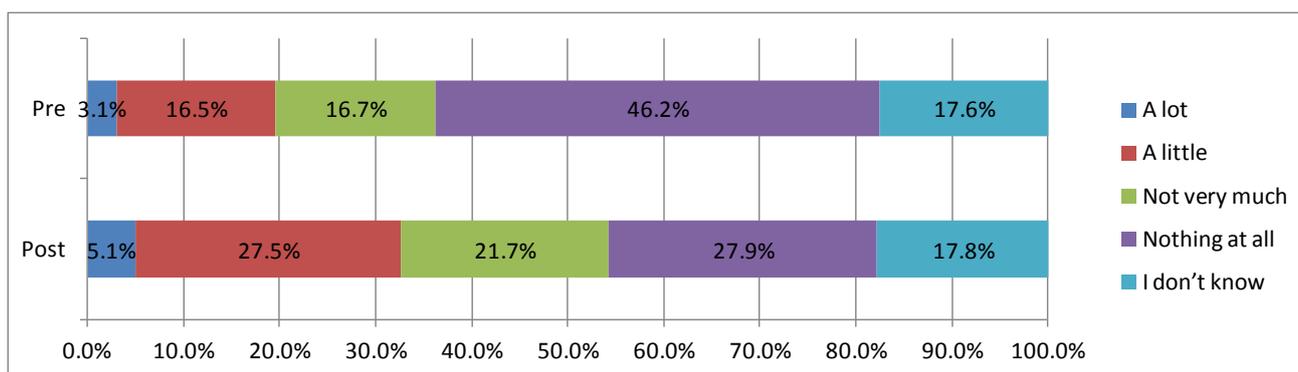
Q: At your school, has your teacher ever talked to you about the following words?

The chart below shows that there was a consistent increase in pupils hearing LGB identities or gender discussed at school, though gender was more likely to be discussed than LGB identities.



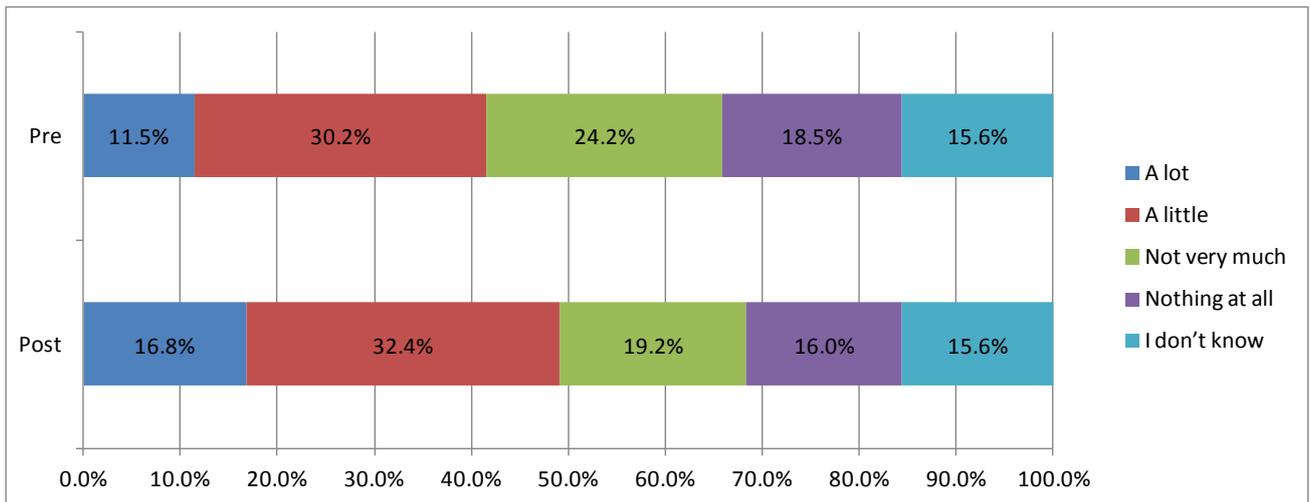
Q: At your school, has your teacher ever talked to you about homophobia, which means saying or doing something horrible to people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual?

The chart below indicates an increase in pupils reporting discussion of homophobia: 20% stated ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ pre; 33% stated ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ post. There was also a reduction in those saying ‘not very much’ or ‘nothing at all’, from 63% pre to 50% post.



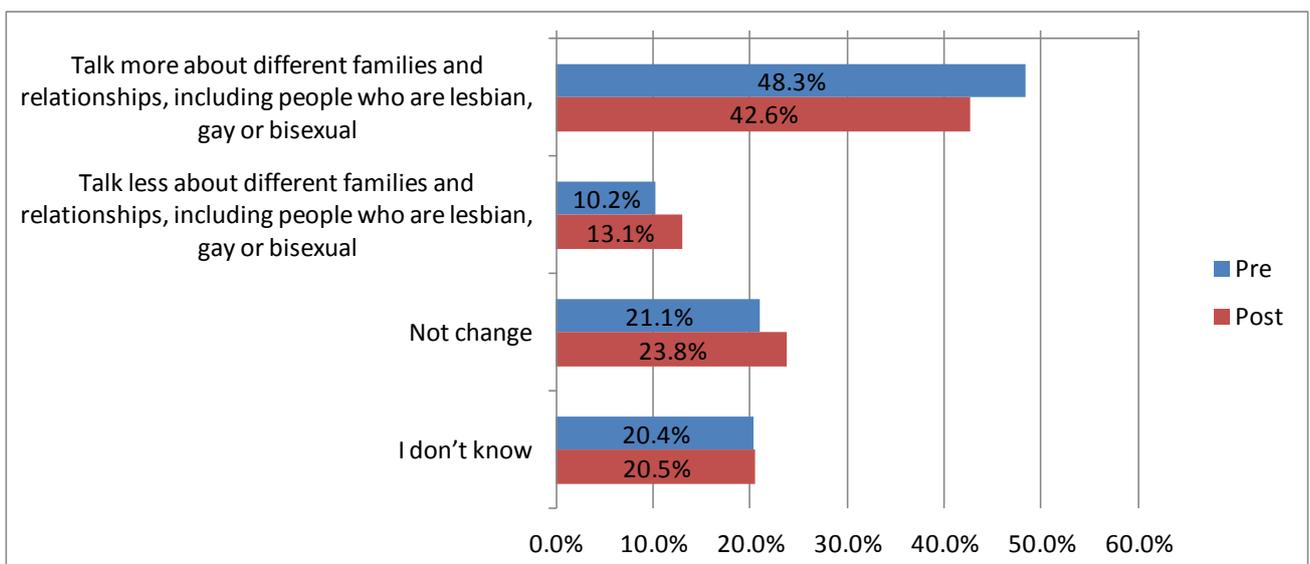
Q: At your school, has your teacher ever talked to you about bullying someone because of their gender? For example, this could include being mean to a girl because she is a girl, being mean to a boy because he is a boy, or being mean to someone because they do not behave like a 'typical' boy or girl.

Results were less different regarding discussion of gender-related bullying (see below): 42% stated 'a lot' or 'a little' pre, whilst 49% stated 'a lot' or 'a little' post. There was also a small reduction in those saying 'not very much' or 'nothing at all' (from 43% to 35%).

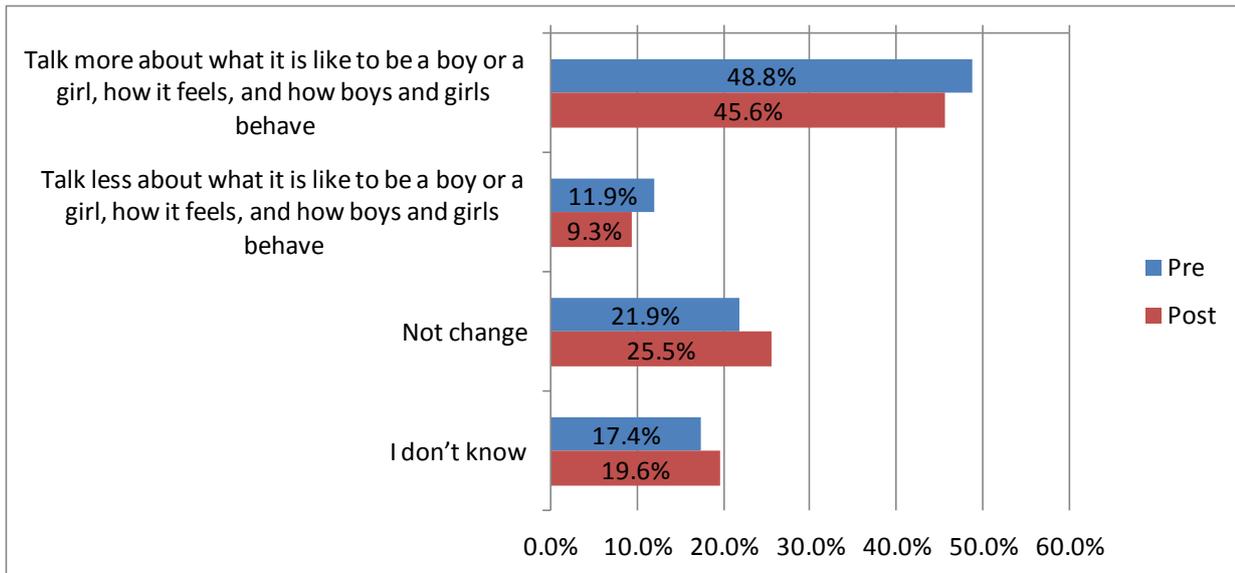


Q: In general, do you think your school should...

There was little variation on whether pupils wanted more discussion of diverse families/LGB relationships: 48% thought there should be more pre, and 43% thought more post.

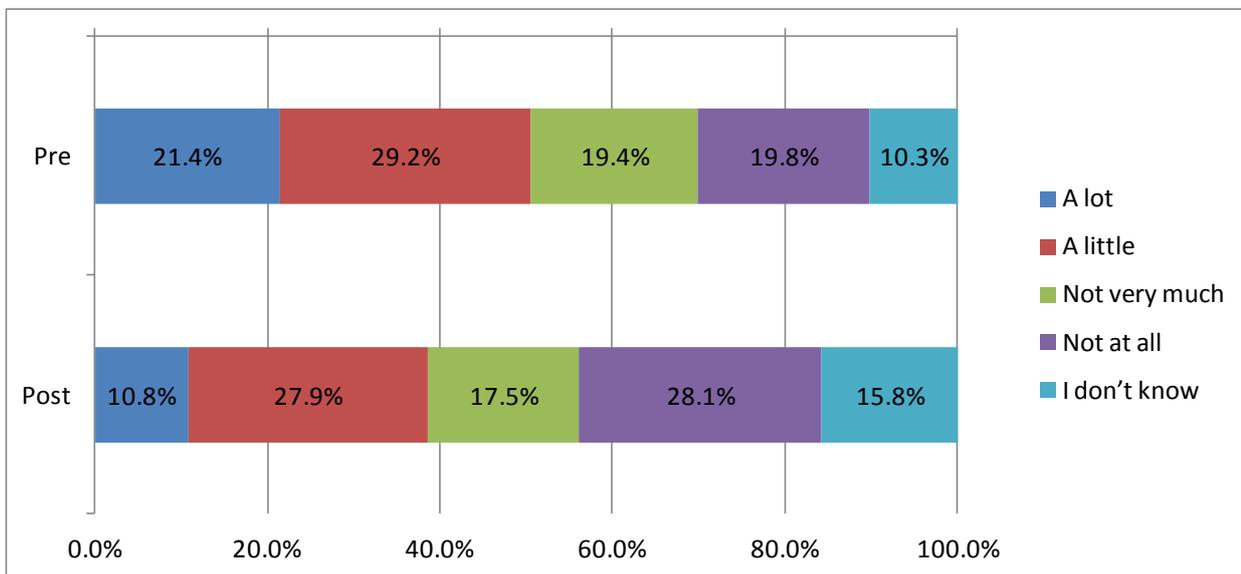


There was also little variation on whether pupils wanted more discussion of gender: 49% thought there should be more pre, whilst 46% thought more post (see chart below).



Q: In your school, are you aware of any homophobic name-calling or bullying? This could include, for example, using the word gay as an insult (e.g. “You’re so gay”) or spreading rumours that someone is gay.

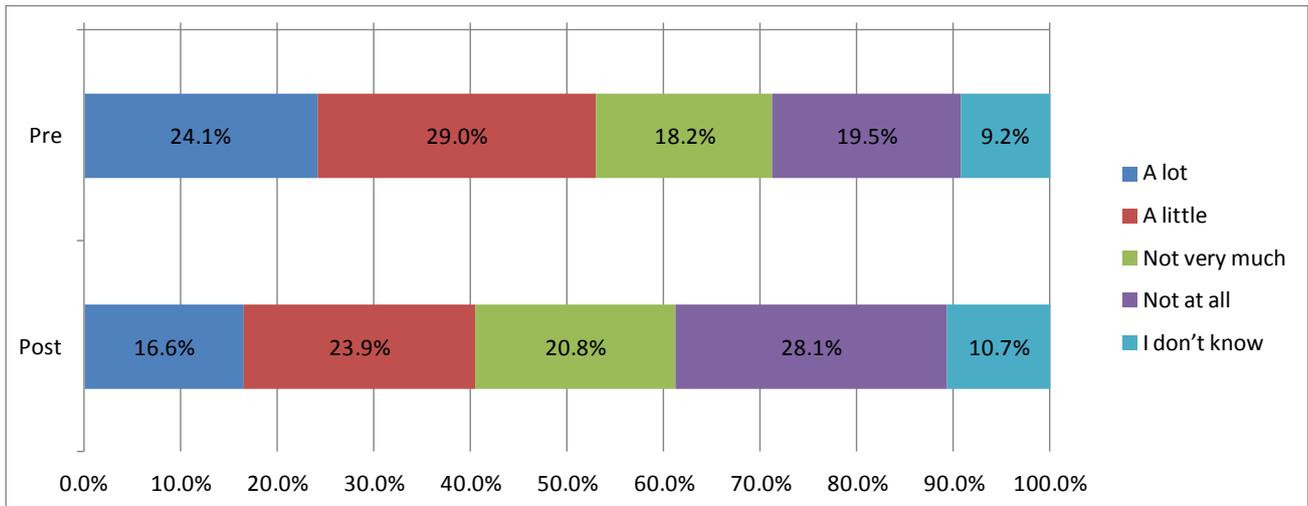
The chart below suggests a decrease in pupils observing homophobic name-calling or bullying: in the pre survey, 51% were aware of ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’, whilst in the post, 39% were aware of ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’. Slightly greater numbers also felt that there was ‘not very much’ or ‘none at all’ post (46%, compared with 39% pre).



Q: The word ‘gay’ can sometimes be used to mean something is bad or stupid (e.g. “That’s so gay”). Does this ever happen at your school?

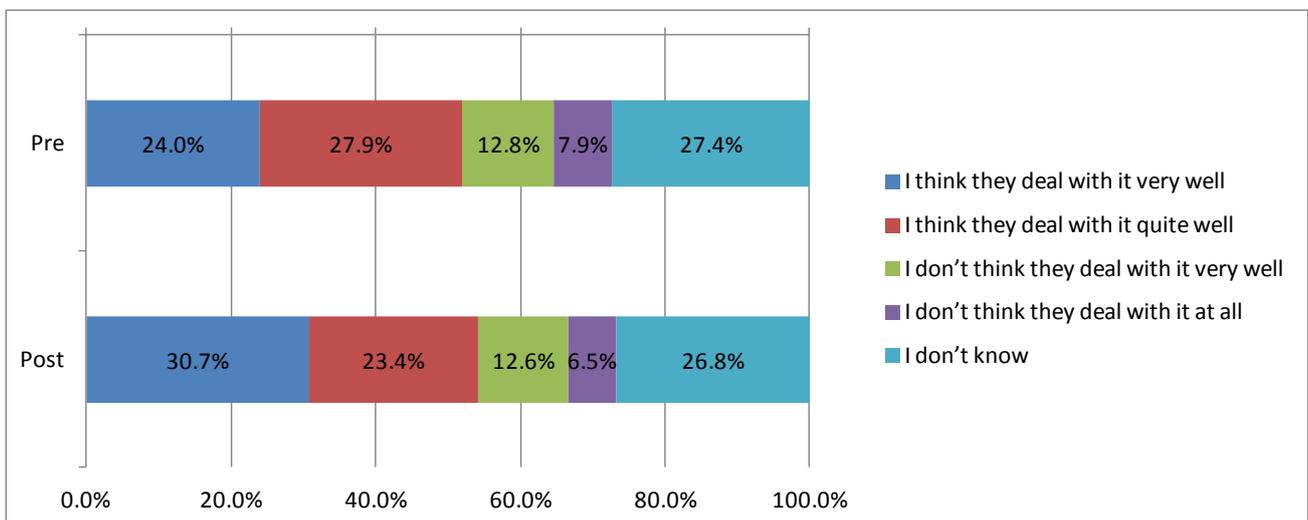
There was little difference regarding negative use of the word ‘gay’: 84% said they did not use it ‘very much’ or ‘at all’ pre and 83% said they did not use it ‘very much’ or ‘at all’ post. Hearing other young people saying it differed somewhat more (see below): 53% said they heard it ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’

pre' whilst 40.5% said they heard it 'a lot' or 'a little' post; similarly, 38% reported hearing it 'not very much' or 'not at all' pre, increasing to 49% post.



Q: How well do you think your school deals with bullying in general, and homophobic name-calling and bullying in particular?

When asked how well they thought the school dealt with bullying, little variation was evident regarding bullying in general, as most pupils thought this was dealt with 'very' or 'quite' well pre (69.5%) and post (70%). Dealing with homophobic name-calling and bullying specifically also had little variation (see below): 52% said 'very' or 'quite' well pre and 54% said 'very' or 'quite' well post.



Q: Does your school do any of the following about homophobic name-calling or bullying?

There was not much variation regarding specific responses to bullying: most pupils thought their school encouraged reporting pre (59%) and post (65%), and tried to look after young people (66% pre and 69% post). However, there was slightly more variation regarding prevention, where 56% thought their school tried to do this pre and 64% thought they did post. There was most difference regarding discipline: 39% thought their school did this pre, whilst 51% thought they did this post.

Overall, there was an increase in pupils hearing LGB identities, gender and homophobia discussed at school, though gender was more likely to be discussed than LGB identities. Fewer pupils observed homophobic name-calling or bullying and negative use of the word 'gay' in the post survey than the pre survey.

Secondary school staff survey

Profile of respondents

The pre and post surveys had broadly similar respondent profiles (see below), which means that although the respondents were not matched on an individual basis, the profile of respondents in terms of demographics was relatively similar.

Q: What is the name of your school?

School	Pre (%)	Post (%)
S1	3	0
S2	10	6
S3	13	20
S4	26	21
S5	18	15
S6	11	13
S7	18	24

Q: What is your role at the school?

Respondent role	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Member of SLT	6.5	8
Member of support staff	31	28
Member of teaching staff	61.5	64
School governor	1	0

Q: What is the main subject area that you teach?

Main subject taught	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Arts	12	13
Computing, design and technology or ICT	8	7
Citizenship, PSHE or RE	3	5.5
Humanities	31	30
Languages	6	8
Maths or sciences	27	25.5
PE	7	7
Social science	7	5

Q: How many years teaching experience do you have?

Years teaching experience	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Up to 2 years	10	8
More than 2 years to 5 years	15	13
More than 5 years to 10 years	24	27
More than 10 years to 20 years	35	35
More than 20 years	17	17

Q: How would you describe your gender?

Gender (from a longer list supplied)	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Female	69	63
Genderqueer	0	0.5
Male	28	33
Trans	0	0.5
Prefer not to say	3	4

Q: Do you, or have you ever, identified as trans?

Very small numbers had ever identified as trans.

Q: Please could you let us know your age.

Age	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Under 25	4	4
25-29	14	13
30-39	32	32
40-49	24	23
50 or over	22	21
Prefer not to say	4	7

Q: How would you describe your sexuality?

Sexuality	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Heterosexual or 'straight'	91	85
Bisexual	2	3
Gay	2.5	2.5
Lesbian	0.5	0.5
Queer	0.5	1
Unsure or questioning	1	0
Prefer not to say	2.5	8

Q: How would you describe your ethnicity?

Ethnicity (from a longer list supplied)	Pre (%)	Post (%)
White British	87	85
White Irish	1	1
Any other white background	4	3
Mixed / multiple ethnic background (sub-categories combined)	4	2
Asian or Asian British (sub-categories combined)	0	1
Black or black British (sub-categories combined)	1	0
Prefer not to say	4	7

Knowledge and awareness

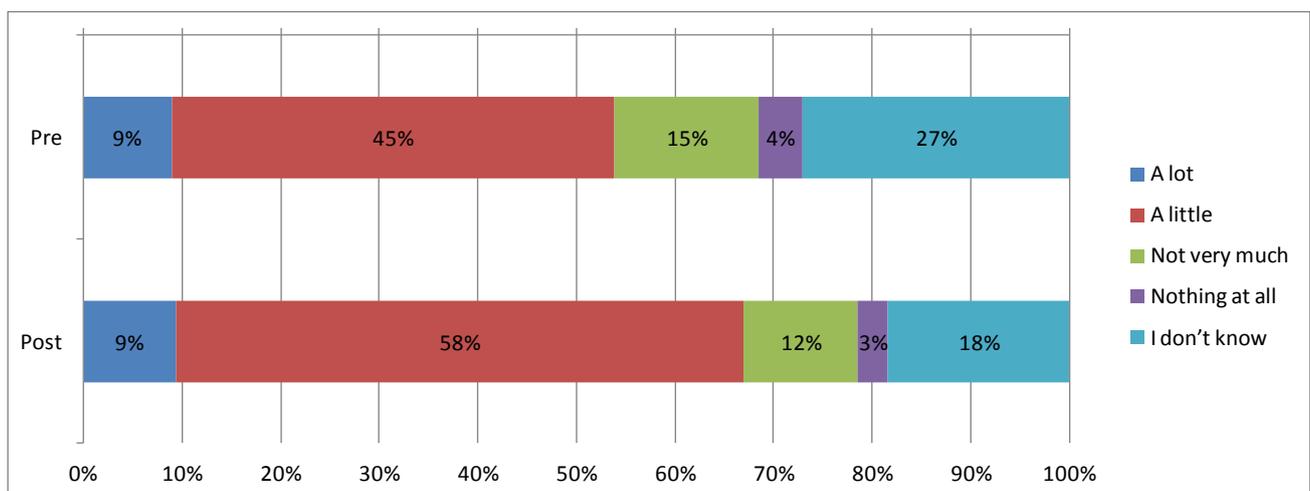
Q: In general, how much do you think you know about matters related to lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) identities or relationships?

Very slightly fewer people thought they knew ‘a lot’ towards the end of the project than at the beginning (27% compared with 28% pre); very slightly more people also thought they knew ‘a little’ (57% compared with 56% pre). In total, 15% thought they knew ‘not very much’ or ‘nothing at all’ both pre and post. When asked about friendships with LGBT people, results did not vary much as they were largely positive to begin with.

Perspectives on the school environment

Q: To your knowledge, has your school ever taught pupils about LGBT identities or relationships?

The chart below indicates that more people thought their school taught ‘a little’ (an increase of 13 p.p.) about LGBT identities or relationships towards the end of the project than the beginning (there was no difference regarding ‘a lot’).

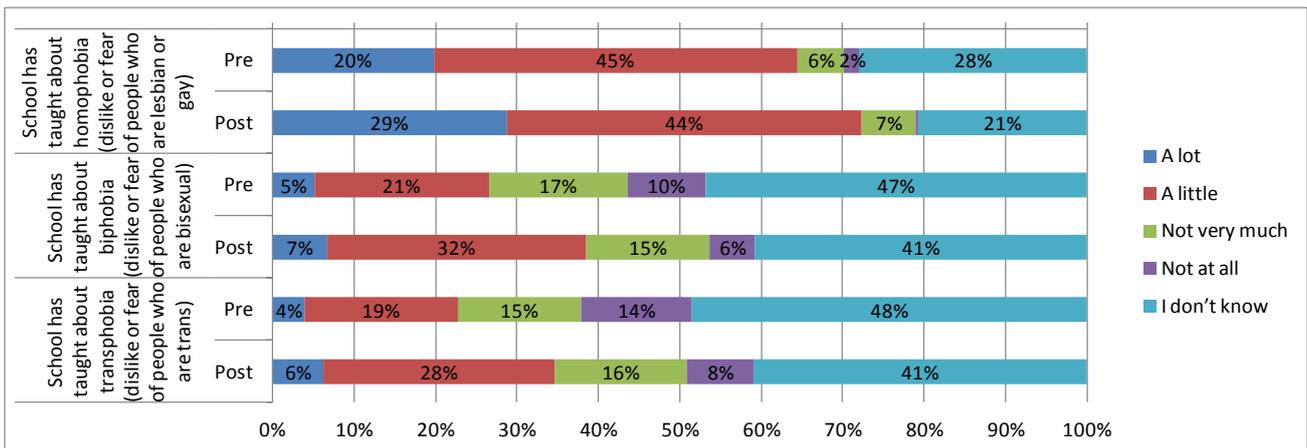


In terms of approaches to teaching:

- there were small differences in the numbers of people responding that their teaching was directive or informative rather than interactive (a decrease of 4 p.p.)
- fewer people thought that teachers involved were both well-informed and confident post-project (a decrease of 4 p.p.)
- somewhat more people felt school leadership supports staff delivering in this area (63% overall post-project)
- 63% thought external speakers seem to both know a lot and seem confident post-project, representing increases of 18 and 16 p.p. respectively, which might reflect greater contact with external speakers in the period.

Q: To your knowledge, has your school ever taught pupils about homophobia, biphobia or transphobia?

There were small but visible differences regarding teaching about homophobia, biphobia or transphobia (see below): more people thought their school had taught ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ about homophobia, biphobia and transphobia (increases of 8, 13 and 11 p.p. respectively).



There was little difference regarding whether people thought their school should include more about LGBT identities: 63% said more pre and 62% said more post.

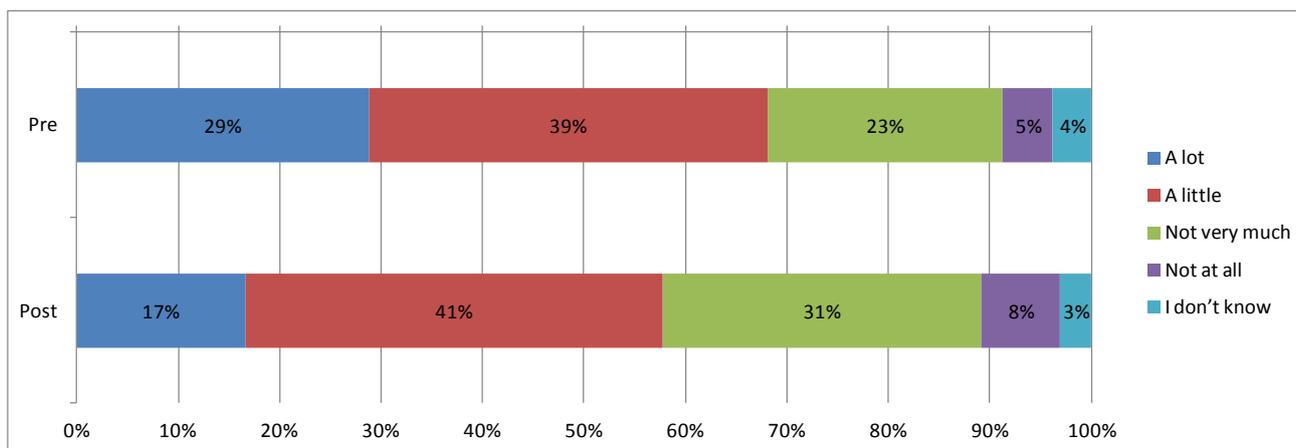
Q: In your school, are you aware of any homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or discrimination amongst pupils? This could include, for example, name-calling, threats, intimidation or violence because someone identifies as LGBT, is thought to be LGBT, or has a family member or friend who identifies as LGBT.

There was some variation regarding awareness of HBT bullying or discrimination: 44% thought there was ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ pre, and 39% thought there was ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ post. Similarly, slightly greater numbers felt there was ‘not very much’ or ‘none at all’ post (48% compared with 45% pre).

Q: The word 'gay' can sometimes be used to mean something is bad or stupid (e.g. "That's so gay"). Does this ever happen at your school?

There was little difference regarding staff members' negative use of the word 'gay': 93% said they did not use it 'very much' or 'at all' before and 94% said they did not use it 'very much' or 'at all' towards project end.

Hearing pupils saying the word 'gay' negatively differed slightly between surveys: 68% said they heard it 'a lot' or 'a little' pre, whilst 58% said they heard it 'a lot' or 'a little' post (see chart below). In the pre survey, 28% reported hearing it 'not very much' or 'not at all'; 38% reported the same in the post survey.



Q: How well do you think your school deals with bullying in general, and homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in particular?

When asked how well they thought the school dealt with bullying, little variation was evident regarding bullying in general, as most people thought this was dealt with 'very' or 'quite' well pre (86%) and post (90%).

Dealing with HBT bullying specifically had greater variation, changing from 59% saying 'very' or 'quite' well pre and 69% saying 'very' or 'quite' well post. However, more people in the post survey still thought 'general' bullying was dealt with better than HBT bullying.

Q: In general, do you think STAFF at your school do any of the following about homophobic or gender-based bullying?

There was little variation regarding specific approaches to responding to bullying:

- the majority thought 'most' or 'some' staff would intervene if they witness this kind of bullying amongst pupils (86% pre and 90% post)
- encouraging young people to report this kind of bullying similarly varied slightly: 85% said 'most' or 'some' pre, and 90% said 'most' or 'some' post
- trying to prevent this kind of bullying also varied slightly: 81% said 'most' or 'some' pre and 90% said 'most' or 'some' post
- disciplining young people who bully others in this way varied from 83% pre to 90% post

- trying to look after young people who have experienced this kind of bullying differed from 83% pre to 87% post
- the greatest difference was with regard to advertising groups or services that are for LGBT young people, which went from 35% pre to 52% post (though there is still room for improvement on this).

Q: In general, do YOU do any of the following about homophobic or gender-based bullying?

Similarly, there was little variation regarding their own approaches to responding to bullying: the majority said that 'most' or 'some' of the time they intervened (92% pre and 95% post), encouraged reporting (90% pre and 95% post), tried to prevent bullying (90% pre and 93% post), disciplined young people (89% pre and 92% post), tried to look after young people (89% pre and 93% post) and/or signposted young people (38% pre and 49% post).

Q: Do you think that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs (SEN) are any more likely to experience homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying at your school?

Awareness of disablist bullying did not vary much between pre and post surveys: 43% thought disabled and/or SEN pupils were no more likely to experience HBT bullying in the pre, and 40% in the post.

Professional practice

Q: Would you personally feel confident teaching about LGBT identities or relationships?

Confidence levels differed very slightly between pre and post surveys: 55% felt 'very' or 'somewhat' confident before whilst 57% felt 'very' or 'somewhat' confident towards the end of the project.

Q: At the moment, how likely are you to include LGBT identities or relationships in your teaching or support of others' teaching?

The data suggests that slightly more staff said they would be more likely to include LGBT identities or relationships in their teaching or support of others' teaching than in the pre survey (41% said they would be 'very' or 'somewhat' likely to include compared to 35% before). However, in the post survey, 38% still reported not being 'very' or 'at all' likely to include (it was 43% pre).

Interest in training on LGBT identities or relationships dropped from 67% pre to 53% post, which may be due to the fact that at least some of those staff had experienced training in the interim period. Similarly, there was decreasing interest in resources on LGBT identities or relationships: 68.5% wanted some before, whereas 59% said they would like some post.

Additional comments provided by a relatively small number of respondents (34) at the end of the survey varied. Whilst most were complimentary, some were more critical, and attest to the diversity of attitudes and abilities present within schools. Whilst some people found the input informative, for example, others felt it was too 'basic' for their needs. This presents clear challenges for those seeking to support such a range of staff in one sitting.

In summary, more staff thought their school taught ('a lot' or 'a little') about LGBT identities or relationships, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia towards the end of the project than at the beginning. Hearing pupils using the word 'gay' negatively slightly decreased in the post survey, and staff thought they dealt with HBT bullying better than they had previously, though they still felt they dealt with 'general' bullying better.

Secondary school pupil survey

Profile of respondents

Q: What is the name of your school?

School	Pre (%)	Post (%)
S1	7	5
S2	18	6
S3	12	28
S4	34	30
S5	4	7
S6	13	6
S7	12	18

Q: What year are you in?

Year	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Year 7	29	10
Year 8	23	15
Year 9	17	23
Year 10	18	16
Year 11	2	18
Year 12	7	6
Year 13	5	12

Q: How would you describe your gender?

Gender	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Female	52	57
Genderqueer	1	1
Gender variant	1	1
Intersex	1	1
Male	44	39
Trans	1	1

Additional open text responses included agender, gender fluid, intergender, and non-binary.

Q: Do you, or have you ever, identified as trans?

Relatively small numbers had ever identified as trans in terms of percentage (5% pre and 3% post), but this represents a relatively large student body in terms of numbers.

Q: How would you describe your sexuality?

Sexuality	Pre (%)	Post (%)
Bisexual	4	5
Gay	1	1
Heterosexual or 'straight'	86	84
Lesbian	1	1
Queer	2	2
Unsure or questioning	6	7

Additional open text responses included asexual, demisexual, heteroflexible, pansexual, and polysexual.

Q: Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

Small numbers of pupils self-defined as disabled or having SEN in the pre (7%) and post (7%) surveys.

Q: How would you describe your ethnicity?

Ethnicity (from a longer list supplied)	Pre (%)	Post (%)
White British	85	83
White Irish	1	1
Any other white background	3	3
Mixed / multiple ethnic background (sub-categories combined)	3	6
Asian or Asian British (sub-categories combined)	4	5
Black or black British (sub-categories combined)	4	3

Knowledge and awareness

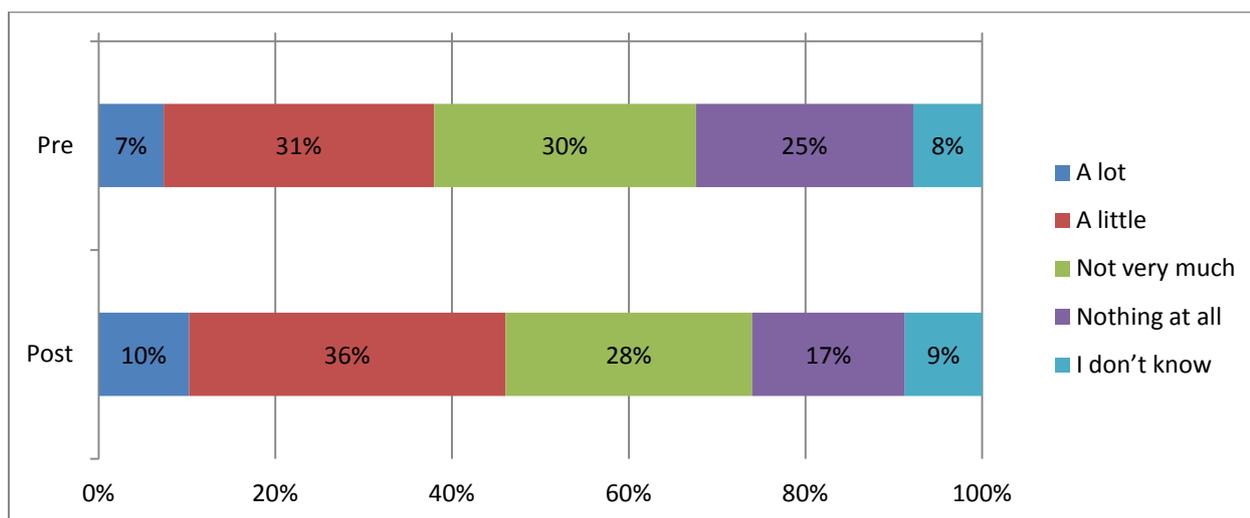
Q: In general, how much do you think you know about matters related to lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) identities or relationships?

Slightly more people thought they knew 'a lot' towards the end of the project than at the beginning (27% compared with 22% pre), with very slightly fewer people thinking they knew 'a little' (44% compared with 46% pre). In total, 25% thought they knew 'not very much' or 'nothing at all' pre and 24% post. When asked would they be happy to be friends with an LGBT person, results slightly increased, from 77% to 84% regarding lesbian or gay people, 76% to 83% regarding bisexual people, and 60% to 69% for trans people.

Perspectives on the school environment

Q: At your school, have you ever been taught about LGBT identities or relationships?

The chart below indicates that slightly more people thought their school taught 'a lot' or 'a little' about LGBT identities or relationships towards the end of the project than at the beginning (an increase of 8 p.p.).



Q: How and when was this taught?

According to pupils, the majority of this teaching was delivered within PSHE and/or SRE, though there was also some visibility within citizenship lessons, other subject lessons, school assemblies, and by external speakers. There was little variation between pre and post surveys. Teaching also appeared more often delivered within Years 7-9 rather than beyond.

A number of pupils highlighted the learning they had received from their school's LGBT group, for instance: *"We have a wonderful LGBT+ society run by students, from which I have learnt 100 times more than from school"*.

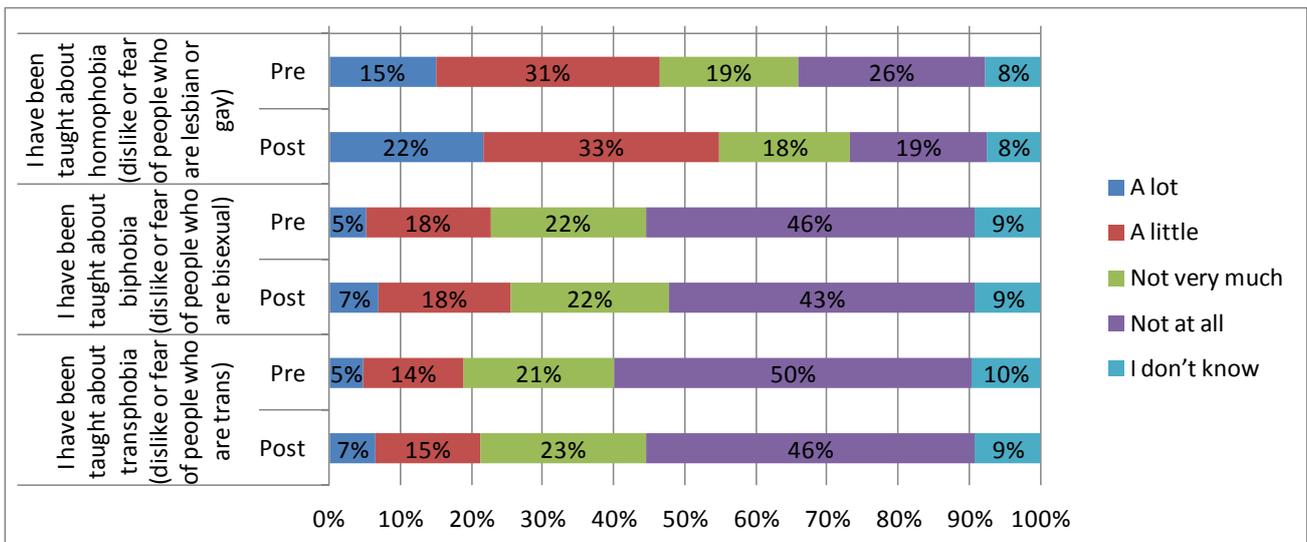
Q: What did you think about how you were taught about LGBT identities or relationships?

In terms of views on the teaching, there was little variation between pre and post surveys concerning school/teacher input (see table showing 'yes' responses below), though there was slightly more variation regarding external speakers, interest levels, and usefulness.

	Pre (%)	Post (%)
We were mostly just talked to	72	76
It let us talk about LGBT identities/relationships	40	40
My teacher seemed to know a lot about the subject	46	45
My teacher seemed confident talking about the subject	62	60
External speakers seemed to know a lot about the subject	41	47
External speakers seemed confident talking about the subject	44	49
It was interesting	50	54
It was useful	54	58

Q: At your school, have you ever been taught about homophobia, biphobia or transphobia?

There were small differences regarding teaching about homophobia, biphobia or transphobia (see below), with more people thinking their school had taught ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ about homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in the post survey (increases of 9, 2 and 3 p.p. respectively). There were relatively large numbers of people responding that biphobia and transphobia are still not taught about ‘very much’ or ‘at all’ (65% and 69% in the post surveys respectively).

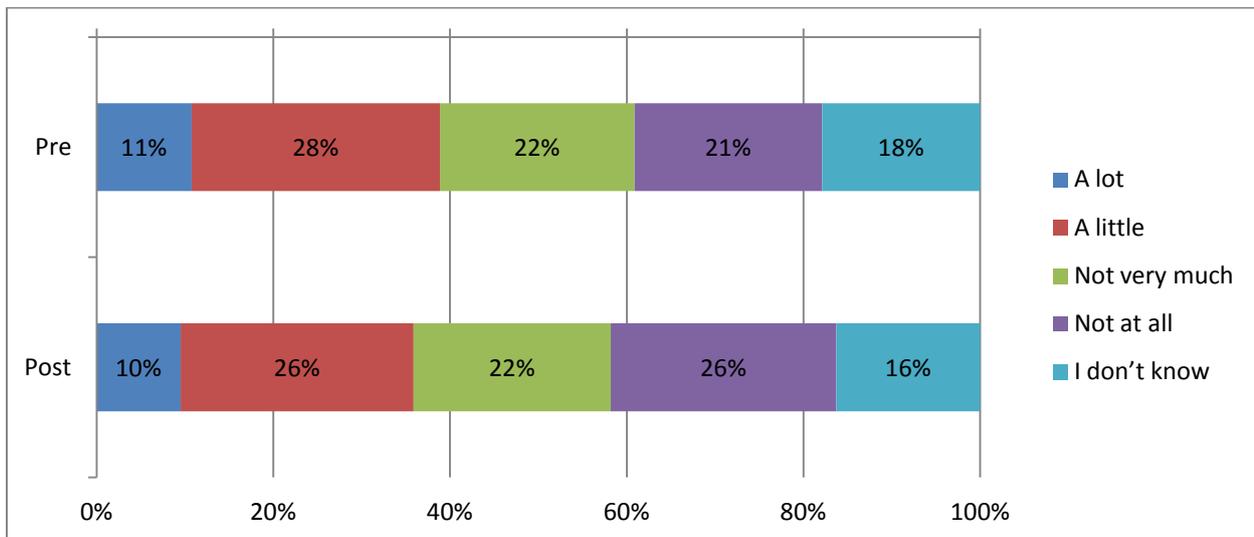


There was very little difference regarding whether people thought their school should include more about LGBT identities: 57% said more pre and 56% said more post.

Q: In your school, are you aware of any homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or discrimination? This could include, for example, name-calling, threats, intimidation or violence because someone identifies as LGBT, is thought to be LGBT, or has a family member or friend who identifies as LGBT.

There was very little variation regarding awareness of HBT bullying or discrimination (see below): 39% thought there was ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ pre, and 36% thought there was ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ post.

Similarly, slightly greater numbers felt there was 'not very much' or 'none at all' post (48% compared with 43% pre).



Q: The word 'gay' can sometimes be used to mean something is bad or stupid (e.g. "That's so gay"). Does this ever happen at your school?

There was little difference regarding pupil's own reported negative use of the word 'gay': 20% said they used it 'a lot' or 'a little' before and 17% said they used it 'a lot' or 'a little' towards project end. Hearing other young people saying it differed slightly more: 48% said they heard it 'a lot' pre and 43% post; 34% said they heard it 'a little' pre and 31% 'a little' post.

Q: How well do you think your school deals with bullying in general, and homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in particular?

When asked how well they thought the school dealt with bullying in general, there was little variation: 54% thought this was dealt with 'very' or 'quite' well pre and 56% post. Dealing with HBT bullying specifically varied slightly more: 34% thought it was dealt with 'very' or 'quite' well pre and 39% 'very' or 'quite' well post. Differences of opinion between how well people thought 'general' bullying was dealt with compared to HBT bullying were still clear.

Q: Does your school do any of the following about homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying?

There was little variation regarding specific responses to bullying:

- approximately two thirds thought their school encouraged young people to report this kind of bullying (64% pre and 67% post)
- slightly fewer people thought their school tried to prevent this kind of bullying (59% pre and 61% post)
- less than half thought their school disciplined young people who bully others in this way (46% both pre and post)
- similar numbers reported that their school tried to look after young people who have experienced this kind of bullying (47% pre and 45% post)

- the lowest responses concerned advertising groups or services that are for LGBT young people, with 30% thinking their school did this before and 39% thinking they did later.

Additional open text comments from some participants highlighted what they felt were weaknesses in current responses within their school:

“I think it is good that they’re trying to teach us about LGBT but the way they approach it is utter stupidity. Two teachers come into assembly and tell us about famous gay people, talk about how if you’re gay you will get bullied and how far the world has come in accepting gay people. Notice how all the topics are about GAY people. No mention of trans. Anyway I don’t appreciate any of the assemblies and if I was questioning my sexuality and gender I would not feel any comfort from that” (original emphasis)

“When talking about LGBT+ [people] in ethics and philosophy [the] information was stereotypical and limited... [it] did not include the idea of multiple sexualities and the information... was very one sided... [and] stereotyped them... Also, it was confined to one subject and certain assemblies... I have witnessed many LGBT+ bullying situations in which staff have been present and no action is taken. Staff members avoid this topic when it appears”

“I think my school should let more external teachers who are experts in this field come into the school and talk across year groups about this subject... a lot of teachers feel awkward about talking about it with students”

“Certain things are labelled as ‘girl things’ or ‘boy things’ which is completely stupid and wrong and derogatory and it’s not just students that label things like that, it is teachers too... and it needs to stop... I have trans friends who are constantly discriminated by EVERYONE and it gets me really mad that people decide not to use their correct pronouns because it is ‘too hard for them to change’ which is just really stupid and aggravating that people decide changing pronouns and names is harder than ACTUALLY BEING TRANSGENDER” (original emphasis)

“We’re basically taught as if there is a binary nature to sexuality, i.e. you’re either gay or you are not. The work on accepting and embracing that some people are gay and to ‘get over it’ is mostly good... but that’s as far as it goes. There is such little talk on transgender/transsexual identities, to the extent where most don’t know the difference between the two. As quite a traditional school, [my school] fails to accept that people are not born into one of two camps (gay or straight) and that not everyone identifies or has to identify with the gender they were biologically born with”.

Where there were gaps in people’s education, this could lead to confusion, and/or them having to seek information elsewhere:

“When my friends know about some of the sixth formers who are gay or lesbian they talk about it as if it is illegal and I never really know what to say. I do find it a little weird and I am a bit scared of people who are but I don’t think it’s bad. Also I don’t like how people make fun of them”

“As someone who identifies as LGBTQA+ it would be helpful to be taught about relationships etc concerning these orientations... It would also be helpful not only with understanding myself more but also my boyfriend who identifies as transgender. This information is currently not taught at schools and that means that I have to look in other places for the information that may not be as reliable or relevant to what I’m looking for”.

In summary, slightly more pupils said they were happy to be friends with an LGBT person in the post survey than in the pre survey, and thought that their school taught about LGBT identities or relationships slightly more than they had in the past. However, over two thirds suggested that biphobia and transphobia were still not taught about ‘very much’ or ‘at all’, though hearing other young people using the word ‘gay’ negatively reduced slightly in the post survey.

4. Partnership schools: Staff perspectives

In each of the ten partnership schools we conducted a semi-structured in-depth interview with the school's designated lead contact for the IEIE project, resulting in 11 participants (as one of the ten interviews was a joint interview with two participants). These interviews lasted between 25 and 60 minutes, and were conducted over the telephone or face-to-face depending on what was most convenient.

We provide here a description of the participating schools and their contexts, but to protect anonymity have not linked these with the school codes. There were three primary and seven secondary schools involved; some were known as academies, some as comprehensives. In one of the schools only the sixth form centre was involved in the IEIE project (and therefore the evaluation). Two were officially faith schools. School locations included inner-city Bristol, "leafy suburb" areas, the "commuter belt", and those described as "rural". In terms of pupil demographics, these were mixed. Some of the schools were known to be in areas of high deprivation, with many pupils from low economic backgrounds, whilst others were much more varied, "from the very poorest families to some of the most well off". A number of schools described their in-take as "very much white British" or "not very diverse really", whilst one had a large proportion of students for whom English was an additional language, originally "coming from various different countries... so a teacher in any average lesson could be expected to have children of five different languages all in the same room". Ofsted results also varied, from those in 'special measures' or requiring 'improvement', to those classed as 'outstanding'.

The school leads that we interviewed were from a range of professional backgrounds. Whilst the majority (seven) were teachers with a pastoral responsibility and/or in school leadership roles, a number (four) were in broadly pastoral/student support leadership positions but not from a teaching background themselves. Knowledge and expertise in HBT bullying and/or LGBT related issues varied; some had had contact or worked with EACH before, whilst for others this area was totally new to them.

Perspectives on activities undertaken

Project understandings and motivations to take part

Participants were asked about their understanding of the project and their motivations for taking part. Most people described the project in relation to HBT bullying and/or "raising awareness" about sexual and gender identities more broadly:

"I thought it was a training package to help support schools to create... more of an inclusive atmosphere within their school and educate students around homophobic bullying, transgender bullying, etc... how to sort of approach those conversations and approach that work so that it wasn't... something that was almost swept under the carpet" (S2)

"We took the driving aim to be... to raise the awareness of bullying around LGBT" (S4).

A range of specific motivating factors were identified, from supporting individual students, to contributing to Ofsted inspections:

“We recognised that as a school we weren’t supporting students who were, and have been in the past, talking about their sexuality or transgender [identity]. We also had a young boy who joined us, who joined us from primary school a couple of years ago, who decided he was transgender and I don’t think we were very well equipped as a school to support and help him, and we decided that actually we needed to get more information around how we can support students, and more training, because it was very evident... we had some staff who were extremely nervous about it” (S2)

“We have an issue... because we have a school that’s predominantly Muslim for which many of our students being homosexual or whatever it may be, for them it’s wrong... their family think it’s wrong... how do you balance that with a cohort of students who believe that they have been born gay or... this is the path that’s been destined for them, but they’ve got to fight against either other people’s religious views or their own... you think of the Equality Act and you think of the protective characteristics, well one of them is sexual orientation and one of them is religion and belief, so how on earth do you balance two competing objectives who have completely different views and ensure that everybody’s needs are met? ...So that was for me the real reason to do it” (S5)

“[It was] an area that we hadn’t really focused on, so it was a really good opportunity for us... I don’t want to say just because of Ofsted because it isn’t, it is much bigger than that... but obviously there is part of it that is an Ofsted focus, so that has to be a little bit on our agenda... and we identified that perhaps we weren’t supporting all the students that we should do” (S4).

A number of leads talked about their involvement in IEIE as more of a general matter of principle, stating that it was “worthwhile” and linked well with SMSC, ‘British values’, and other current (government and/or education) agendas. In some cases, helping pupils to understand (and respect) diversities in society was explicitly linked to their school’s ethos. An evolving social context more widely was also seen as a contributing factor:

“I think it was an understanding of a developing concern nationwide that we were happy to be involved in... it’s not taken second place but we’ve had big stuff over the years on racism and all those sorts of things and I think the homophobic aspects of things was a little bit behind... you would never see a teacher possibly react the same way hearing a child calling another one ‘gay’ as you would hearing one calling them a racist term” (S7).

In two (primary) schools, involvement with the IEIE project was linked to giving staff ‘permission’ to include certain topics or language in their teaching:

“Opening up gender issues, using the correct language like gay, lesbian, bisexual, not being afraid to use that language, and I suppose in some ways being given permission to use that language, because a lot of staff are worried about using any of that language because they may have somebody come in and complain... that’s what I thought it was [about]” (P2, participant 1)

“When I first came to the school I became aware that there was some inappropriate language being used from the children and not necessarily being tackled as clearly as I would like it to be by the teachers... some of our staff would have been nervous about

answering certain questions that might cause conflict with what they believed parents perceptions are, so the teachers thought that they were doing the right thing... but not actually really engaging with it as fully as I would have liked them to" (P3).

One interviewee also hoped that "unpicking" pupil prejudices was a way of responding to what they felt was "small-mindedness" amongst their parents.

Evaluation surveys

Participants identified a range of activities that had taken place during the IEIE project, which for the most part they found useful, including the baseline evaluation surveys. This was both in terms of identifying needs and raising awareness/opening up discussions:

"Because we were able to baseline survey our students and staff, so actually then you can be really clear about where your strengths are and where you need to do a bit more development, so for instance one of the things that came out of our initial survey... students said, actually we need some better signposting... so that's really interesting and really useful for us, so I found those surveys were great" (S6)

"I think the survey definitely asked some questions that they [the school] probably haven't really thought about and I think that as the trans issue... has become so much more present in the media... I think it really has driven that up in people's kind of awareness as well... The survey helped to draw attention to areas that we didn't necessarily know we needed to have some focus on" (S3)

"The data from the first student questionnaire was very interesting and that was valuable because it did open our eyes I think to the very wide range of newer forms of sexual identification and the language that students were using and the range of students that were identifying in interestingly new and creative ways" (S1)

"The survey... at the very beginning of the project opened up all those conversations... so I think all that was brilliant" (P2, participant 1).

Networking meetings

The partnership school networking meetings that ran throughout the project were also identified as useful in terms of being able to exchange ideas and/or compare progress:

"One of the things I have appreciated was the group that joined together staff from across different schools... hearing the issues that other staff were experiencing in other schools and trying to work those things through together... I found that very helpful" (S1)

"I have really enjoyed... where you get everyone together... that for me has been a really positive thing because I've enjoyed actually kind of understanding what other schools are doing, seeing what they're doing and what resources they're using... I feel really positive about how much work we have done in our school compared to some of the other schools in the area who are just kind of starting out" (S3)

“We’ve got different issues, so it’s quite interesting to also have that peer-to-peer support just to compare what we’re dealing with at different schools... I think sometimes you can become a bit isolated... and you think the only issues are these... and actually I think it’s important for you to appreciate that actually, no, everybody has different experiences and views and opinions and it’s not all the same... I think that’s quite useful” (S5).

For some, there was a sense that they felt part of a collective working towards the same goals, or being ‘prompted’ to share practice on this topic:

“I like hearing what other schools are doing, you know, it kind of just gives you some ideas, doesn’t it, and transferable things... I think it’s good to do it as a group of schools as well because... you do gain things from each other... I’m looking forward to the conference and hearing how everyone else has got on” (S6)

“I’ve been able to share practice and receive hints and ideas from other schools... although we do that a lot about other things... this would never be something that I would have thought to have approached another school about... that was really good the opportunity to do that” (S2).

Staff training and the provision of resources

One of the key elements that most staff talked about in some detail was the staff development input within the IEIE project. Most often this took the form of an explicit training session, but sometimes it was less formal awareness-raising input as part of a staff meeting or individual communication:

“[The meeting] opened up conversations... It was very collaborative, it wasn’t, you know, the teachers were sitting there and we’re going to sit here... it was a very open meeting... so it was a very level playing field, I think, and then [EACH] posed questions, like really challenged your thinking, so I think that was really crucial... It was a very warm staff meeting [and] it felt safe... for everyone to talk” (P2, participant 1)

“There were some members of staff that shared like a difficulty that they were having in the playground or in the classroom and they were like, ‘well what do I do here? Like what would I say? How would I do that?’ ... So they had that arena to talk about it as professionals, other teachers and support staff to talk with them, and also to have the expertise of [EACH] to say, ‘well I’d approach it like this, or you could do it like this” (P2, participant 2).

Whichever form the provision took, it was universally praised, summarised as “excellent”, “amazing”, “high quality”, “really impressive”, “powerful”, and “really useful”. As one participant described:

“Everyone was so positive about the input, absolutely blown away by, you know, how kind of positive it was, and inspiring... they [EACH] absolutely know their stuff” (S6).

Where training was voluntary within a school, this does not seem to have been as effective than other schools where the training was compulsory:

“I think [in future] I would insist [to school leadership] that the whole staff body received some training. I think that would probably work in our favour because I think even though

some teachers might think it's totally irrelevant to them, they'd be surprised... [EACH] know [their] stuff really well and it's a shame to kind of waste it on [a small number] of staff because we've got over a hundred that work here" (S3).

Participants also noted that ideally training involved all staff, not just teaching staff:

"What I appreciated is that [the Head Teacher] backed it, so it wasn't 'OK, well just teachers go', it was 'all associate staff need to attend as well as teaching staff', whether you were the cleaner, the cook, the teacher or [the Head Teacher], there was a requirement that everybody had this understanding because you never know who somebody wants to speak to, or might speak to... this isn't just about 'when I'm in RE I'll talk about this', this affects the child as a whole" (S5).

Less often, EACH was directly involved in working with school pupils (as opposed to school staff), for instance working with Year 6 pupils about gender stereotyping in one primary school.

The provision of resources (see further detail in Chapter 7) and/or guidance on curriculum content was also identified, alongside materials (such as posters and the EACH 'Dear Year 7 Me' film) to raise visibility within the school more generally:

"When [EACH] came to deliver the staff meeting [they] brought with [them] some lesson plans... and so certainly the Year 5 and Year 6 teachers have been using those lesson plans and embedding that throughout... It opened our eyes to buy different resources which we probably wouldn't have known because it's a hard thing to find out really, because they don't have a section, well they should probably, but there aren't any sections in Waterstones to my knowledge, so we got them all off Amazon" (P2, participant 1)

"In terms of PSHE we've got these... pilot resources that we're able to use in our lessons, so we've got some... Year 8 classes going on with those lessons... our PSHE lead has been using some of the materials, so really kind of threading that into PSHE" (S6)

"[EACH] suggested a book [That's so gay] for the school and I'd actually already heard of it and used it and found it absolutely outstanding and... several members of staff have borrowed it... so that was good" (S2)

"[I] asked [EACH] to come in and work with my PSHE leader to make sure that the SEAL programme that we were using throughout the school actually had appropriate opportunities built into it for teachers to deliver lessons where questions could be raised and where thoughts could be challenged" (P3).

One interviewee was clear that they did not see sexual or gender identities as a curriculum subject, but wanted to "weave" them in more naturally, giving an example of how they had talked about Alan Turing during an assembly, mentioning that his achievements were overlooked because of discrimination.

Though there were differences of opinion and experience amongst the leads, the evidence seems to suggest that schools engaged in a range of IEIE activities across the evaluation period.

Impact on professional practice

As well as understanding what activities had taken place, the evaluation sought to capture what impact these had had on staff practices, both formally in the classroom, and more informally around the school. Because of the ways IEIE has been embedded within wider anti-bullying measures in some schools, it is not always easy to separate HBT bullying elements from their wider work, but there is evidence to suggest that the IEIE project was at least an influence in some partnership schools, and more transformative in others:

“What EACH has done is made it [sexuality and gender identity] a priority... that’s the difference, I think, because there are loads of things that are on your list, you could have a list as long as your arm of what things you should talk to students about, but I think it makes it really heightened when someone is saying... ‘what about this?’, ‘come to this training’, ‘look at this resource’” (S5)

“I think probably because we are a little bit further along, I think for us it’s just about kind of reinforcing and having a renewed kind of emphasis as a staff team” (S6)

“I think it was quite useful to be part of a project that was... focused on a particular area. Sometimes it can be a bit wishy-washy when it’s like, ‘we’re just going to look at equalities’... because actually you’re telling us there’s nine protective characteristics we’ve got to look at, well which one? ...It’s been really good for me to be able to look at the different areas but actually to understand how big homophobic bullying is in itself” (S5)

“It’s raised the profile of things that we probably weren’t picking up and taking seriously enough... there was a buzz about it in terms of getting it right” (S2)

“[The training] made them [staff] think, that was the key thing... It’s opened up a conversation... which is I think the really positive part of it... We’re just at the very beginning of it... I think it’s certainly started a process for us that we didn’t have in place so that’s brilliant because we didn’t have anything, we didn’t have anything for LGBT at all... We’ve started discussing something that we never discussed before... definitely that’s been the outcome for us” (S4).

S2 reported that they would not have delivered assemblies about “different families, same love... some people are gay, etc etc” before involvement in the IEIE project. Another school also suggested:

“We’ve done assemblies and stuff, which we were doing before, but... it’s had more of a purpose... it’s helped us... create positive discussion” (S3).

Staff knowledge and awareness

Increasing staff knowledge and awareness about HBT bullying and/or LGBT identities was identified as a specific impact:

“I think it’s made staff sort of think about the children in the class a bit more, about what are their family set-ups, what are they coping with at home, what might they need to discuss,

what might they need support in, and I think it's made us just think a little bit more about those different family set-ups, so I think that's had quite an impact... I know I've definitely been thinking about my children in a little bit more close detail" (P2, participant 2)

"Staff awareness massively increased... personally myself I'm very confident in this area... [but] I think it's raised my awareness more about it in terms of trying to educate others" (S2)

"I think the awareness that we [the school] had, there were certain things we had to put in place, has certainly been increased by being involved with the project... particularly I would say in the transgender area... you wouldn't have heard the words, you wouldn't have seen understanding of the issues... that can impact on the kids and on their development and learning and progress [before]... I don't think people would have even considered that sexual preference or anything like that could have made that difference" (S7).

Sometimes awareness and support in relation to particular students' needs was also discussed:

"One of our bigger issues this year for possibly the first time has been more around gender identity than around sexual identity... we had a couple of students this year who were far more questioning of their gender identity and that raised a number of practical issues as well as just issues of understanding where that was coming from and what it meant... We've had some fairly in-depth email and kind of phone conversations with [EACH]... around this gender identity issue because we needed to pick their brains a lot and that was very helpful... that has been our sort of major gain... it was useful around gender identity versus sexual identity simply because that was presenting, that was what we needed" (S1)

"It kind of coincided for us, we had our first transgender student in school... we hadn't had a young [person] transition literally up from primary school as a transgender student [before]... [EACH] were great because the first person I phoned was [them]" (S6).

A perception that teachers respond differently to particular language use was reported by a number of schools:

"I think staff will pick that up now more than maybe they would have done previously but I don't have any evidence of that... When we did the survey one student referred to, without even thinking, 'this is so gay' and didn't even think about what they were actually saying and they were pulled up very quickly on that.... I think that [awareness] probably is the main thing that I'd say has developed" (S7)

"I think overall the staff are a lot more aware of terminology being used and a lot more aware of 'gay' being used in a derogatory way, so I think potentially there may have been... an increase in the amount of students that have been reported for using that term in a negative form... whereas before things might have just gone, not deliberately, but unnoticed just because of the busyness of the classroom... I think staff are a lot more aware of trigger words, especially when it comes to 'gay', that is one of the words that... has been highlighted as something that does trigger a very fast response" (S3)

"One of the students that I've been working with... he said he feels all staff should be trained in it and I actually said, 'well that's quite funny that you say that because actually it was

literally the day before we all had our training'... he says that he feels that more teachers pick up on things [now]" (S2).

Staff confidence

Impacts on staff confidence were also raised in relation to the IEIE project:

"I think specifically what we've got... because we've [had] another turnover of staff, we've got another group of staff who now feel... empowered and confident and supported" (S6)

"[EACH] offered to come in and support with the parents and things like that. I think that gained a lot of confidence within staff as well... to have that outside body come in, I think that's quite special" (P2, participant 2)

"Confidence in being able to, you know, have that conversation when a child says 'oh you're gay' or whatever... the confidence of staff about actually being able to approach that subject and say, 'that's not appropriate because...', rather than [just] 'that's not appropriate'. Through talking to one of our students who is... very passionate around the subject of homophobia... he says that one of the things that really annoyed him about that was that they [staff]... would say 'that's not appropriate', but they wouldn't say why it's not appropriate, so through EACH and through his comments, I was able to say to staff that actually some of our students don't get upset at what's been said, they get upset more about how we deal with it, and that's come through that staff now feel a little bit more confident to talk about and say that" (S2).

In one (primary) school this was linked to a particular group of staff, in that the participant felt the "biggest impact" had been on teaching assistants who had received training to increase their confidence. Before this they thought they had probably been 'afraid', but IEIE had signified their 'permission' to use "the language of sexuality". In another primary school, support staff were also specifically mentioned:

"When we first... needed to get the project off the ground, part of my role was to talk to a lot of the support staff... and some people were really, really negative... 'you're going to come and you're going to do this?', 'well I'm not going to do that, why do you want to talk about that?'... Some people had quite prejudiced ideas which I would have never, never have imagined... Now those same people are much more on board with it and could understand the importance of it... There is an impact, absolutely an impact, because we would never have found out about how people felt about it or about how actually you can change, through those conversations, people's opinions" (P2, participant 1).

In two primary schools, interviewees explicitly suggested that increased confidence as a result of staff meetings/training had translated to the classroom:

"The staff were absolutely empowered by the end of the meeting, they felt a lot more confident in terms of it being necessary to give an appropriate response to children and I think they also realised that they would fully have my support in anything that they said... I recently observed a lesson where there was absolutely no insecurity from the member of staff who was delivering the lesson and it was someone who I would previously have thought very concerned, very anxious, and she delivered a lesson extremely well and the children's

responses were so much better... there was a definite confidence and security in the way language was used and the matter of fact way the lesson was delivered and it just passed onto the children, who had no difficulty with anything really” (P3).

“Without a shadow of a doubt... without that sort of knowledge of language... [from EACH] I wouldn’t have felt confident as a teacher to have, you know, allowed that [discussion] to happen in my classroom, it just wouldn’t have happened, because you just don’t know where you stand as a teacher, you don’t want to put yourself in that vulnerable position... for example, [a pupil] had, she’s got an auntie that’s getting married and she’s a lesbian and before if she’d have said that I’d have been like, ‘oh that’s brilliant’, don’t really know how the school stands on talking about lesbians... try and keep it a bit quieter, whereas now it’s a bit more of a celebration... she wants to share it with the class, not a problem, let’s talk about it” (P2, participant 2).

School practices

In addition to impacts on staff knowledge and/or confidence, participants also indicated that there had been impacts on school policy and practice outside of the classroom, in terms of how they dealt with bullying and/or supported individual students:

“Staff were quite inspired about that after the training, you know, having a kind of [school] charter, so we’re going to have a little look at that” (S6)

“I guess it’s raised awareness amongst staff, not that you want to label a student, of course you don’t, but... I do wonder if that’s why she’s refusing to come to school... [which] is something then for us to work on... On a much wider school issue though... we realised that we have to change things in SIMS [School Information Management System] and exam entries... because last year we had a student who identified as male but on SIMS was female and we didn’t act quickly enough... in changing exam entries. So that’s a real learning thing for us and something that we know and we know now for our current student that we’ve got to make those changes” (S4).

One school said that they were now recording homophobic bullying and transgender bullying as specific categories within their reporting system:

“It’s actually more prominent in terms of the fact that we look at that [now]... I think we’ve only really started reporting it correctly probably since we’ve been part of the project” (S2).

Another school described how IEIE had fed into another related piece of work they were doing:

“We had already started a pupil-led anti-bullying policy and... that is led by somebody who works in the school... and [EACH] came in and met with the group as well and just challenged their ideas a little bit further and they made some adaptations” (P3).

A specific approach that a number of schools are adopting as a result of hearing about it during the IEIE project is the use of ‘safe space’ stickers for staff to demonstrate that students can approach them:

"We've also created, [EACH] talked about a sticker that we could use to almost put within classrooms or within offices that basically are a little sort of safe space... and it just means that this member of staff is really confident for you to come and talk to them and that if you sit down and say, 'Miss, I think I'm gay', they're not going to go, 'oh that's lovely, oh, oh, oh', and be worried. They're going to, you know, sit down and talk about it properly, and support and listen" (S2)

"We've had some stickers designed... it was something that [EACH] said, by having just some kind of simple stickers on laptops to say you're somebody that you can have a conversation with about LGBT, but actually we've had some designed that are, you know, 'talk to me about mental health', 'talk to me about anti-bullying', 'talk to me about LGBT', so we've gone for like a whole range of them" (S6)

"I've spoken to students about that, they think it's great, and I've spoken to some staff about it and they're like, 'as soon as you've got the stickers let me have one', because they want to support ultimately" (S4).

In P2, staff identified that they felt it was particularly important that the school's Head Teacher was supportive of the agenda, to give staff confidence "that if we do get any parents come in and complain, that he will stand and support [us]" (P2, participant 1):

"I think everyone's felt, knowing that they [SLT] are so supportive of what we're trying to develop in [our school], you know, everyone feels happy to be going forwards with it... I have to say as a teacher before we had [IEIE]... I would not have felt comfortable using the words gay, lesbian, heterosexual, and explaining that to children. I would not have felt confident thinking that parents were going to come back at me and then I would be questioned... [but] knowing that you have that [SLT] support and... [we're] absolutely fine to be rolling out these learning aspects about different family cultures and set-ups... it fills you with a lot more confidence in the classroom" (P2, participant 2).

Similarly, S6 identified the importance of leadership support:

"I think it's useful that they [staff] know... there's an organisation, they know that they can signpost young people to them as professionals... that's a good thing they know we're committed to it as a leadership team and they can make those connections with organisations like EACH... you do need a leadership team that kind of believe in that inclusive approach" (S6).

Safeguarding was also identified as a useful tactical 'lever' to engender staff support or engagement within school:

"People go into their little silos and their little niches... [but] the way in which I've been able to infiltrate... and I've chosen that word very carefully, because I think safeguarding is on the top of everybody's agenda and actually homophobic bullying and how somebody may feel as a result is a safeguarding issue... [so] that has been something that has allowed me to almost push the information... and say actually 'if we've got a child who has decided they want to commit suicide or they feel that bad because they're dealing with these issues and they have no-one to talk to, that's on your table, you need to know'" (S5).

One of the ways in which IEIE was thought to have influenced school practices was in encouraging or facilitating signposting, for example S2 have an 'equalities board' that displays "outside agencies that people can contact... if they are questioning their gender or their sexuality or if they've got family members that are in the same position". Another participant also described:

"We felt we needed to... be able to point them [pupils] towards appropriate help and support external to ourselves where we were limited... so that those students felt properly supported... We made sure that we were linking students properly to those provisions, which was good" (S1).

Participants were asked to reflect on any differences they observed across IEIE activities, or their impact within their school. Gender identity was commonly identified in that participants felt less 'familiar' or 'comfortable' with this as a subject area compared with sexual identity:

"Certainly trans was the thing that people are more concerned about... it's just less familiar. One of my colleagues has, and I honestly don't know whether they identify as male or female because I just don't know who the student is, they said that we're so quick to say 'come on now girls', 'come on now boys', and she's really had to think in lessons about that. She was really worried about 'what if I just slip into saying that?'" (S4)

"It's quite a tricky thing for staff to get their head around. They don't have any problem at all with honouring and respecting students' wishes in the way that they're spoken to, etc. They certainly have no problem at all with students not identifying with classic binarised gender definitions, in fact quite the opposite, there were plenty of our teachers saying, 'I spend large chunks of my teaching challenging students over classic gender identifications and encouraging them not to feel that they need to conform to classic gender identifications' [but] they didn't see why that necessarily corresponded to somebody then objecting to the use of words like male or female, 'you can be a female and not like any other female, what's the problem? Nobody's saying you have to wear to dresses, nobody's saying you have to do x, y and z, you know, you can dress how you like, you can play what sports you like, you can mix with who you like, that's fine, it doesn't stop you being a girl'. So that sort of slight mismatch in terms of people reconceptualising this, or at the very least saying, 'OK, I'm not sure I quite get it, but I can now understand enough to feel I can respect that this is your wish and therefore that's OK, we can honour that and do our best to make you feel comfortable and not undermined by the language that we're using'" (S1)

"I've been a pastoral leader for... ten years here and prior to that elsewhere and... we would never have identified somebody, or try to identify somebody, as transgender, but we seem to have, now I'd say we've got, that I'm aware of... three or four students now already who we are starting to work with as transgender students" (S7)

"I think staff really don't have much experience or knowledge, to be honest, when it comes to gender reassignment, or even a child, for example, who decides 'oh actually Miss this is how I'm beginning to feel'. I think that's a much harder area to tackle and... harder for us to provide support... the new concepts such as gender fluidity and things like that... I think staff find it quite uncomfortable, more so than talking about being gay or straight... because I

think it is that thing about actually 'well it's beginning to affect my belief system now, do I believe that you can be gender fluid or not?'" (S5).

Another potential area where interviewees saw differences was in relation to religion. One school lead felt that their faith school status had been handled "sensitively":

"I think [EACH] really, really carefully and cleverly explained why we needed to teach the children this, because obviously some members of staff have religious views and that's absolutely fine, but [they] really cleverly explained why we need to expose every child to this, and just that explanation, I think, helps to open people's minds, actually we do need to expose them to it so they're not shocked in the world when they go into the world and they meet someone who's gay or lesbian or... something that's different to their family life, so... they have some knowledge of it, even if they might not experience it" (P2, participant 2).

However, another lead felt that the needs of their religious students were not being met. They said that this was not necessarily because of lack of input from EACH, but because of the challenges of their particular environment:

"I think the difficulty that we have... [is] there are often organisations that support you if you're gay and organisations who support you if you're religious... [but] what we don't have are institutions that really tackle being Muslim and being gay... and actually Muslim, gay and young perhaps... I think that information and those skill sets and where I can signpost, that was definitely lacking... If I have a young boy who comes to me and says, 'Miss I'm struggling with my identity, I'm really struggling with being a Muslim boy and I'm struggling with my sexuality', where can I give him support? ...Where can I send him where he can be both... if that's what he wants to do... And that's the challenge that I faced and I think that's a challenge that my staff still face... it's not that they [EACH] didn't give you enough, I think it's not enough of what I need... I was very happy with what I got, I just think maybe my demands are more than what they could provide" (S5).

Elsewhere, staff felt that religious pupils could have their awareness raised, even where this was at odds with their family's views, though it was noticeable that this was within a primary school setting which might have made it 'easier' than the context above:

"It's not healthy just to have one viewpoint and obviously that's their chosen religion, but they should know... I can't imagine growing up not having an awareness of stuff like that... I've got two children in my class that are strict Muslims, I think their eyes have been opened massively. I mean they started with [a] literal look of disgust and the words of, 'well that's strange', and now when we talk about it they're a lot more at ease... one of them's beginning to ask questions, but she's exposed to different family life situations and not just a singular sort of way of looking at life and I think that's really important for particular children like that that are being very sort of honed in on one aspect of life" (P2, participant 2).

Interviewees were asked how much they thought IEIE had been adopted as a whole school approach in their setting. The majority thought that it generally had, though often with some way to go to achieve whole school impact:

“I think that it is already a whole school initiative in that we made training for teaching staff compulsory. Once we have the resources from the project we will look at introducing them through tutor time and so all students will engage in discussion... it will be[come] part of what we do” (S4)

“It is... in the sense that we have a strategy... as a whole to create a safe and welcoming and honest culture, and having staff who feel comfortable with the issue... have students who feel confident to be able to talk to somebody if they need to, have a culture in which anybody who speaks out of line should expect to be challenged” (S1).

The primary schools might have found it somewhat easier to embed a whole school approach because they were smaller than the secondary schools involved:

“It has been a whole school initiative, absolutely, because I think every member of staff has, for want of a better phrase, signed up to it” (P2, participant 1)

“It’s very much a whole school approach. It starts in Foundation stage, goes right through to Year 6” (P3)

“With our approach, I would say, we’re all sort of talking with each other, communicating, so we have the same approach, we’ve got the same resources... [and] support networks with... senior members [of staff]” (P2, participant 2).

It was argued that a whole school approach is more effective than isolated curriculum provision, echoing other research elsewhere (e.g. Formby and Willis, 2011; Mitchell et al, 2014):

“It shouldn’t just sit in a PSHE lesson because that isn’t going to have a massive impact because actually you have to sort of live and breathe that, and feel it, don’t you. It’s about the ethos of the school, you know, if children feel safe to come, you have good attendance, and if people feel safe, they behave better, and if they feel supported and all of that... they learn... [and] they achieve. So all of those things link, don’t they, and so it has to come, it has to come through everybody” (S6).

Though it is not possible to ‘prove’ that IEIE caused any changes in professional practice, the school lead data does suggest that having dedicated support and guidance was thought to increase staff knowledge, awareness and confidence, which in turn impacted upon wider school practices.

Impact on the school environment

Participants were asked if they could identify any ways in which IEIE had impacted directly on pupils. One school felt that this had not yet happened, but around half of school leads were able to suggest some, albeit sometimes limited, ways in which IEIE had impacted upon pupils. This included increased awareness levels and willingness to engage in open discussion:

“It’s definitely prompted some engagement from the students, the student body. It has publicised this area and... the students have really kind of taken on board that this is an issue, well it’s not even an issue, that it’s an area that we need to be aware of” (S3)

“It’s just a more open classroom about stuff like that. The children aren’t afraid to ask questions, whereas before I think they were a lot more closed, they didn’t want to say [lesbian]... their ideas already are changing. We still need to do more work on it because it takes a long time to change things that have been told to them at home, but I think that’s been the biggest impact on the children so far... They feel confident in asking questions and they’ve got the arena to do so, that safe space” (P2, participant 2)

“The student council have been much more involved... so I think that’s quite a shift for us, that we’ve got a group of kind of student leaders who have been involved... So I think our student leadership is much more aware than it ever would have been through our involvement with EACH” (S6).

A specific way in which IEIE was said to have impacted upon pupils was through school-based LGBT or equality groups. Some of these were already in existence, but had developed further through links with IEIE, whilst others were newly established during the period:

“The equality group sprang completely out of that [baseline] questionnaire. I had so many sixth form students come to me after that who said ‘why didn’t we do this when I was in Year 9?’... [They have] set up this equality group as a result... and more and more students are actually coming out... I think there’s a kind of a difference that ‘oh they’re giving me this questionnaire’, and ‘oh it’s something that they can actually talk to somebody out’... I think it’s definitely had a major impact here... At the moment they’ve put [LGBT history month] posters all around the school... I’ve had students come to talk to me about that... That was completely their own thing, they came to me to ask could they and I was like ‘of course you can’” (S4)

“I think what has been a positive is that... we have publicised that [equality group] more, that’s had a bigger uptake” (S3)

“Really recently [we] have set up an equalities group within the school... It literally came about because I had one or two students who just seemed to be kind of gravitating towards me and talking about things... I just literally approached them and said, how did they feel about meeting sort of regularly, maybe as a little group so that we could start talking about equality... They came up with the idea about the [equality] board and information and the posters. They wanted to put more posters up around school so that students didn’t have to go and talk to somebody, they could find information of where to go for help or support from others without having to have a conversation” (S2).

One lead discussed the role he thought such groups could play in validating particular students’ identities (as opposed to the more practical issues that he felt responsible for):

“[If a student is] struggling more personally and emotionally... they’re far more likely to talk to their peers, and in the sixth form to be honest I would expect at least nine times out of ten for the contact routes to be, ‘OK, I know there’s a group, I know that group meets then, they’ve stood up in assemblies and waved at me, I know what they look like, I would maybe talk to somebody [there]’, or even just... find the friends who are sensitive and talk to them... If we are making sure that this group of people’s issues are well known, we’re presenting them in a way that validates them... [but] the gender identity questions were more obviously going to

land in our lap because they required actual kind of changes of practice or policy from teachers” (S1).

Interviewees also commented on the numbers of students willing to be ‘out’ about their identities within school. Though this cannot be linked directly to IEIE, it does suggest that more inclusive environments, over time, are understood to foster more ‘open’ students, as these examples from S6 illustrate in relation to both gay and transgender identities:

“Yesterday they had another student council meeting and EACH have their [IEIE] conference coming up and they’ve asked some students to come, so it was put to the student council who would like to come... and like everybody’s hand in the room went up... It was just a moment of loveliness because one Year 8 girl, she said, ‘well actually I just want to go because I am gay’, and... not one murmur, funny look, you know, nothing... and I thought, ‘gosh, what a long way we’ve come if our students can just say that and there’s no reaction’... so I was really pleased about that” (S6)

“Our students... were made very aware from the student that they were transgender... [and since then] we’ve had a few more students who felt safe to come out and say, ‘actually yes, I am transgender’, so that is definitely much more I think apparent and talked about than it was a few years ago. so I think that’s a good thing” (S6).

In S4, they were perhaps less far on in facilitating such an ‘open’ culture:

“I wouldn’t ask if someone was straight so you don’t ask if someone is gay but a lot of time they [pupils] are giving you hints, but not actually saying anything, that’s what I find in my role. Not in the classroom but in my office... that’s certainly increased I would say... there’s more hinting” (S4).

Though most interviewees felt it was too early to document wide-scale changes to the school environment, there were tentative suggestions for how IEIE might have contributed to (elements of) their school’s culture or ‘atmosphere’.

Reflections on the project

Project strengths

Participants were asked to discuss specific strengths of the IEIE project. Often this was related to its flexibility in identifying and meeting the particular needs of individual schools:

“They’re very good at being bespoke and tailoring it to what you need, so it wasn’t a kind of, one size fits all... the fact they can be flexible was really appreciated” (S6).

Attention was also drawn to the particular expertise of members of EACH staff who were able to draw on their experience of teaching to provide sensitive, appropriate and non-judgemental support:

“I’ve been thrilled to bits with the work [EACH] have done... it was so appropriate and it was, you know, just relevant and challenging, but absolutely safe” (P3)

“[EACH member of staff] has a tremendous sensitivity... because [they have] been a teacher, so both the realities of being a teacher and working with young people, but also to the pressures of being a teacher and the things that actually matter to you, situations you will find yourself in... I was confident that staff would buy-in because [EACH was] acknowledging the difficulties that ordinary staff might face in thinking through things... It’s an area where it would be very easy to be very preachy and... make everybody just feel bad and that’s not the case” (S1).

The level of ongoing support was also appreciated:

“The communication from EACH themselves has been exceptional, and you know the constant kind of, ‘how you getting on’ type thing, and actually telling us where to go to get more information” (S2)

“I know if we needed [them], [EACH] would come and help support... we can phone [them] at any time if we want any support or help and [they’ve] always been very genuine in that and that’s always been on the table” (P2, participant 1)

“If I emailed [EACH] tonight and said, ‘oh my god this happened in my classroom today, I need support on this, what would you do?’ [they] would email me back... I know that ... I’ve been really impressed” (P2, participant 2).

Project limitations

Often, however, without being asked, participants identified a weakness in the project relating to timescales, though it was sometimes recognised that this was out of EACH’s control:

“[Staff training] needs to come much earlier in the process... It’s the timelines really, because everything else is there, but I think the timings are not right because it would be great to have the post survey about June... the timings are just too short” (P2, participant 1)

“The only thing... was the length of time... it was so short between survey first and final, that does it really provide any quality data... I think if it had been longer we could have had more opportunity to do things... you didn’t have much chance to do things and find out ‘oh we should have done that that X school did’... I think I would be able to assess the impact far greater, better, if we had much more time to develop it, but I do appreciate that that is the constraints of government on that” (S4)

“Proposals had to be put together very fast at a time of year where everybody was already exceptionally busy... it was just the nature of when you get government approval to do a thing like this suddenly everything has to happen magically... then you just prioritise and think, OK, so within this period of time this is what can be done, but that could have been more strategic, given more time and a sensible period of time... Because I know how ridiculously busy and how many other agendas we’ve got on the go here, I wasn’t being particularly optimistic about how much we would manage to do in that period of time” (S1).

Timing issues were also raised more generally in relation to how long change can take to occur:

“OK, we know this agenda is here, we know this is something that we have to work with, and we’re happy to do that but it will just take a little bit of time... with the kids as well... those who are 15/16, they’ve been using this language unchecked for seven or eight years so it’s not an overnight thing to say ‘right you lot, that’s it, we’re not going to use that anymore” (S7)

“I have to remind myself that this isn’t something that’s going to happen in 24 hours. This is a whole cultural thing, a whole massive cultural change in the school and, you know, that’s quite difficult to do, but definitely I would say... it [the project] has helped us massively” (S2).

Other suggestions for potential improvements largely concerned the training input and/or clarifying expectations, which highlight the potential difficulties of training a diverse range of staff in a short space of time, and indicate that school staff members may need regular reminders of what they can expect or request with regard to external support:

“Making it [the training] a bit more teacher-focused, or should I say teacher-friendly... yes give them the information but actually it needs to be a bit more structured, ‘OK, well how does this impact in the classroom? How does this impact in tutor time? ...What are the actual strategies that I can use?’... otherwise it’s a bit of a brain dump, they’ve giving you all this information but what do you do with it?” (S5)

“No disrespect to the people delivering it but they’re white British and white middle class, I think it’s understanding that actually having maybe speakers or experiences from different communities would be really useful... Also it felt very gay related and very male dominated, so it didn’t really talk so much about lesbians as in female experiences, so I think that would be quite useful... otherwise I don’t think they get as much out of it” (S5)

“If this was going to happen again I would say if they could maybe say at the beginning exactly what you will gain... If they’d have said... something like, you get ten hours’ worth of support, you choose how you use it... you can use it by two hours of staff training, three assemblies and, you know, time on the telephone to talk things through... something like that, so it’s a little bit more prescriptive in what you kind of get... then I wouldn’t have been in the situation where [I was thinking] could I phone up and ask for assemblies or not” (S2)

“What would have been quite useful for me to have is actually an anti-bullying policy to look at, because what’s been difficult at the moment, we have a behaviour policy and so we’ve got a few lines of anti-bullying rather than actually having a separate anti-bullying policy which looks at how we tackle homophobic bullying, but also racist and disablist... We don’t actually have that as a school... It would be nice to have had a policy and ‘this is what you would do and this is what you’d put in it and this is how you can address it in your school and you can make it your own” (S5).

Broader challenges to LGBT-inclusive schools

Broader challenges were also identified, beyond the scope of the IEIE project. Often these were linked, at least in part, with national government policy and practice, with the current demands placed upon schools commonly mentioned. In this context, addressing HBT bullying was

understood as having to 'compete' for time against other agendas, which can mean it is not prioritised:

"Schools need time to be able to deliver... all of these different topics within a very, very busy curriculum... There needs to be more... understanding... of how it needs to happen and how schools need to address it... I think we're told to do this, do that, deliver this, deliver that... but there's never any recognition of the fact that we still have to deliver everything else... There's no assessment or judgement on the wellbeing of our students and so... unfortunately when you have the pressures of trying to get your grade to the certain standard, time is cut in other areas that should be for tackling and addressing all these massive issues that our students are facing" (S2)

"Obviously in terms of curriculum, we have to get... the English, the maths... we're judged on that and... we have all of these different measures and there's an awful lot of pressure, I think, on schools, so in terms of priorities really schools are looking at needing to get their grades... We don't have the luxury of time... In a way it's about having a leadership team or having somebody in school that really keeps that up there in terms of it being important... otherwise I think all of that could get kind of buried underneath EBacc and Progress 8... There's also the matter of the fact we've really got to talk about FGM and CSE, and I think with PSHE, when I've looked at the curriculum it's trying to have the time to teach it all... It's time and it's having a leadership team I think who, you know, will kind of place it up there in terms of being a priority" (S6)

"The problem is that there is a such a big long list of things that schools are feeling that they have to address at the moment and a ridiculous volume of qualification reform all at once and just a whole range of things that are doing school's heads in, in terms of pressing issues for the moment. Unfortunately this is a thing that could probably ... drop, well, off the end, at the moment" (S1)

"The sheer demand of all of the different objectives we're supposed to be meeting, what's most important? Well actually they're all important and I guess the difficulty is when you've got someone who has got multiple challenges... for example a Muslim black female who is struggling with her religion, faith, gender, and also her sexual orientation, how do you meet that child's needs? ...Everything is a flavour of the month... FGM was the hot potato, then it was Prevent... and now it's moving onto CSE... I just don't think, perhaps, gender and sexual orientation are on the forefront... The government could do more to support it, because actually if we are saying that this is an issue for our young people... why does it not feel like it? Because we haven't got the backing... For people to see it as an item that is at the top of the agenda then I think ultimately the government have to support it and show that they also see it as important, and if they don't they're not going to get the response that they want" (S5).

Broader funding cuts were also linked with schools:

"We've seen a massive increase in concern for young people with mental health in school, in the context of, you know, locally it is near on impossible to get CAMHS support unless you are suicidal... Actually that work then about supporting those young people and their families comes to schools to do, so schools aren't just areas where they teach anymore, they are..."

little mini social services... I've seen a massive shift in that in the last few years, since the recession really hit and we saw lots of cuts out there in services, yet it's not that those things don't need to happen anymore, in fact if anything they need to happen more because the effect on the family has been massive... Someone still has to pick it all up, so my team deal with much higher end work than they ever did before... I've had to look at supervision for them in terms of secondary trauma, which I never thought I would have had to [do]" (S6).

"Everything obviously costs money and when things are getting sliced, it's a judgement call of what you spend your money on... Everything that I've ever seen of their [EACH's] work has been exceptional and when you find really good services like this, it's hard to kind of, not keep hold of them, but it's hard to kind of keep working with them... when you know unfortunately there may be a cost, and that's the most difficult thing" (S2).

Teacher training was also identified as an issue:

"I don't actually think that schools are provided with the training, or teachers are provided with the training... even our new staff now, our new NQTs, say that they don't get any formalised training of how to approach subjects such as this" (S2).

Echoing themes in other research (Formby et al, 2010), concerns about parental objections or lack of support were also apparent:

"I think our parents particularly would be, are very, wary. We've had issues with social media and things where parents have said 'well why are you telling my child about Twitter when they're not allowed to go on Twitter?' ... I could see there could come a point with some of our parents where [there would be] 'why are you telling them all about this stuff? Are you trying to make them be gay?' or that kind of response... So I think there's a limit to where you'd take it" (S7)

"There were certainly a few teachers who... with the best will in the world thought they were doing the right thing by not getting involved in things that they thought might upset parents... I think it's based on what they know about the families and a lack of confidence in themselves to actually stick to their guns and deliver what they should be delivering" (P3).

Staff also thought, where they were not clear how inclusive an environment the local secondary school was, that transition from primary to secondary school could potentially be challenging for pupils:

"That could be a barrier, sort of the transition from primary to secondary, where they've learned all of this in primary... and then they go to secondary. If we're not emulating that or there are different influences, older children, different language, that'll be a struggle for them... I think it'll be nice... once we develop it a bit here and we sort of see the impact happening here to... [see] how can we become collaborative in that way so when these children transition up to secondary school they can use the tools... It would be nice... if they [the secondary school] sort of took that on board and developed it themselves in that way" (P2, participant 2).

Challenges for staff were also identified in relation to keeping up-to-date with current identities and related language use, and/or the complexities of defining and responding to 'bullying' (see also Formby, 2013; Formby, 2015; Warwick and Aggleton, 2013):

"The goalpost keeps moving... so now people [are] being able to be gender fluid or, 'I don't have to say my gender. I don't have to do this'. None of those things help, because whilst I don't like to put people in boxes, it doesn't give anybody any sort of structure, so to be honest it makes it a bit difficult" (S5)

"I would say we have a big issue with banter... It's a very difficult thing and it's something we discuss a lot... When is it just a relationship that's gone sour and they've just been nasty and actually they'll be friends next week or when is it real bullying... I have had parents coming in and telling me their child has been bullied and it's borderline because a lot of the time it can be banter and their child is involved in it as much as anyone else... There's a hierarchy in it and there's this kid at the top, or a couple at the top, and we've had a lot of bullying behaviour because they don't want to be the person that's bullied, so if they're doing it then they're not being bullied by this person who is leading at the top... You do have to be careful with that one, that you don't start shoving everyone on the bullying register" (S4)

"I think that's probably where children do get confused, because sometimes I think we talk about it [bullying] quite a lot and the children's definition then change and they think you're being bullied because I've taken your pencil... I think we need to probably address that a bit more, so they understand the definition of actual bullying, as opposed to, that isn't a very nice action today... I think sometimes, because we do talk about it, because we bring it out into the open, people think maybe it's more prevalent than it is" (P2, participant 1).

Lessons learned

Interviewees were asked to identify what lessons they had learned from being involved in the project:

"For me, it's been those, that understanding of some of the difficulties that students who are in this position would be in... because like a lot of things that we have to deal with as teachers, it isn't me, I don't have to live with it, I don't have to understand it because it's not a way I've ever lived or chosen, you know, so it's more difficult in that sense to empathise" (S7)

"I have learned that I can't just assume that I know what the student population wants or need, or the staff population for that matter either. I can't just assume that everyone knows as much as I do or that everyone feels as comfortable with the subject or as a confident to deal with the subject as I do and so that was quite interesting" (S3)

"I learned some stuff about my student body that were sharper in its detail than I knew before and that was helpful. I certainly learnt some stuff about what was happening in other schools that was helpful, it made me kind of realise, actually some people are dealing with things far more challenging than we are... certainly on the gender issues... We haven't actually had the kinds of challenges that would force us towards structural changes... [that] we could have... Thankfully they rebuilt the main school with unisex toilets so that one's

never going to be an issue, but you know we could have had issues around changing rooms, we could have had issues around PE groupings, we could have had challenges to the fact that the school database requires everybody to have a gender otherwise we can't put them on it, it's not our fault, it's just the way it is" (S1)

"With the right training teachers really will change their language, their behaviour, and that's very important... For me personally, I didn't realise until I came to this school, or until I really started looking into it, that so many people are still stuck in the dark ages, you know, it's extraordinary" (P3)

"I think the main lesson is you don't know it all... you can always learn, and also time doesn't stand still... with all these new terminologies, and understanding what the community want... That's been important... I only found out the other day that the gay community have taken back the term queer, I didn't know that... [so] you always need to keep yourself fresh and up-to-date with what's going on" (S5).

When asked to reflect on IEIE, most participants were able to identify both project strengths and limitations, at the same time as suggesting some of the challenges that remain for schools when trying to address HBT bullying, not least that socio-cultural change will not easily happen in a one year period. However, interviewees did also identify how a project like IEIE can contribute to staff empathy, and greater understanding of students' needs.

Looking forward

Participants outlined ways in which IEIE was expected to have continued influence or impact in the future (i.e. beyond the lifetime of the project). Activities were identified where IEIE resources or guidance were anticipated to become more embedded within schools:

"We do need as a school to now invest in a much more diverse set of resources and I'm very aware of that" (P3)

"I think what it has also prompted us to realise is that we need to do some more follow-up, because... we raise awareness of it, we do an assembly, we talk about it, and then there's not really any kind of resources or anything else that we then use with the students... We do have PSHE day as opposed to PSHE lessons and we look at kind of all aspects of life in that sense, but... we've already had our sex and relationships one for the year, and I think the students... have since highlighted to us that maybe we do need to look at the way that we address LGBT+ relationships during that day, providing more information on... what each term means and how people identify... There wasn't enough time for this year for it [PSHE] to be amended, but... I think things will be amended now. So that's a real positive and it is a work in progress, but it is definitely something that will work its way into the curriculum for that type of day" (S3)

"I want students to be a little bit more aware of where the support is, so from the equality group we've got a group of students who are willing to go into assemblies... raising awareness... [and] once I've seen the resources, we'll probably look at putting some of those in then throughout the year" (S4)

“We’ll need to check that all of the classes are delivering the lessons... Once we’re sure that everybody’s had some of the input they should have, then we’d re-evaluate where we would go, where the gaps in the knowledge are, where maybe teachers aren’t as confident... and haven’t delivered it in the quite the same way... and [then] maybe team teach... So we’ll keep an eye to make sure every class has had some of those lessons, but you’ve got to give people time in order to do that” (P2, participant 1).

Ongoing individual interactions with students and/or parents were also highlighted as areas which could be improved or developed:

“I think people are still a little bit nervous... I think if people felt that they could, like if someone is getting bullied... about the colour of their hair or something... then staff are very quick to just say, ‘go and see your [pastoral lead]’... but I’ve got this feeling that staff don’t want to appear dismissive, so they feel that they have to listen and kind of nod and say the right things rather than, ‘why don’t you talk to your [pastoral lead] about it?’, because I think they, what they don’t want to do is make it appear that they’re uncomfortable talking about someone being LGBT, so they don’t want to send them away because they feel like it’s sending out the wrong message, but for any other kind of bullying that would be the first thing that they would do, so I think we have to get over that” (S4)

“Understanding of how we deal with those who have gender identity issues and how we can support them better than perhaps we do... it’s kind of that outreach stuff as well in that how do we deal with the parents? Because certainly with one of these students the parents are very negative toward even discussing, to even discussing the possibility [that their child identifies as trans]” (S7)

“I suppose for me in a good scenario... we would maybe have a parent session on EACH... and even just share some of the stories... I think it needs to come into the parent body” (P2, participant 1).

Suggestions were also made for DfE, to increase more specific anti-bullying guidance, and to make PSHE statutory:

“Ultimately... I would like them [DfE] to provide more help and support... I don’t think there’s enough policies and support on what you need to do and how you need to manage it... and actually in different contexts what it could be” (S5)

“I think the biggest thing... we’ve just had this, you know, announcement last week that PSHE is not going to be made statutory, so actually that doesn’t really endorse it very well” (S6).

However, future impacts on pupils were still envisaged:

“I think the education on offer to the children through... EACH will have a massive impact, I really do. I think the children will be much better equipped to deal with life in our communities now than they would have been if we hadn’t started it” (P2, participant 1).

It was clear that ongoing effort and impacts were anticipated, looking forward, suggesting that whilst the timescales of this project were criticised, this did not mean that schools were planning on ceasing activity in this field.

5. Partnership schools: Pupil perspectives

Five focus groups were undertaken with pupils within the partnership schools (i.e. in half of the schools involved in the IEIE project), lasting between 30 minutes (in the one primary school involved) and 40-50 minutes in the secondary schools. These involved a range of ages, genders and sexualities, though to protect their anonymity only the year group is assigned to participant quotes below. In some schools the groups were selected by staff, for example involving school council representatives; in other schools the groups were self-selecting in that the school simply requested volunteers. Some groups (where the school had such a group) were disproportionately made up of LGBT/equality group members, which might demonstrate their 'heightened' interest in the area. In one school older year groups were not allowed to attend due to school policy to not take them away from school work in Years 11-13. The table below provides a breakdown of the numbers of pupils involved in each school, and in total.

School	Number of pupils
S1	9
S3	8
S4	10
S6	9
P2	11
Total: 5 schools	Total: 47 pupils

Perspectives on activities undertaken

Increasing visibility

Pupils identified a range of ways in which LGBT visibility had been increased in their school during the time of the IEIE project. This included posters and notice boards, themed assemblies and other one-off events. Stonewall posters appeared most often used, whilst anti-bullying week (in November) and LGBT history month (in February) were commonly used as impetus for events. There was evidence that the appearance of relevant posters had been noticed by pupils:

“People noticed them and commented on them, but now as they are up people are like, getting used to them” (Year 11 pupil, S3).

However, in one school pupils had witnessed posters being ripped down (which it was noted went 'unpunished'). This was assumed to be “as a joke”, as a “dare”, to “show off”, or to be “silly”, though one individual also suggested it could be due to “dealing with these issues at home”. Even where there were such responses it was generally felt within the group that posters were successful in raising awareness:

“It is quite a negative effect but it is still actually they’re looking at them” (Year 7 pupil, S6).

In other groups/schools there were quite different responses to the use of posters:

“The posters are kind of irrelevant, they don’t really have an effect on what people say and think” (Year 10 pupil, S4)

“There was a guy in my IT class who was openly questioning [his identity] and it was really good to see that but when they [other pupils] are throwing around comments... he was getting really offended and quite upset... they’d get really offensive about it even though the awareness was there and there was a poster in the IT room... they were still not understanding” (Year 13 pupil, S1)

“People laugh at them [posters]” (Year 10 pupil, S4)

“I think that some people don’t even know that they [posters] are there” (Year 8 pupil, S4).

School assemblies also provided a point of discussion, including potential weaknesses in content:

“In assemblies I don’t listen, I just play on my phone, I don’t really care” (Year 10 pupil, S4)

“They get taught about homophobia but not necessarily about the difference between gender and sexuality” (Year 12 pupil, S3).

However, in one school, the use of a video in an assembly to challenge pupil assumptions was praised:

“That was a really important message to start off the assembly that you don’t actually know what [sexuality] they [people] are until you find out the actual facts about them” (Year 11 pupil, S3).

The utility of such assemblies for individual pupils was also noted:

“I think they [assemblies] are helpful because I have a friend in the school who is bisexual and it’s only come out over the past couple of days and it’s been made quite a big deal of but I think the assemblies were there to put some support in place for people who need to come out so they can feel comfortable in their own skin” (Year 11 pupil, S3)

“I think people are becoming more aware of it because it’s been spoken about quite a bit... People didn’t know very much about it until getting the assemblies and recapping everything. I think it helps” (Year 12 pupil, S3)

“It was quite useful because it like told people where to go if they needed support. It like introduced the [LGBT student] group and other groups as well” (Year 10 pupil, S3).

In one school, an anti-bullying video had been made (with students) and played in assembly to every year group during anti-bullying week which was thought to be ‘impactful’. In the same school, special t-shirts had also been printed and worn by school council members during anti-bullying week with various messages focussed on preventing and reporting bullying, particularly through highlighting the (potential) role of ‘bystanders’:

“I think it was quite effective, I know lots of people in my tutor group always asked me to turn round [to read the back of the t-shirt]... they were quite curious” (Year 8 pupil, S6).

However, one of the slogans used did result in “some people like shouted in our faces, like screaming” (Year 10 pupil, S6) which was “annoying” for some of the pupils that experienced it.

Mostly the messages were seen as ‘general’, targeted at all verbal or physical bullying rather than HBT bullying specifically. This raises an issue about how much the impact of IEIE can be distinguished from wider anti-bullying work in schools, which will be returned to below.

Where student-led groups had initiated activities this led to some confusion among the wider student body, for example where there was no explanation for the ‘sudden’ appearance of posters:

“No teachers have like explained why they’re around or anything” (Year unknown pupil, S4).

This could result in pupils thinking schools were “covering their backs” by displaying them, rather than actively engaging with the issues:

“I think that the teachers just put them up so if someone said ‘how are you dealing with LGBT stuff?’ they could be like, ‘well we have posters’” (Year 10 pupil, S4).

Where student-led activities appeared to form the majority of HBT- or LGBT-related work in the school, this fostered a sense that they were responsible for the agenda, rather than the school also driving it forward.

Curriculum content

The formal curriculum was identified as another way in which LGBT inclusion was (or could be) addressed. From a pupil perspective, there were examples of areas of both strength and weakness here. In a primary setting, books (recommended by EACH) had been read in class time which generated discussion about gender, including transgender, identities, also demonstrating participants’ awareness of wider cultural media involving trans identities:

“Our teacher talked about how a boy might want to be a girl and a girl might want to be a boy” (Year 6 pupil, P2)

*“There’s a film like that called *The Danish Girl*”* (Year 6 pupil, P2).

Broader family diversity had also been addressed, linked to personal experiences in the class (see Chapter 4):

“We read that book [Dad David, Baba Chris and me] and we discussed that there are families like this” (Year 6 pupil, P2)

“[My teacher] told us in this story this boy was like adopted by two Dads and they live with each other but he got bullied, all because of that” (Year 5 pupil, P2).

The pupils generally seemed to suggest that learning about diversity might be useful for them:

“I think it’s good to know as a Year 6 because if you come across it later on you will understand it a bit more” (Year 6 pupil, P2)

“We’re not kept in the dark about it” (Year 6 pupil, P2).

However, there also seemed to be some wariness about levels of ‘age-appropriateness’, where they may have been influenced by wider circulating messages about ‘childhood innocence’:

“I would not like to know a lot of stuff about it because if it might be rude or something. I don’t want to know it while I’m still young” (Year 3 pupil, P2)

“Maybe Years 1 and 2 wouldn’t want to learn about it because they might find it a bit weird” (Year 6 pupil, P2).

In a different school, older pupils were less complimentary about the inclusion of LGBT identities across a range of subject areas, because they wanted more positive content:

“In my Psychology lesson yesterday they used the example of gay men but it was in quite a negative sense, like out of men who suffer from anorexia, gay men suffer it the most... it’s always like quite heteronormative and then the only time it’s brought up is when it absolutely has to be” (Year 13 pupil, S1)

“Especially in English I found that if any sort of text can be possibly interpreted as even slightly gay... like Shakespeare sonnets for example... the teacher would go and say ‘oh no we can’t say he’s bisexual, we have no idea. You can’t just assume that’” (Year 13 pupil, S1).

However, there were also more positive examples where diverse content was integrated into subject lessons, such as a topic on family and relationships within A Level French:

“Homosexual couples do come up and in the textbook there are actually a couple of pages on it... [and we] get exam questions like do you think homosexual couples should be allowed to adopt” (Year 12 pupil, S3).

Ethics and Philosophy was another lesson where ‘gay’ content was sometimes explored:

“Our teacher talks to us about it [homosexuality]... it’s [about] like people can be okay with it and people’s views on it” (Year 9 pupil, S4)

“They give examples in ethics and philosophy so you learn about like different religions’ opinions on homosexuality... [and] they also tell you about discrimination in that subject” (Year 10 pupil, S3).

Similarly, PSHE (and local variations) was used to raise awareness among pupils:

“We have this special lesson once a fortnight with this separate teacher that talks about like the stuff that no-one else mentions, like we had this one lesson where we were just doing sorts of relationships... like pansexual, transgender stuff that no-one else had heard of before... [it is in] Ethics, but it’s more like PSHE” (Year 9 pupil, S4).

However, PSHE-type lessons suffered from being devalued by their non-assessed status, echoing previous large-scale research in the field (Formby et al, 2011; Formby and Wolstenholme, 2012):

“I wouldn’t say that they’re useful because at the end of the lesson we just throw all our work in the bin, because we don’t have any books or anything to keep anything in, because it’s just like discarded at the end of the lesson. Once you’ve talked about it then it doesn’t need to be mentioned again” (Year 9 pupil, S4)

“It kind of shows that it’s invalid and not as important as the other lessons and that it’s temporary... If we had a book, like I look at my maths book, I think, I don’t know, algebra and stuff like that, thoughts come to my head. And I look at my Spanish book and I think, ‘Ola’, you know, stuff like that. Because there’s nothing to look at, there is nothing to bring the thoughts back” (Year 10 pupil, S4).

In general, S4 teachers were said to seem comfortable talking about this area, but were criticised for not tackling pupils when they laughed, where certain responses and language use were interpreted as being, or at least facilitating, ‘bullying’:

“They [pupils] are going to end up getting away with bullying more and more and then it will just bleed through the generations” (Year 9 pupil, S4)

“You [should] stop it before it inflates” (Year 10 pupil, S4).

Though individual interactions about LGBT identities were not a focus of the evaluation, there were some examples which might highlight teachers’ lack of confidence when challenged by (potentially more knowledgeable) pupils:

“I think a lot of the time teachers don’t respond very well to [being corrected about terminology], I mean a couple of times I’ve corrected a few and asked a few teachers, I mean not really anything major, but like the whole conversation has like completely disappeared” (Year 13 pupil, S1).

For some students, LGBT-inclusive content could be challenging as it highlighted differences of opinion between their teacher and family:

“One thing popped up in my mind because of my religion, because we’re not allowed to do such things [i.e. be gay], which started to make me worry, but my teacher said not to worry because we are new to this... [and] are learning it just in case... I felt really uncomfortable with it but [my teacher] explained it to me” (Year 5 pupil, P2).

In summary, though there were varied experiences evident across the focus groups, pupils’ willingness to engage in, or with, HBT/LGBT-related activities within school was apparent.

Perspectives on the school environment

Understandings and visibility of 'bullying'

Across both the primary and secondary schools the discourse of bullying was prevalent, supporting staff data (see Chapter 4) that the term is widely used:

"Loads of people [are] bullying each other in our class. They just constantly do it and don't stop" (Year 3 pupil, P2).

Pupils in S4 were particularly vocal about what were perceived to be levels of inaction regarding both bullying prevention and punishment:

"Teachers don't really act upon it, they're pretty useless to be honest" (Year 10 pupil, S4)

"The whole bullying side of it, I don't think it's took seriously enough in school... I think that there should be more severe punishments for what happens. It happens too much, there's too much of it" (Year 10 pupil, S4).

Echoing debates in academic literature about the 'regulatory' nature of bullying (Formby, 2015; Rawlings and Russell, 2012), pupils identified how certain terminology could be used as a 'put down', or to emphasise 'difference' (see also Davies, 2011; Formby, 2013, 2015; Thornberg, 2011; Walton, 2011):

"It's like if you do something that is not, like if you said something or did something to someone they would use that against you and they would say that, like 'oh, you're so gay' to stop you from doing that anymore... it's just like if you want to do something yourself sometimes someone always judges you for that" (Year 9 pupil, S4)

"I think it's just if you stand out, like if you're not the same as everybody else... if you don't do the same things and you don't like to wear the same clothes, they kind of like, you're kind of thought of as like an outcast, like different, because you don't do the same things" (Year 9 pupil, S6)

"They [pupils who have 'come out'] are made to feel they can't even come into the same room as them [other pupils]" (Year 11 pupil, S3).

Language use was similarly related to popularity and (social) 'hierarchies' within school, also linked to lack of reporting:

"It's like this girl came up to me the other day and had a massive go at me and you still don't say anything... I just agreed to everything that she said, because she was like 'I'll beat you up' and everything... The teachers won't do anything, so I am not going to go to a teacher... She [the other pupil] thinks that she's like top of the school" (Year 8 pupil, S4)

"Some people treat it as like it's kind of the cool thing to do, like if you are saying those sorts of things then you are above everyone else and like it doesn't apply to you, so you're better than them. You're just like kind of getting authority over everyone" (Year 9 pupil, S4).

One form of 'difference' that was particularly highlighted in one group related to school work:

"People normally get picked on because they're different, I mean ever since Year 7 I've been carrying around a massive folder full of all my homework and people have been saying that I'm different... that's what I do, I like to be organised, and like to be on top of things" (Year 8 pupil, S6)

"I do sometimes get called a keener because I'm always helping all the teachers and stuff... it does hurt for a couple of seconds but then I'm like, well I'm kind of glad" (Year 7 pupil, S6)

"Say you handed in your homework early or you put it in your book, you're kind of thought of as like desperate to be like teacher's pet, but really it's just like if you put it in your book then you can't lose it before it's due in!" (Year 9 pupil, S6).

It was suggested that these experiences could influence people to 'try' less at school, particularly among boys as they got older, i.e. it is not seen as 'cool' to study, though localised differences among friendship and/or tutor groups were also acknowledged:

"I don't understand, your tutor groups are completely different to mine... if one of the teachers are like 'who wants to go and get the books' everyone puts their hands up!" (Year 8 pupil, S6).

Language use that might be described as homophobic, such as the phrase 'that's so gay' being used to describe objects or behaviours, was said to be common in at least two schools:

"[That] happens all of the time but nothing happens about it... it's not saying it like you are, like obviously you're attracted to men, but it's sort of used as an insult... Rather than its actual meaning, it is used as in, like, 'that is really bad', or 'that is weird'" (Year 10 pupil, S4)

"Even though the awareness has been raised of LGBT, that word ['gay'] will still always be used as it is, in a negative way, by some as some people are just basically immature... that word does get thrown around a lot" (Year 11 pupil, S3)

"I've done it myself by accident as a joke, and then I've realised, 'oh I shouldn't have probably said that'" (Year 11 pupil, S3).

In this evaluation, 'that's so gay' was almost universally portrayed by young people as problematic language use, which might demonstrate the influence of the IEIE project. By contrast, in research elsewhere, young people (including young people identifying as gay themselves) have argued that this phrase should not always be understood as (intended to be) homophobic (Formby, 2013, 2015; Rasmussen, 2004; Warwick and Aggleton, 2013), though the complexities of this argument are difficult for schools to address, meaning that a 'zero tolerance' approach is more often adopted (Formby, 2013).

Often language use or 'bullying' behaviour was explained as immaturity:

“The people who were bullying him in the story [Dad David, Baba Chris and me] just can’t accept the truth that people can have two Dads or two Mums or be adopted so they are just being immature” (Year 6, P2)

“We have some quite immature pupils in our year and when people do come out they make quite sarcastic comments, nasty comments, that make them feel like they don’t belong in our year and make them feel really uncomfortable” (Year 11 pupil, S3).

Other language use linked to identities or personal characteristics was also said to happen “a lot” in S4:

“Nothing really gets done about that. Like some of my friends have [had] someone being racist to them and the teachers hear it and they’re like, ‘oh if you hear it again come and tell me’, but they never really do anything about it” (Year 9 pupil, S4)

“There is like calling people like retards and stuff” (Year 10 pupil, S4).

There was a shared feeling in this group that verbal bullying was far more prevalent than physical bullying, but was not tackled because it was ‘only’ verbal. For them, this demonstrated a misunderstanding of the severity or impact of these experiences:

“They [teachers] think that that [physical bullying] is the only bullying that actually makes a difference” (Year 10 pupil, S4)

“Being constantly teased can be just as bad as physical bullying... if you went in and said I keep getting punched and beaten up they would probably get, like, isolation for it, but if you went in and said I am being constantly teased then not much would happen” (Year 10 pupil, S4)

“You can get away with teasing. People do it because there is not a punishment. They just think it’s alright, and if you go to teachers and ask them to sort it out then they will just be like ‘oh just sort it out between yourselves’, and sometimes it takes a bit more than that” (Year 9 pupil, S4).

Experiences of verbal bullying were compared to hate crime in that it was felt that verbal incidents (such as those involving racism) were taken more seriously once the police were involved:

“Because we’re in school it’s not frowned upon so much, it’s not taken seriously, but like if someone was racist to a guy and he went to the police and said that it was bad then that person can get arrested for it, but if it happened to us, if it happened in school, then that wouldn’t happen” (Year 10 pupil, S4).

In this context, adults (teachers or parents) appearing to ‘dismiss’ their concerns was a cause of frustration:

“They just say it’s boys being boys because they think that’s just what people do, but it’s not, it’s actually like, it gets to the point where it happens so much it is actually bullying” (Year 10 pupil, S4)

“It’s like me and my friend, we had a massive fallout and my mum said ‘no, it’s just girls being girls’ [but] it’s not” (Year 8 pupil, S4).

Elsewhere, there was more emphasis placed upon cyber bullying than verbal:

“No-one ever bullies anyone face to face... [but] online anything will go down” (Year 13 pupil, S1).

In S1, potentially offensive language use was more often explained as ignorance than malicious:

“Me and [another pupil] are in a computer class with eleven boys and that’s slightly intense... it’s quite bad. Not targeted particularly, just kind of ignorance I guess” (Year 12 pupil, S1)

“You’ll say that you can’t say that, it’s a little bit homophobic, and they’ll be like ‘I don’t care, why are you telling me that?’” (Year 13 pupil, S1)

“There’s certainly a lot of occasions when people use slurs and stuff, and like refusing to not use that word and everything” (Year 13 pupil, S1).

Misunderstandings about gender were highlighted in particular, alongside inappropriate responses when questioned:

“A lot of people refuse to believe there is anything between male and female. You are talking to someone who isn’t either - maybe understand that I know more than you do in this situation!” (Year 13 pupil, S1)

“A lot of the transphobic ideas around binary gender and everything, I mean it’s not great but I kind of see why, but the bigger problem is the way that people respond to that and if you try and question that, you are likely to be shut down” (Year 13 pupil, S1).

Misunderstandings were said to exist amongst the staff population as well as the students, mirroring research findings from elsewhere (Formby, 2015):

“I feel with the gender binary thing, teachers don’t really understand... I don’t really feel like if somebody said something like ‘oh there’s only two genders’... I don’t feel like a teacher would intervene because I don’t feel they would understand why it’s an issue” (Year 13 pupil, S1)

“Although their parents have emailed the teachers and said, you know, ‘please respect [their] pronouns’, a lot of teachers do still mess up, some of them apologise, then there are apparently certain ones who use the right pronouns and then when they don’t do their homework or something, where they’re annoyed, they misgender them” (Year 12 pupil, S1).

‘Safe’ LGBT spaces

As documented in Chapter 4, there was some evidence to suggest a rise in schools providing or facilitating ‘safe’ spaces for LGBT students in the form of school-based LGBT or equality groups. Of

the ten partnership schools, four had such groups in existence or development at the time of the IEIE project. As one participant described:

"We're like one big family and we meet up every [weekday] lunchtime... We discuss and talk about the different types of gender, sexuality and make sure it's clear to everybody what each individual thing is. It's really important for each person within the group, if they want to have a label, because it makes them comfortable with having something to say, 'I am this and that's how it goes' kind of thing... I think there's a lot of misunderstanding from an outsider's point of view, as well as the family's point of view, because everything is like black and white and they just don't understand how that person is feeling" (Year 12 pupil, S3).

Several different focus groups mentioned the numbers of pupils who were 'out' about their sexual or gender identity, which was often taken as a sign that their school was a more 'accepting' environment. Sometimes it was suggested that as pupils 'came out', this lessened the use of the phrase 'that's so gay' in their year group:

"It's so like known in our year now, like we've had people come out... it's become such like a normal thing, that it doesn't really bother anyone anymore. You hear it ['gay'] so much so often as a positive thing, that trying to turn it into a negative doesn't really work anymore" (Year 9 pupil, S6).

IEIE impact

It has already been mentioned that trying to separate IEIE impact from wider school cultures and activities is difficult, but the focus groups did demonstrate some awareness changes among pupils that happened during the time of the project as a result of formal school content. One (Year 8) pupil in S6, for example, described how she "didn't even know it was possible" to have gay relationships, but that now she thought "to be honest they're exactly like us, but they love the other gender, so we should not discriminate". Elsewhere, pupils also demonstrated awareness and positive attitudes, supporting staff perceptions at the school that discussions were more 'open' now:

"You can love who you want to love. It's not your family's choice, it's your choice" (Year 3 pupil, P2).

They also seemed comfortable asking their teacher questions:

"I asked my teacher yesterday when we were reading the book, when two friends are really, really good friends, they are like a girl and a girl and are best friends, I asked my teacher if it could be called love friends and my teacher said 'yeah, it's not a romantic love but it can be a love that you love them inside'" (Year 3 pupil, P2).

In some cases greater awareness was explicitly related to greater education:

"When someone came out as bisexual the amount of contradictoriness that came out of the mouths of other people was absolutely awful... because there has been more education on this, staff are now aware and people in my year are more like it's not a big thing, whereas before it used to literally be bees to a honey pot... everybody wanted to know... like 'why do you like this?', 'why do you like that?', 'why can't you choose?'... and it really hurts... Now

being in Year 12 because we've been more educated everybody's more laid back and if someone comes out or someone says 'I'm this gender' they're more willing to accept because they are more in a position to want to learn about that" (Year 12 pupil, S3).

In this group there was a discussion about the consequences of such 'immaturity', so that when pupils act out a "stereotypical gay person... all camp... as a joke" this can make other pupils reluctant to 'come out'.

In S6, the anti-bullying work undertaken was seen in a positive light, but there was less certainty about any impact on bullying rates or incidents. Some participants felt that there was less as a result, whilst others thought it was hard to stop some people because "it's just the way they are", and they will always be different in front of teachers (which one member of staff referred to as "self-policing") and therefore not get 'caught'. This view was also shared elsewhere:

"The people who actually do say 'that's so gay', in the lessons they are completely quiet and they don't say anything but then after they just carry on... It doesn't really have an effect on them" (Year 10 pupil, S4).

The reported evidence for decreasing bullying rates in S6 was based on witnessing less, and due to reporting levels that were (perceived to be) increasing. The phrase 'that's so gay' was also thought to be overheard less now, in part it was felt that this is because it is currently less 'a trend', but pupils also commented that they thought people knew they would get 'in trouble' if they used it, as it was talked about more by staff after the initial evaluation survey. In addition, it was suggested that boys and girls tend to have separate friendship groups, particularly in lower years, and this might explain why some (girls) do not hear it as much.

Reporting bullying was apparently still problematic, however, with fears about being called "a snitch", even after campaigns explicitly focussed on 'bystander' reporting. Participants demonstrated concerns about confidentiality, for instance wanting to know that staff would leave a gap between the reporter going to them and then them going to talk to the alleged perpetrator. Bullies were thought to be able to play on these fears in order to avoid 'detection', and knew to utilise lunch times when there were thought to be less staff around than break times.

Language use was identified as problematic in a range of settings, with some evidence to suggest teachers were addressing this more than they had in the past:

"In Year 7 everyone used to say 'that's so gay', that sort of stupid term, but now that we've learnt a lot about it everyone's a lot more clear, and like nobody says it, well maybe I've heard some people I know say it, but I think like everyone's realised what it actually means" (Year 10 pupil, S3)

"I feel as if teacher's have picked up that when the boys are messing around and they've said the word 'gay' like as an insult, the teacher's will pick up on it, whereas I feel like in the past they never used to be as strict about it" (Year 11 pupil, S3)

"They [teachers] used to like brush it off as [if] it wasn't a big thing" (Year 11 pupil, S3)

“Somebody, a boy, called my Dad gay... I told my teacher and he got told off” (Year 3 pupil, P2).

There was also a perception of increased teacher support and awareness when students ‘come out’:

“They are aware of your situation... they go the extra mile while teaching to ensure that that kid feels just normal, and just comfortable in the class, with other people in the class that might not necessarily know” (Year 12 pupil, S3).

It appears that bullying has a relatively high profile in pupil discourse, with varying perceptions about school responses to pupil interactions. Though language use was still identified as problematic, it was also one of the areas more clearly attributed to being impacted upon during the course of the IEIE project. Taken together with the developments in school-based LGBT/equality groups, there is some evidence to suggest that the IEIE project and wider school responses to LGBT identities have raised both staff and pupil awareness, thus contributing to more inclusive environments.

Suggested ways forward

Across the groups there were a range of ideas put forward for how (their) schools could become more LGBT-inclusive environments.

Assemblies

Implementing more frequent bullying-related assemblies was suggested in one school:

“I think instead of it just being like assemblies in bullying week I think it should be monthly or something. It should be constantly drilled in to us because then it will, hopefully it will stop it then” (Year 10 pupil, S4).

Curriculum content

There were suggestions for more LGBT curriculum coverage and specific input from each of the secondary schools involved in the pupil focus groups:

“I think they could do something that was compulsory even if it was like just one session... I mean the assemblies we do are good but there is still the opportunity for them [pupils] to just sit there and laugh whereas if they’re made to learn about it and discuss it and like, get their views out...” (Year 13 pupil, S1).

“I think there should be a PSHE day dedicated to bullying... The teacher can then challenge the ones that are sitting there thinking ‘why do I need to learn this?’ or ‘this is so boring’. The teacher can then challenge that kid about, like, ‘why are you so non-accepting of this?’... then get a topic discussion going” (Year 12 pupil, S3)

“I think we might need a lesson on what the words really mean sometimes because before the assembly I didn’t know much about it” (Year 7 pupil, S3)

“Even though we do get educated about it we need to be educated on it more because some still don’t get the concept of what it means and where it can’t be used...they still need the understanding that it is OK because some people still don’t accept it” (Year 11 pupil, S3).

There was specific mention of more frequent coverage across year groups:

“I think that they do it [bullying] just in one part of the year. I think that they should be doing it again through different parts of the year” (Year unknown pupil, S4)

“I think that from the day that you come in to comp [comprehensive school] you should get it until the day that you leave. It should be constant. And I think that if it’s drilled in straight away, especially in like Year 7, then it [bullying] will be less likely to happen” (Year 10 pupil, S4).

Sometimes levels of perceived empathy from teachers were criticised, linked to ineffective curriculum coverage because bullying was not seen as any teacher’s ‘specialist’ subject:

“The teachers, they don’t really seem like they care. They feel like, ‘oh, it’s just a paid job, turn up, do it, and go home’... They don’t have empathy” (Year 10 pupil, S4)

“They just get paid to do it [teach] and that’s all that matters... Like if you go to them with a problem they’re just like, ‘oh I don’t want to sort out your drama’, and then they send you back, and it’s like it might be drama to you but it could lead to something else and they don’t really understand that... I think that we need, like some separate time, because other teachers don’t really want to hear about it, they just want to focus on their own subject, like if we had a lesson devoted to that [bullying] then I think that we would get more out of it than other teachers giving up their time because they just don’t want to. They just want you to do all their work” (Year 9 pupil, S4).

There was also a suggestion for more engaging lessons, in particular drawing on ‘real life’ experiences of people who had some connection with bullying previously (see also Formby, 2013):

“If you made it [a lesson] interactive... if you said, ‘ah, I’m going to act out a scene where someone was bullied and then they went home and, I don’t know, committed suicide’, like something like that, it would definitely get in to their [pupils] heads, the effect that they have on people... It’s just the way that the brain works, to be honest. If you’re shown something engaging then you listen, but if you’re not then you don’t” (Year 10 pupil, S4)

“I think if they brought someone in that had been through, like the consequences of bullying, or the consequences of racism or something. If they actually brought a real person in that it had happened to then it would make us kind of stop and... [think] ‘do we want to do that to someone?’” (Year 9 pupil, S4)

“I think maybe actually getting like a person who was a bully who had bullied someone in and got them... to say ‘I was a bully once and I made their life terrible’, and the actual person who was being bullied, they committed suicide, so then you go, ‘this is what could happen if you drive someone to the point’, you might not know that you’re doing it but it happens and then that would make people think... ‘I’ve made some big mistakes’” (Year 10 pupil, S4).

In this way, guest speakers were thought to be more effective than using videos in class:

“When I know a video is coming on I just zone out, and everybody else, well, I assume everybody else does it” (Year 10 pupil, S4)

“It’s a chance to have fun. In a video it’s a chance to have fun with your friends and stuff” (Year 9 pupil, S4).

In S6, there were suggestions that HBT bullying could be covered more explicitly in future, not just as part of ‘general’ anti-bullying, and that out of school bullying could perhaps be addressed more within school.

‘Punishment’ and prevention

In one school there were animated calls for “stricter punishments” for bullying, with simultaneous suggestions for prevention tactics:

“I think that teachers, if a teacher heard a kid just walk in to a lesson and say ‘oh you’re so gay’ or ‘you’re a retard’ then straight away they should have like a really strict punishment. Even though it’s a little thing, but if you punish them like that... straight away, because then... it’s scary” (Year 10 pupil, S4)

“If the teachers did more about bullying they would realise like how many people actually do bully people and how many people are actually affected by it” (Year unknown pupil, S4)

“The teachers should guilt trip the students... It got it in my head... I think it’s all to do with like perspective, because if the bullies... if they have perspective of what they were doing and... the effects that they are having on people’s lives, I think that if they had perspective they would definitely, definitely stop, but school isn’t really good at enforcing that... they should enforce more about caring and stuff” (Year 10 pupil, S4).

Individual support

In one school there were calls for increased counselling support to be available to students, which it was felt would put emotional health on more of a par with students’ physical health:

“Maybe express that she [the school counsellor] is there more... because I know one person that goes to a counsellor and that’s it, and like the amount of people that do get bullied and don’t go to a counsellor...” (Year 10 pupil, S4)

“I think they [pupils who experience bullying] should be referred straight away to the counsellor... It should be easier to open up. People should feel like they can actually go and tell the teacher but kids... sort of keep it to themselves for too long and it keeps happening and happening but by the time they tell the teacher then it’s a bit, they could have stopped it earlier on but they’ve gone through quite a lot” (Year 10 pupil, S4)

“Sometimes they don’t address problems as equally... They care more about your personal life than how you actually feel, like if you are actually physically put in danger then that is more what they focus on than your emotions” (Year 9 pupil, S4).

However, it should be noted that previous research has found that counselling referrals can be understood by young people as indicating ‘blame’, ‘fault’ or a suggestion of an ‘abnormal’ (gay) identity (see Formby, 2013, 2015 for further discussion), so any school developments in this area need to be handled sensitively.

Increased teacher training

Pupils in S1 called for more education or training for teachers to enable more open dialogue about LGBT identities within the school:

“They [teachers] would be a lot more able to shut down any sort of sniggering that was going on within the lesson because sometimes they just don’t notice it but being taught about the sensitive issue it is might be easier for them to make it a safer environment for everyone” (Year 13 pupil, S1).

Liaison with parents

Echoing research findings elsewhere (Formby, 2014), S3 pupils wished schools could offer more support with family relationships when needed, essentially helping to ‘educate’ their parents:

“My parents are very, very homophobic about things and I try and educate them but as I try to I get told I’m a child. I’m not really allowed and I get put in my place for saying it. It’s kind of difficult because you need someone like [members of school staff] to have like, not a meeting, but to have like an education thing to be like, ‘gay is ok’, or ‘gender’s ok’” (Year 12 pupil, S3).

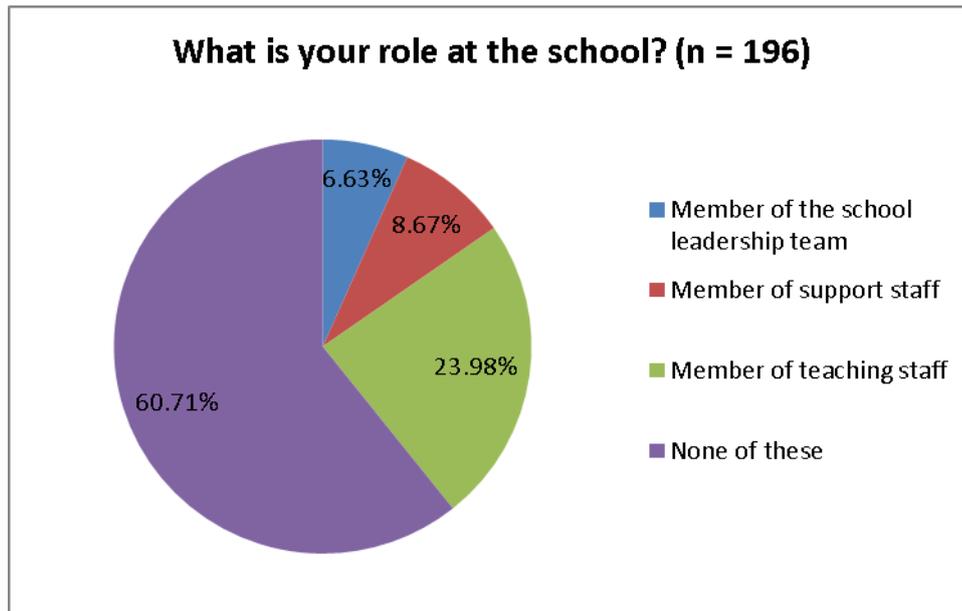
Whilst some of the pupil suggestions were beyond the IEIE remit, many do support the approach of the project, and suggest the importance and benefits of continuing and embedding such practices within schools, both within and beyond those directly involved in the IEIE project.

6. Training event evaluation

In total, 205 responses were received from attendees across three standalone training events in Taunton and Bristol, run by EACH, that took place between October and December 2015.

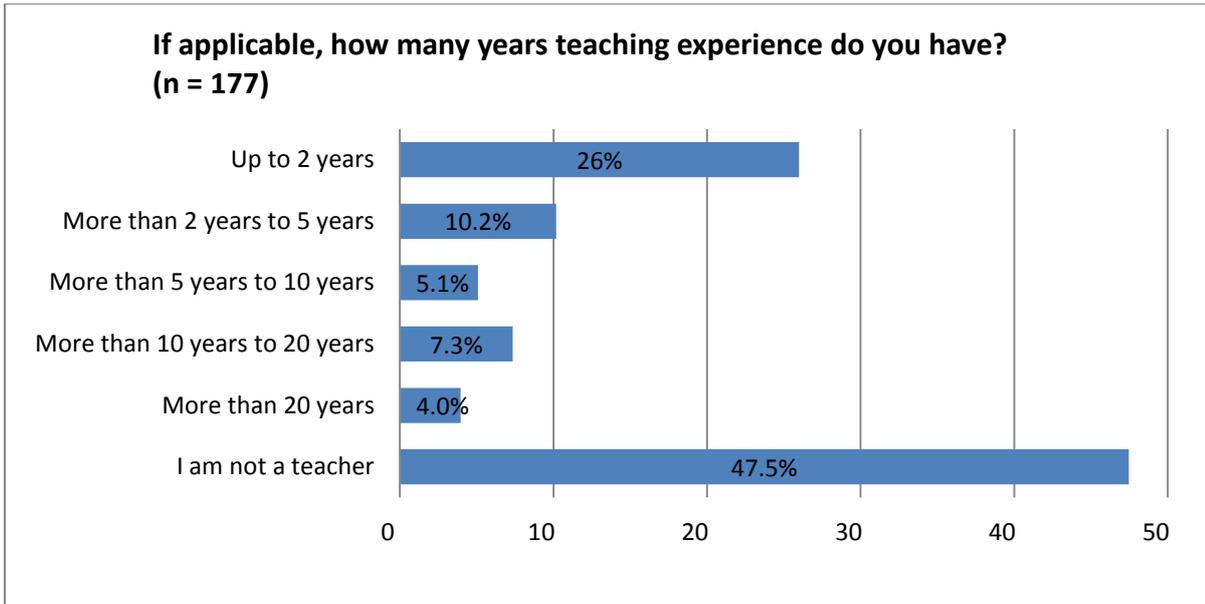
Profile of respondents

Training participants were asked for some demographic information at the end of the questionnaire, which is presented below.



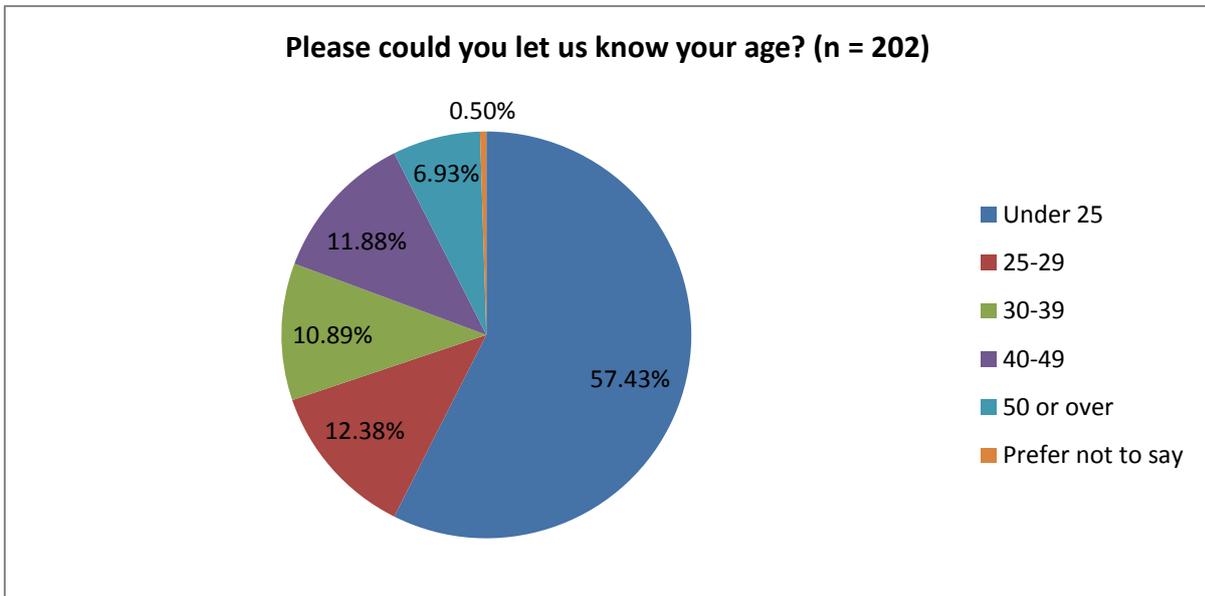
As the chart above shows, 39% of training participants were school employees, whether SLT, teaching or support staff. The large number of respondents (61%) declaring 'none of these' mostly comprised of PGCE students/trainee teachers. Other roles identified included advisory teacher, educational psychologist, learning mentor, and youth worker.

A large proportion of respondents (73%) also said 'none of these' to the question 'What is the main subject area that you teach?', with explanatory comments mostly saying 'all', 'primary' or 'early years'. Of those who did have specialist teaching areas, a variety of subject disciplines were reported, including citizenship, PSHE or RE (7%); maths or sciences (6%); arts (5%); humanities (5%); PE (2%); social science (1%); computing, design and technology or ICT (0.6%); languages (0.6%).

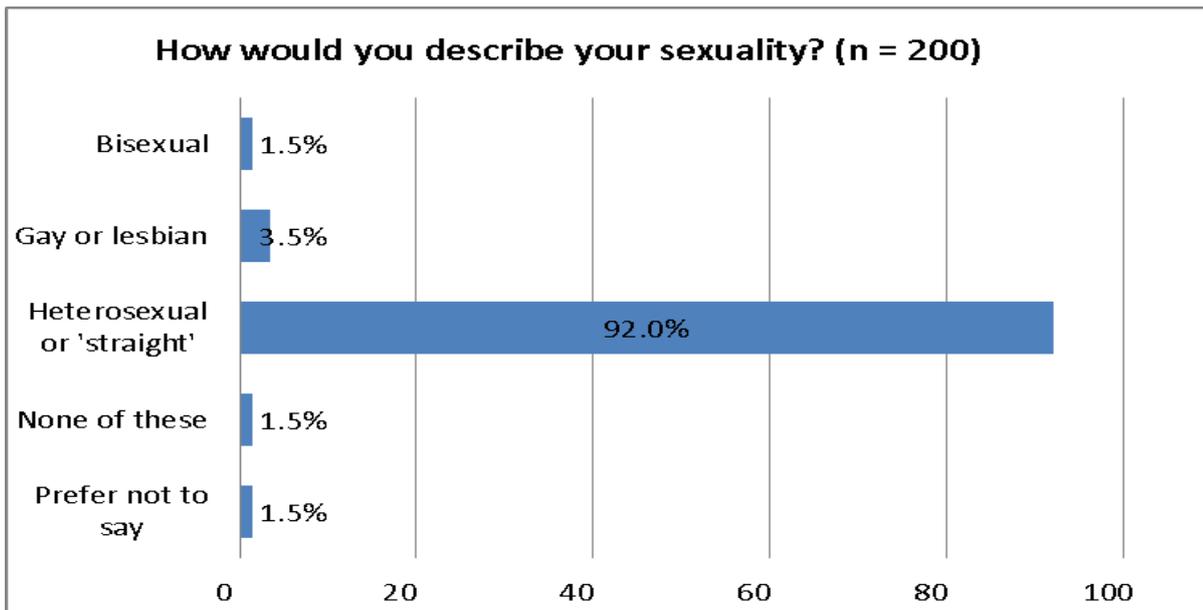


Where respondents did identify themselves as having teaching experience, the clear majority were comparatively new to the profession (see chart above), having less than two years experience.

Regarding gender, the sample included significantly greater numbers of self-identified females (87%) than self-identified males (12.5%). Less than one per cent identified as trans.



As the above chart demonstrates, in excess of half the respondents (57%) were under 25, which is perhaps not surprising given that the majority of respondents identified as trainee teachers. The proportions in each of the other age ranges were relatively even (11-12%), apart from the 50 or over range that was slightly lower (7%).



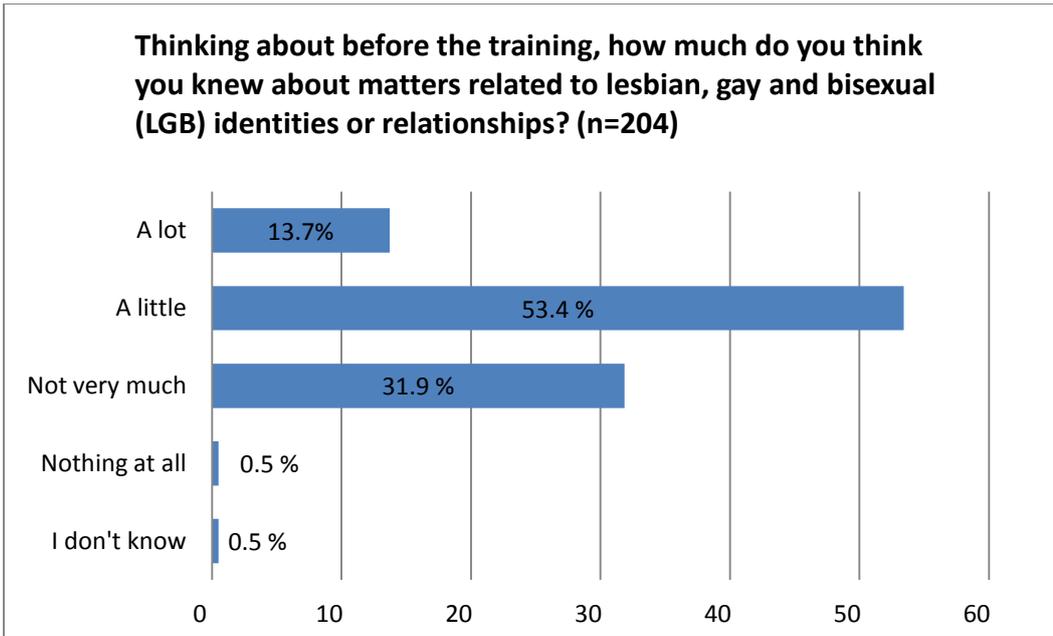
Over nine tenths of respondents (see above) identified as heterosexual or 'straight' (92%), with an additional 5% describing their sexuality as either bisexual, gay or lesbian.

With regard to ethnicity, the table below shows that the vast majority of training participants identified as white British (94%).

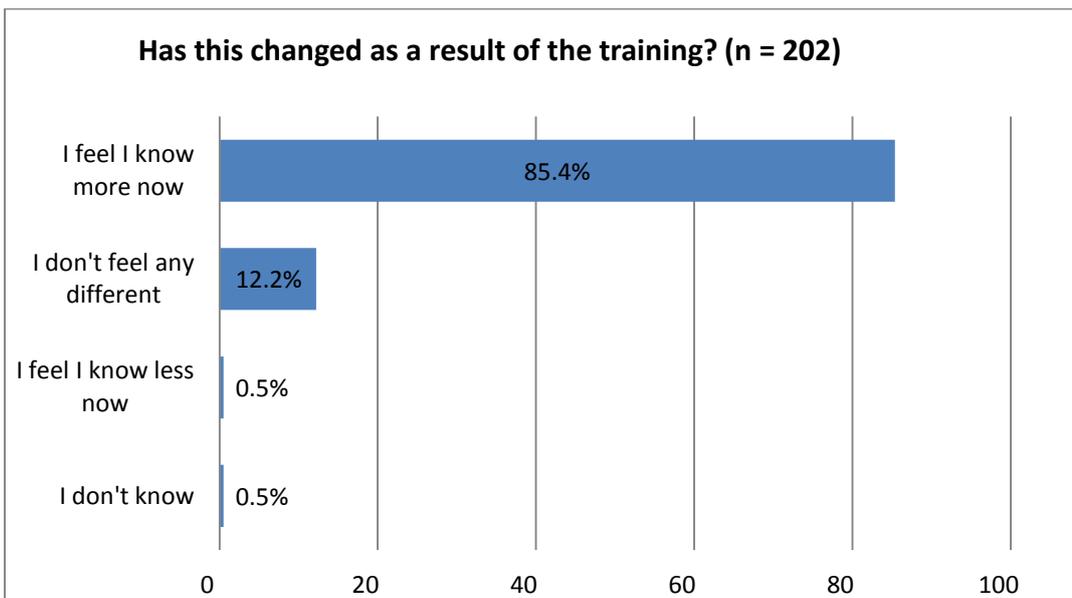
Reported ethnicity (from a list provided)	%
White British	94
White Irish	1
Any other white background	1.5
Mixed / multiple ethnic background (sub-categories combined)	2
Asian or Asian British (sub-categories combined)	0.5
Black or black British (sub-categories combined)	0.5
Prefer not to say	0.5

Knowledge and awareness

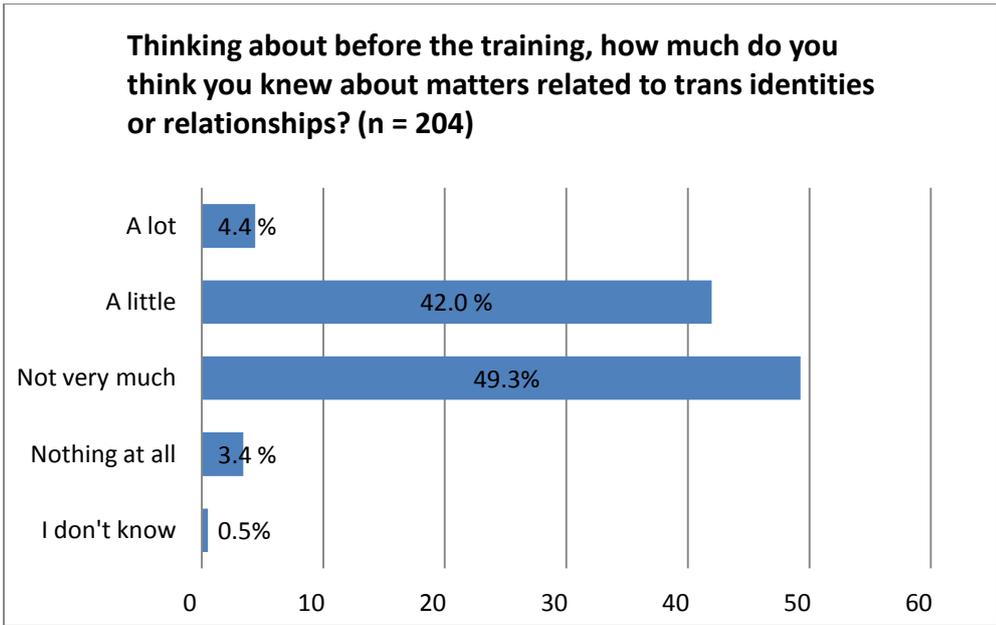
The first section of the questionnaire asked respondents about their knowledge and awareness levels. As can be seen below, the majority of respondents (86%) felt they knew 'a little', 'not very much' or 'nothing at all' about matters related to lesbian, gay and bisexual identities or relationships prior to the training.



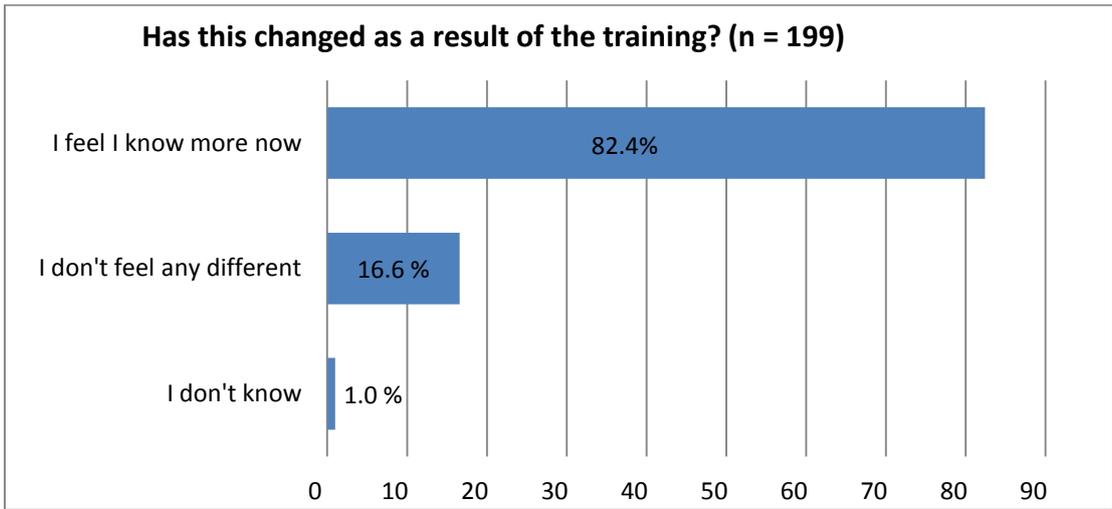
Reported change as a result of the training was high (see below), with 85% feeling they knew more about LGB identities or relationships after the training.



Responses to the survey (see below) reveal less awareness about trans identities or relationships compared to LGB (with 95% feeling they knew 'a little', 'not very much' or 'nothing at all before the training).

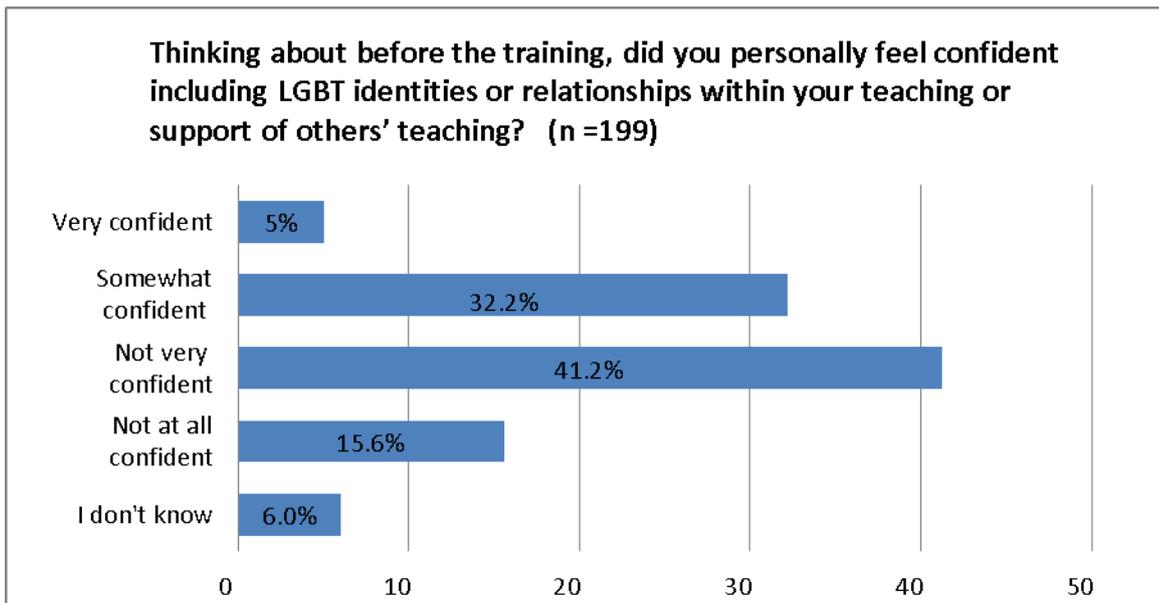


After the training, 82% felt they knew more (see below), which is marginally lower than the proportion who felt they knew more about LGB identities as a result of the training.

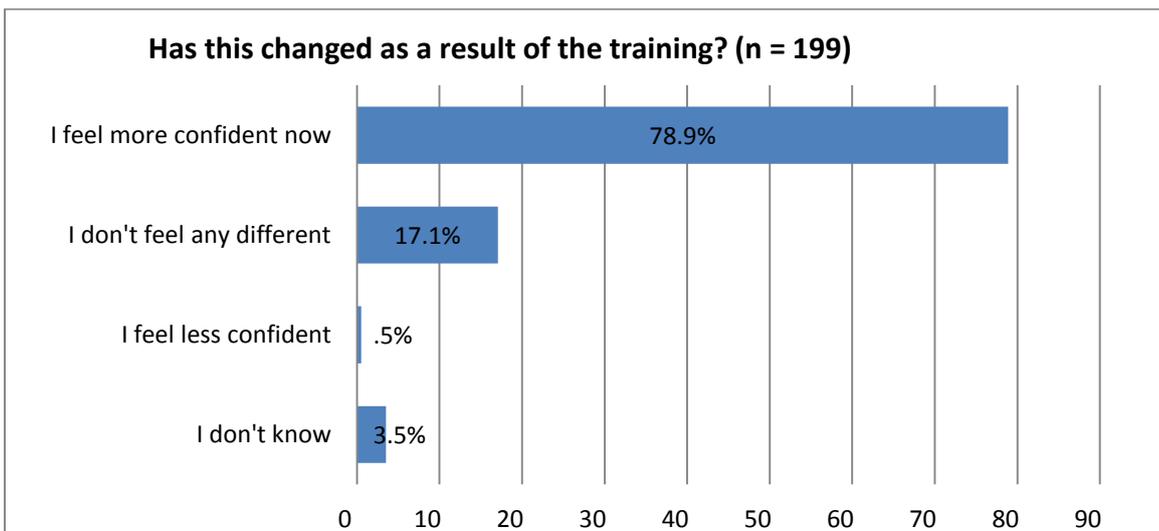


Professional practice

The second questionnaire section asked respondents about their professional practice. Over half of respondents (57%) were either ‘not very confident’ or ‘not at all confident’ about including LGBT identities or relationships within their teaching or support of others’ teaching prior to the training (see chart below).

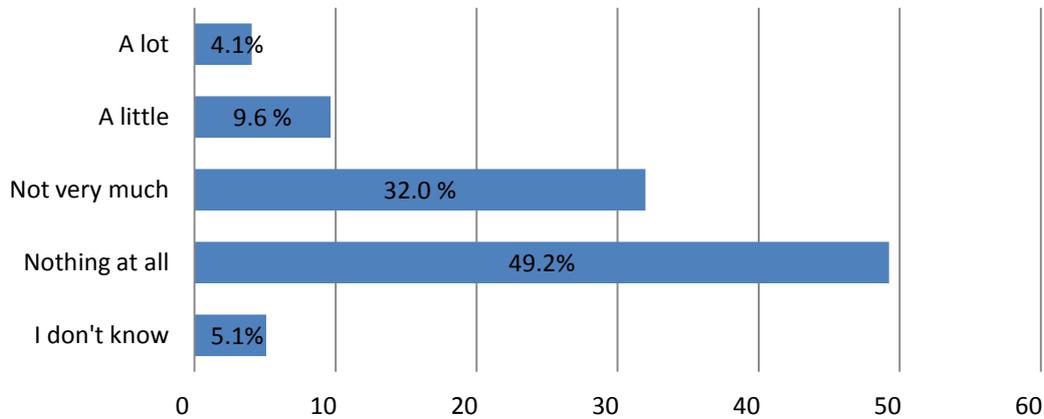


Following the training, 79% said they felt more confident to incorporate this area into their teaching or support of others' teaching as a result of the training (see below).



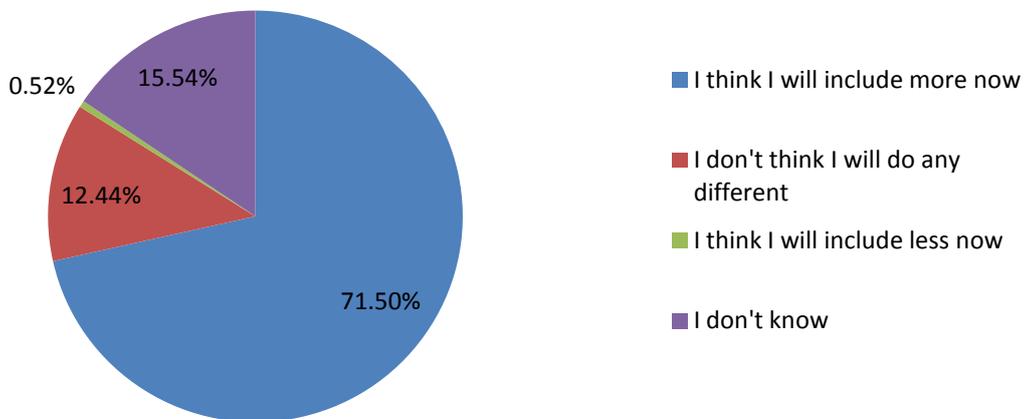
As shown below, over three quarters of respondents (81%) said that they did not include LGBT identities or relationships in their teaching or support of others' teaching prior to the training.

Thinking about before the training, how much did you include LGBT identities or relationships in your teaching or support of others' teaching? (n = 197)

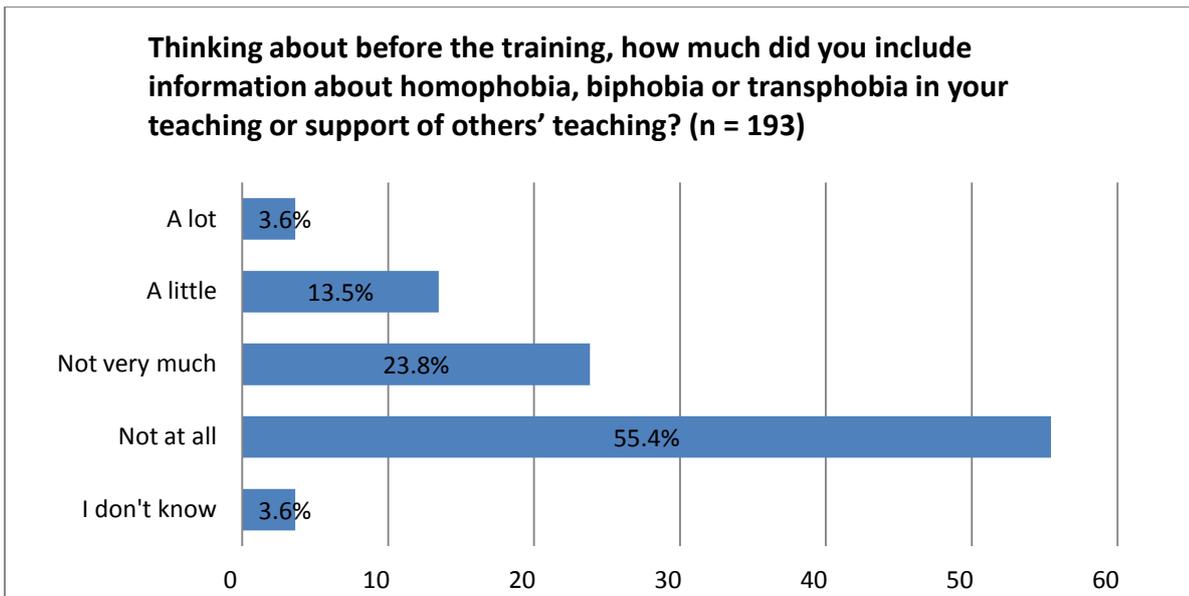


Following the training, just under three quarters of respondents (71.5%) thought they would include LGBT identities or relationships more within their teaching or support of others' teaching as a result of the training (see chart below).

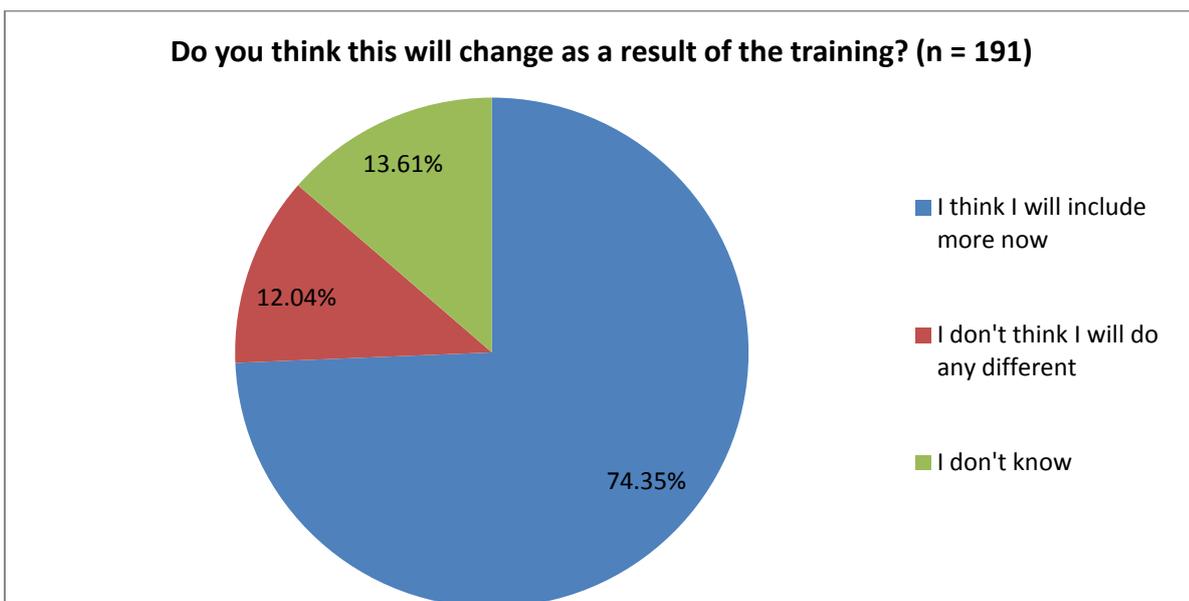
Do you think this will change as a result of the training? (n = 193)



Thinking about before the training, over three quarters (79%) of respondents said they included 'not very much' or 'nothing at all' about homophobia, biphobia or transphobia within their teaching or support of others' teaching (see below).

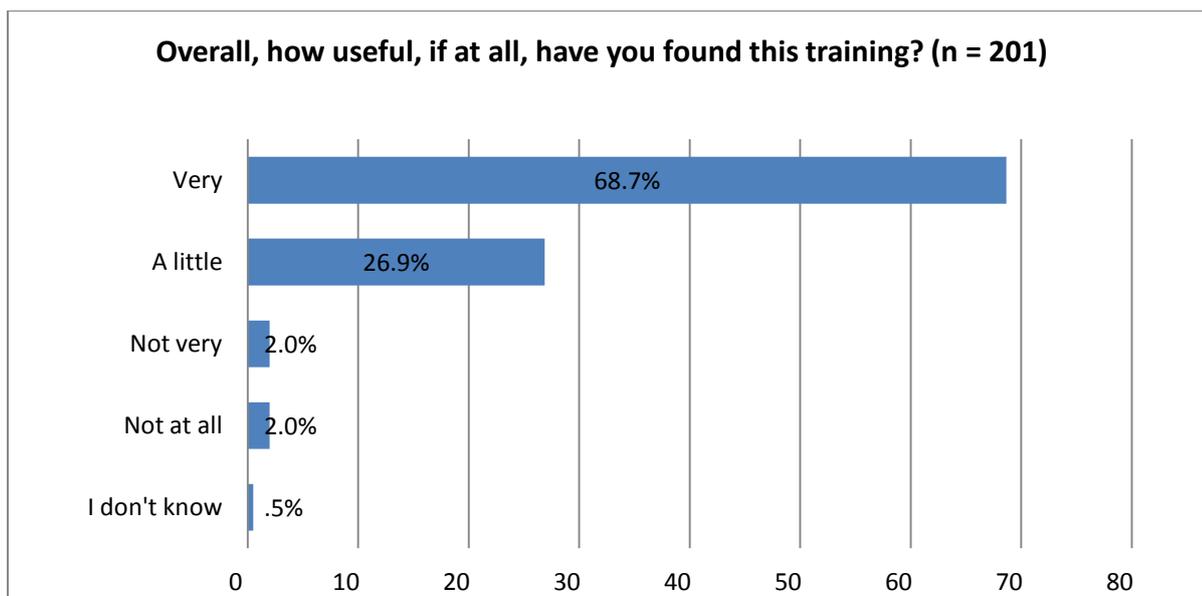


Following receipt of the training, the clear majority (74%, see below) said that they thought they would now include more information about homophobia, biphobia or transphobia in their teaching or support of others' teaching.



The training

When asked, respondents were generally positive about the usefulness of the training they received, with 96% stating that they had found it 'very' (69%) or 'a little' (27%) useful (see below).



Respondents were invited to share open comments on what they have found most beneficial about the training. Issues raised included the content and delivery approach:

“Discussions around ‘what is gender’ - I had never considered this before and it was harder to answer than I thought”

“Made me think more about the practical issues of a young person coming out as transgender”

“We were given real life examples of how to approach/respond to issues or questions thrown up during education. It opened up discussion of something which may not be discussed a lot and mean that it is at the forefront of our minds. It didn’t feel as if we were being lectured on how to be better practitioners but that we were part of the room”

“Lots of very useful information and teaching resources and all for free! Very entertaining and natural expert speakers”

“Excellent in every aspect, especially the presenters. Most interesting and enjoyable course I have attended in a long time”.

In a similar way, participants were also asked to provide open comments about any aspects of the training that they think could be improved (such as logistics or content/delivery). Suggestions included the following:

“Could you suggest any figures in the national curriculum that were/are gay role models? Or role models that children could be taught about. Authors that are gay etc? Could put their names up on the board for us to write down - who they were, what did they do to contribute”

“Would be useful to know more how to address the subject with younger children as I feel it was very much aimed at higher KS2/secondary”

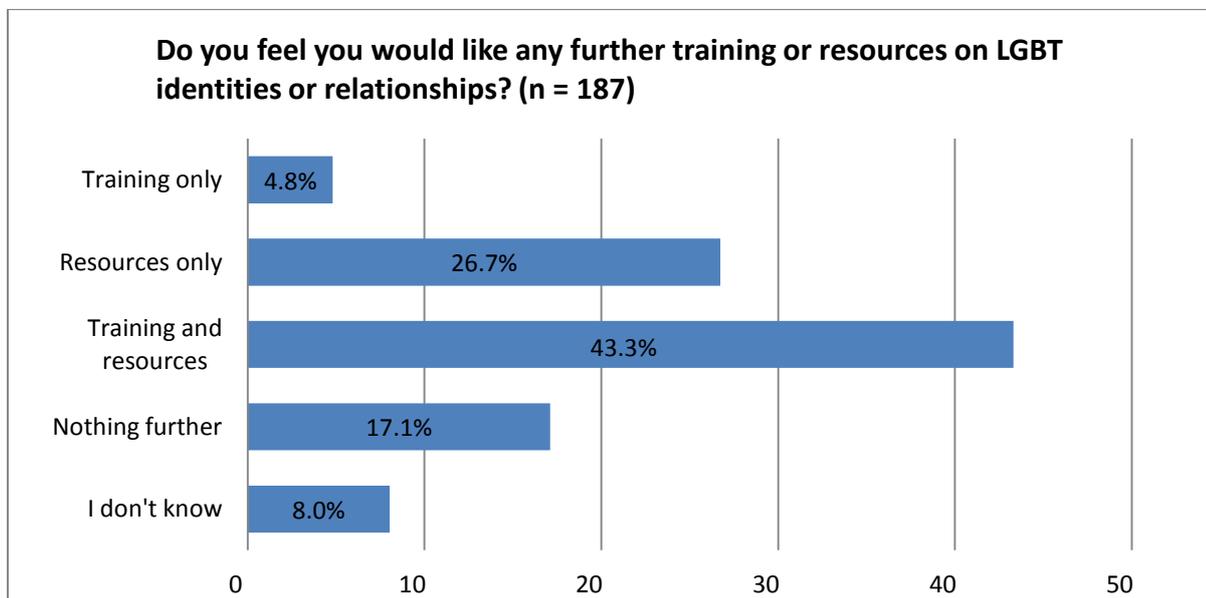
“Some definitions would have been immensely helpful”

“I would have liked more time for discussion, interactive activities to find out more about everyone’s experiences in school/life”

“Bisexuality was not as visible as LGT”.

The future

The penultimate section of the questionnaire asked respondents about the future. There was a relatively strong demand for further support on LGBT identities or relationships. Most commonly this was a combination of training and resources (43%), but just over a quarter desired resources only (27%, see below). This suggests there should be interest in the IEIE resources launched at project end.



When asked to provide more detail on what they would like to see covered in future training, resources or support, participants mostly requested practical advice or input:

“What sort of posters you could use in the classroom”

“What do we cover at different key stages”

“Ways it can be included in lessons”

“Some role play to see how best to address some situations”

“Videos that could be shown in primary schools”.

Some respondents also offered further comments or suggestions, which were mostly complimentary, though some would have liked more primary-specific input:

“Very valuable and useful to know and improve knowledge”

“Very thought-provoking and engaging afternoon. Thank you”.

Overall, training participants were positive about their experience, and thought it would have an impact on their future practice, with over three quarters thinking their knowledge, awareness and confidence about LGBT identities or relationships had increased as a result.

7. Reflections from consortium partners

Five individual interviews were undertaken with consortium partners, i.e. representatives from ABA, EACH, OtRB and the PSHE Association (coded CP1-5 below). The focus of these was to reflect on the project and identify learning for future delivery in the sector. Interviews took place over the phone and lasted between 30 and 70 minutes. Quotes are not always attributed to a code to protect participant anonymity.

Perspectives on activities undertaken

Most of the consortium partners had been involved in resource development, to varying degrees. ABA, for example, led on a literature review (Tippett, 2015) and guidance documents (ABA, 2015a, b, c) specifically related to HBT bullying among disabled young people and those with SEN, which were informed by consultation with disabled young people about their experiences of HBT bullying:

“A lot of the young people that we spoke to said that they were kind of considered asexual and that they didn’t need any information about SRE, they didn’t need any information about PSHE, and so what was happening was that... if the child for example had to go [for] speech and language therapy the school would... often put it in where they were supposed to have sex and relationship education because that was seen as the least important thing for that young person... [they] just felt like teachers tend to see disabled children as not needing information about sex and relationship education, and included in that LGBT issues, even though they are the group that are the most vulnerable to, for example, sexual abuse... And something else that was quite interesting was about how disabled young people felt that they weren’t, if they felt that they were LGBT+ they felt that they couldn’t really say that or they weren’t believed... We spoke to this group of young people who were trans young people, but trans disabled young people, so they were a really interesting bunch and it was kind of like, they felt that because for example if you’ve got Asperger’s you might not be taken as seriously when you say actually I think I’m trans... they basically provided a framework for the materials”.

These resources were thought to address a specific gap in current materials: “*Nobody [has] really looked into the impact of HBT bullying on disabled children and children with SEN [before]*”. Perhaps as a result of this, the resources garnered a variety of media attention (e.g. see Bloom, 2016; Duffy, 2016).

Broader resources produced also included a short animated film, ‘What is gender?’, led by OtRB (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIYtj0sf6ec>), and the materials launched at the final showcase event (led by EACH):

“What we’re looking at developing is something that comes as a ring binder that has about 20 pages of whole school policy guidance, some useful definitions, frequently asked questions, supporting people’s coming out and all those sorts of things, then there’s around nine lesson plans for secondary and seven lesson plans for primary to give some more practical guidance around that... Other stuff can be added to it later down the line so it’s more of a living resource... that they [schools] can keep adding to”.

The work with partnership schools was said to have fed in to the development of this resource:

"I think the work with the schools helped inform... what we would prioritise to put in the resource, what we were aware was coming up for them, and just the way we presented the information... that idea of it being a living resource rather than something bound that we just send off... seeing what they were using and what they were praising also informed how we developed our resource".

Gender was identified as an integral component, perhaps responding to materials where this has not been so strongly included before, albeit with different foci at different ages:

"I think the [IEIE] programme has given us more freedom and opportunity to address issues around gender and make sure that's represented in the resources... the difference between the [primary] delivery is there is a lot less focus on trans issues, like we were talking about gender stereotyping and that, but it wasn't about trans issues specifically, whereas in secondary there was quite a big focus on supporting trans people".

Gender is also the subject of the film, again informed by consultation with young people which was said to be an important aspect of IEIE work:

"It'll be great to have a product out of it... for the young people to see that they've contributed to something that's kind of created" (CP5)

"Having conversations with trans and gender questioning young people, and with the young people with special educational needs and disabilities, really helped backup the work on those issues. We did also do some work consulting more generally around homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying with groups around the area and I suppose that reinforced what we already knew around homophobic bullying but it also highlighted that addressing trans issues was becoming more and more of a pressing concern and that all of the groups that we visited were saying they have much more predominantly trans service users coming along to these groups" (CP4)

"Everything that we do started off with directly listening to the views of young people themselves" (CP2).

As mentioned by school staff, the use of 'safe space' stickers was also suggested as part of IEIE:

"The safe space sticker is one of the most eagerly anticipated element of our resource with teachers regularly asking us at the end of any training or awareness-raising session when these will be produced. As a result we're having several hundred sheets printed because they're going to prove so popular and I know exactly why. They're an invaluable way to say to anyone who sees one, 'I'm cool with this issue. I may not have all the answers but you can speak to me and I'll try my very best'".

Impact on professional practice and the school environment

Staff knowledge, awareness and confidence

Mirroring questions asked of school staff, consortium partners were asked if they could identify any perceived impact on staff they had worked with, regarding knowledge and awareness or confidence levels, and how these may have differed across settings or issues:

“Awareness has doubtless been raised amongst our three primary schools around the way that the primary settings are very gendered, lining up boys and girls, pitching them against each other in a sort of fun kind of way that nevertheless gently reinforces all those stereotypes, which is lovely to debunk and then they go, ‘God, yes, I do’... [In secondary schools] much more a case of their concern is without doubt supporting gender questioning pupils” (CP3)

“I think the stuff around gender identity was where people definitely had a lot less confidence and were quite uncertain... I think it’s affirming for them to know that there’s support locally for that and I think also it seemed to coincide as well just with a lot of schools having a pupil that they needed to support. So I think what helped as well was that it wasn’t like it was something theoretical, you know, like, ‘well if this ever comes up maybe we’ll need to do something’. I think they were recognising that it was quite an immediate issue” (CP4).

Echoing views from the school staff, consortium partners also highlighted the role of the IEIE networking meetings:

“One of the things this [IEIE] programme has allowed those schools to do is... just hear us or each other say, ‘oh yeah we do that’ or ‘yes we found that as well’... and you can just see that that’s really reassuring because they all, understandably, operate like little fiefdoms really, I think especially with academisation there is that sort of closed-shoppedness, and this has given them the chance to sort of cross-pollinate in a positive way... mostly in the meetings but I think that there have been some email exchange and a couple of telephone conversations [as well]” (CP3)

“[The] meetings that we did have they’ve found really useful to kind of talk and share with other schools, so I think facilitating that networking and that conversation and getting advice from other schools... that kind of helped them” (CP4).

School practices

Participants were also asked to identify any changes they were aware of that had taken place in partnership schools. A number of different elements were raised, including policy change and resource use:

“There are three secondary schools who are rewriting their policies on gender questioning and trans pupils based on the work that we’ve done with them” (CP3)

“I know a few schools have reviewed their policies as part of the programme, or it was already coming up for review or the programme triggered it and we’ve given them feedback

and our thoughts... some of that isn't going to, like some of it will change maybe at the end of this academic year, so it will fall outside of the project but that change is going to happen and it's part of their ongoing strategy" (CP4)

"We've had schools, because we sent them samples of some of the resources that we're developing that will be released next month, we know that schools have already been using those materials and starting to embed some of that now, which is good" (CP4).

School-based equality or LGBT groups were also discussed, alongside some individuals' experiences:

"Where schools have got either established LGBT groups, and three of our schools have, and others are now wanting to do it... they're being affirmed by the fact that those other schools have, that's been really good because it's given those young people a voice. That sounds terribly twee but it is true, it has given them that voice, and I'm picturing the trans young person at one particular rural school who said at the end that 'it's so nice having somebody from outside listen to us and take us seriously'" (CP3)

"I'd say the group at [S4], the young people's group... I've had quite a bit of contact with them... and from their perspective... the school's taking it really seriously and they found that really helpful and useful, and the kind of enthusiasm and encouragement that they've received around challenging like homophobic, biphobic, transphobic bullying has been really good" (CP5)

"One young person who came out as trans... at one of our partnership schools... from his perspective he was kind of anticipating, I think, quite a bit of bullying, or you know, kind of staff intolerance and stuff. From his kind of feedback anyway... [they] were really good when [he] came out... very supportive around giving him his ID badge and things like that, and the right name and those kind of things" (CP5).

Reflections on the project

Project strengths and limitations

Consortium partners were asked to identify what they felt were strengths to the IEIE project. Most often what was raised related to the focus and content of the project:

"What was great about the project was that... [we] wanted to look at particular areas that were different, so for example [the] work on looking at how HBT bullying affects disabled children... has kind of surpassed our expectations because we really didn't know that we would get as much information back from young people... what I was think was really good was actually having the space to develop and focus on looking at vulnerable children, so disabled children being in that group, and also trans children, and really focussing in on those specific areas and having a chance to look at what are the differences around disablist bullying and HBT bullying, so that's been really helpful"

“One of the things as well that I’m very proud of about this piece of work is just how foregrounded primary is in it... I’ve always been very mindful of how little there was out there for primary settings and primary staff” (CP3)

“This project has given us more of an opportunity to work with primaries [who] have definitely been a lot more interested... they’ve been really receptive to this work” (CP4).

Partners also emphasised the role of the ‘pre’ evaluation surveys:

“Your surveys were really helpful because it helped frame and shape the conversations that [we] had with the relevant members of staff in the school, therefore that enabled [us] to tailor a bespoke training session... and all that came out of it helped inform the lessons and activities that we created” (CP3)

“Having it tailored to individual schools and their needs... having done the baseline survey and having those results to feed into what we focused on and what we delivered, that really helped” (CP4).

The ‘whole school’ approach of the project was thought to be particularly beneficial:

“The thing is with the whole school approach... that seems to work the best to reduce bullying... really working with, in particular with the smaller group of schools... quite intensively, there’s that buy-in from the senior leadership team... to trickle the information down through various routes so that the whole school is really involved in it, teachers and all staff in the school are kind of trained up and that everybody’s got buy-in and we know that that, through evidence, we know that works the best in reducing bullying” (CP2)

“It was an opportunity to impress upon... schools, both with whom we’re working and also more widely once the resource has been published and the programme comes to an end, that well-intentioned individuals or small groups of teachers are not going to affect practical change, however well-intentioned... a whole school approach has to be top-down, has to have the senior leadership team on board” (CP3)

“It’s been... good that all teachers have got it on their radar now and even if you know it’s not about them being an expert, but that they’ve kind of had it flagged up to them... even in the kind of smallest of impacts, that they then at least feel more confident to be able to support the young person. I’m not thinking necessarily that they will all want to do a whole lesson on LGBT+ but I think that when needed or if needed they’d be more able to support the young person... not just the kind of teachers who are PSHE... it’s not just the PSHE people who’ve been like really receptive” (CP5).

The value of the consortium in feeding into resource development was also identified:

“Because we’ve all been kind of pulled together as experts in the field in various forms, it meant that when we pulled together to write [resources] we each had different expertise that really complemented each other, so it was relatively easy to write because we all had those skills” (CP2).

The key point of feedback concerning a potential weakness of the project related to timing:

“If I had a magic wand I would give more time for it. I think the one year is a really tight turnaround to develop, bring in partners, pilot, complete the evaluation, and deliver all the resources. There’s not a lot of thinking and consideration time in there... That would be the big change that I would make” (CP1)

“It’s always difficult in a 12 month programme to really give schools the space to implement activity... it’s really difficult to see real impact and real change in that short space of time... it sort of sows the seeds of a lot of change, it’s just quite a tall order to deliver that much in such a short space of time, so obviously in an ideal world it would be great to be able to continue the programme or to have projects that last longer” (CP2)

“It’s very difficult to try and execute a one year programme in one calendar year that doesn’t marry up with the financial year and I’m not sure that always people within government quite appreciate the demands that are placed on staff within the school year... really one year is more like nine months... My recommendation to this government would be that if you do anything like this again make it two [years], don’t make it one” (CP3)

“We’ve found that, which we sort of knew at the beginning, but doing a project over one year and particularly the financial year where you get lots of school holidays involved, made it a lot tighter and it would have been much nicer to have more time, particularly I think to make sure that the work really reached people. I think we’ve made a big change with staff so that’s been great to see, but it would be nice to... be able to continue to support the schools to feed that down to their pupils” (CP4).

Broader challenges to LGBT-inclusive schools

Remaining challenges were also highlighted that echoed responses from school staff about wider government policy and practice and their potential influence on the broader school environment, for instance comments were made about the pressures schools face:

“There are a range of challenges that schools are facing at the moment in relation to resources, in relation to exams and narrowing of the curriculum, and all of those kinds of things... My sense is that schools do feel under a lot of pressure at the moment and resources are tight, obviously there are potential cuts in funding, and I think in that context just finding time to do anything beyond the absolute core academic is a challenge for schools and will be an ongoing one. But we absolutely know that children who are engaged in bullying or being bullied are not going to be in a good position to learn and so even if you were just focusing on that academic route there would still be a strong argument for addressing these issues” (CP1)

“I don’t think any of us quite anticipated just how packed out their agenda already is. I think when you factor in Ofsted, radicalisation, FGM, exams, particularly in the more challenged inner city schools who have no slack in their timetable. That’s more of an observation than a criticism but... if we’d just had slightly more breathing space around time” (CP3).

A number of partners also lamented the non-statutory status of PSHE, suggesting that this does not support the development of LGBT-inclusive school environments (see Formby, 2015 for further discussion on this):

“Obviously there was recently the announcement that they’re not going to make SRE and PSHE compulsory, and I know that a lot of young people highlighted that with... any of the LGBT matters not being addressed in sex education, that that helps reinforce a lot of the misconceptions around the issue... there needs to be those conversations where we are talking about relationships, but where it’s inclusive of LGBT” (CP4)

“I think another thing which is not always helpful is not having statutory PSHE as well. Sometimes it’s not seen as being a particularly important subject and it happens so differently in every school that that can cause a bit of a barrier” (CP2)

“It’s really saddening that PSHE, obviously like last week [it] was said... it’s not to be compulsory, and I think while that’s the case, just around those schools having that statutory requirement to take this seriously... [it] is a massive barrier” (CP5).

Similarly, there were calls for DfE guidance on trans inclusion in schools, as it was believed the absence of this inhibited progress:

“It would be enormously useful if the Department [for Education] could put out formal guidance for schools on how to support trans identifying pupils and how to challenge transphobic bullying... it does inform... people feeling, schools feeling, unconfident about it, and us, to an extent, being unconfident because we haven’t got the formal guidance upon which to rely... In 2016 it’s much, much easier to deal with the issue of sexuality and homophobia and biphobia than it is to deal with pronoun change and all that sits around trans” (CP3)

“It was also, from our perspective, probably harder to affirm if they were coming from a position of not having confidence because there isn’t really like a strong government statement supporting some of the more practical issues around how you help people wanting to transition or is questioning their gender... I think that does stop, I think it makes some of the best practice guidance that we reinforce, it makes it sounds like it’s an opinion... it just has less weight behind it I think” (CP4).

Feedback was also provided on youth services, and their impact on LGBT young people:

“The decimation really of... LGBT+ youth services more generally, that youth services are now being cut to a shoestring anyway... the impacts of that on specialist provision is just going to be massive” (CP5).

Lessons learned

The consortium partners were also asked what they felt were the main lessons they had learned from being involved in the project. Often these were related to gender identity issues, or perceived challenges currently facing schools (and teachers):

“I’ve learned that all schools in both settings, primary and secondary, are increasingly meeting this issue of gender questioning pupils [and] I’m recognising that a number of schools in the absence of a youth service, which has collapsed, are seeing that there’s a need for LGBT groups” (CP3)

“The kind of depth of support that both trans young people and schools still require kind of around gender identity... a lot of the young people who took part in the project identify with gender outside of [a] binary and also... outside of the dichotomies of LGBT, heterosexual... you know, it’s fluid... young people do want to start talking about gender and sexuality... it’s about having those conversations and just about empowering the adults around young people to have those conversations in the easy way, not about teaching them a whole new language, so that’s been huge... I think it’s really showing to me that it’s not only just around like transphobic bullying, but actually the kind of lack of confidence and clarity by schools around trans issues more generally was very, very poor” (CP5)

“I’m recognising that there are a number of ‘out’ teachers in school who remain ‘not out’ to pupils, and that’s absolutely their choice, but what’s interesting is that we won’t have... really safe schools for our kids until the teachers feel safe to be out, because what they don’t want to expose themselves to is ridicule by the pupils or perhaps parental disapproval, so if they feel that that’s going to happen they must feel at some level that they’re not going to get the support of the senior leadership team” (CP3).

Looking forward

With regard to future work in this field, observations were made about what were believed to be the most effective ways of implementing change in schools:

“I think we definitely saw that the people with the more kind of clout in the school were much more able to influence what happened and make sure that stuff did happen. There was I suppose a counter example, just that I know there was a school where it was with a member of SLT but then because of that they were also swamped and really busy and so... I think it needs more than one person taking a lead on it just so that they can fall back on someone if they suddenly become very busy... maybe someone with [a] pastoral support [role]” (CP4).

Suggestions were also made about further work in the future:

“I think there’s a problem... if we’ve got disabled children who are not getting information about LGBT issues in schools... and I’d be worried that there would be other vulnerable groups who are experiencing that as well, so I think ensuring that there’s inclusive SRE, inclusive PSHE, an inclusive approach to reducing HBT bullying, so making sure that your information is accessible, making sure that teachers understand that disabled children are as likely... to be LGBT+ as non-disabled children... we’ve seen such a change in the last ten years around HBT bullying for the better... and I think we need to keep that momentum going for as long as possible” (CP2)

“Some of the best schools have provided excellent one-to-one support, but that general kind of challenging prejudices around trans identities I don’t think that was necessarily going on, but we’ve included in our resource more materials about those conversations... at the

moment I think it's more just responded to when it arises rather than any kind of preventative work... I think there needs to be more proactive work but I do recognise that there are some challenges as well that need to be worked out... I think there's a general kind of lack of clarity as well about how it relates to the outside world... we are so organised around gender, it's hard to think how a school can balance those two things... There needs to be maybe more work around gender and harassment, and gender bullying isn't just about people who are trans and questioning their gender, it's also about all the other issues that come with this, so it probably needs just for there to be more work... across the board where you can see how this relates to the young person and how oppressive the way that gender is structured can be" (CP4).

In sum, consortium partners contributed to the breadth of IEIE delivery, including resource development, drawing on their experience of consultation with schools and young people to support this work. They also specifically sought to address perceived gaps in existing materials, through their inclusion of primary schools, gender, and disability. They drew attention to perceived IEIE impacts on staff awareness and confidence, as well as school policies and procedures. In identifying project strengths, and challenges related to timescales and broader policy agendas, they highlighted issues that could be addressed in future.

8. Conclusions and discussion

This chapter draws together findings from across the evaluation, which in total included:

- five focus groups (47 participants)
- nine self-completion surveys (6879 responses)
- fifteen individual or paired in-depth interviews (16 participants).

Project impacts

Whilst the evaluation results cannot 'prove' that the project had impact (because of the lack of control/comparison group, and because the surveys did not have exactly matching samples), there are a range of observations that can be made with implications for future policy and practice in this field.

The survey data from primary settings suggests that both pupils and staff thought that there was more teaching about 'different' families and relationships, LGBT identities and relationships, and homophobia towards the end of the project than at the beginning. More staff also felt that they dealt with homophobic name-calling and bullying 'very' or 'quite' well towards the end of the project than at the beginning, which could relate to the higher levels of reported confidence in 2016 compared with 2015. Staff members were also more likely to say they would include LGBT identities and relationships in their teaching or support of others' teaching in the follow-up survey, compared to before. Pupils reported observing less (pupil) homophobic name-calling or bullying, and less negative use of the word 'gay', in the final survey than in the baseline.

There was less variation between pre and post surveys at secondary level, which could relate to some of the challenges discussed below. In general, both pupils and staff thought that more people taught 'a little' about LGBT identities or relationships, and dealt with HBT bullying 'very' or 'quite' well towards the end of the project than at the beginning. Some pupil focus group data also suggested that teachers were addressing problematic/homophobic language use more than they had in the past. However, in the surveys there were still clear differences between how well people thought HBT bullying was dealt with compared to 'general' bullying (which primary pupils, and secondary staff and pupils thought was dealt with better). Whilst there were variations between pre and post surveys at secondary level, for instance about how often staff heard pupils using the word 'gay' negatively, and numbers of pupils saying they would be happy to be friends with an LGBT person, these were often smaller differences than those reported at primary level.

Where staff had been involved in training (within the ten partnership schools or more widely), there is evidence to suggest that this could facilitate increased knowledge, awareness and/or confidence about discussing LGBT identities, or 'diverse' family relationships, within a school environment, as well as challenges to problematic/homophobic language use among pupils.

Pupils involved in the focus groups identified a range of ways in which LGBT visibility had been increased in their school during the time of the IEIE project. This included posters and notice boards, themed assemblies and other one-off events (with anti-bullying week and LGBT history month often used as the impetus), and formal curriculum input. In primary settings, books had been read in class time which generated discussion about family diversity, and gender (including transgender) identities more broadly, with most primary pupils suggesting that this learning was

useful for them, and allowed them to comfortably ask their teacher questions. Secondary pupils were sometimes less complimentary about the inclusion of LGBT identities across a range of subject areas, though overall the focus group discussions did document some changes to awareness levels among pupils that happened during the time of the project, and which were believed to be as a result of formal curriculum content. However, information delivered within PSHE-type lessons could suffer from being 'devalued' by its non-assessed status, echoing previous large-scale research in the field (Formby et al, 2011; Formby and Wolstenholme, 2012). Similarly, there was some scepticism about levels of teacher empathy or commitment, because bullying was not seen as anyone's 'specialist' subject. Pupils articulated a range of opinions about the effectiveness of visual materials in school: whilst some thought posters could help raise awareness, others felt they had little impact on pupils.

Across both the primary and secondary school discussions, the discourse of bullying was prevalent, with problematic language use or 'bullying' behaviour often explained as immaturity, and echoing debates in existing literature that bullying can 'regulate' young people's behaviours (Formby, 2015; Rawlings and Russell, 2012) and/or perceived 'differences' (Davies, 2011; Formby, 2013, 2015; Thornberg, 2011; Walton, 2011). Staff demonstrated some caution about the terminology of bullying and the blurred line between that and 'everyday' youthful relationships. Though caution is needed to not over-generalise findings from a small number of focus groups, it is perhaps of concern that some pupils perceived themselves to be 'victims' of bullying, and thought that their teachers or school 'do not care'. Reporting bullying appeared to still be problematic, despite these discussions, linked to enduring fears about being called "a snitch", even where schools endeavoured to promote 'bystander' reporting.

A specific way in which schools were thought to support LGBT students was through the provision of school-based LGBT or equality groups, which were said to facilitate identity validation (four of the ten partnership schools had, or developed, such a group during the course of IEIE). The growth in these groups might be linked to a decline in LGBT youth services, which was mentioned by a number of interview participants. Various secondary pupil survey respondents highlighted the information they had received from their school's LGBT/equality group, but the focus group discussions also suggested that where student-led groups had initiated activities, this could lead to some confusion or scepticism among the wider student body, for instance that staff members were merely paying 'lip service', rather than actively engaging with the issues. It may be that it is a difficult balance for schools to strike: to support and facilitate student-led activities, at the same time as not appearing to suggest that the school or SLT are not themselves interested or willing to engage.

Most interviewees felt it was too early to document wide-scale changes to the school environment, given that the IEIE project took place over a relatively short period of time which limited the extent to which the project could 'bed in' prior to evaluation, particularly where some schools were waiting for the final release of resources before they undertook more work. However, there were tentative suggestions for how school-based interventions could contribute to a school's culture or 'atmosphere'. Both pupils and staff, for example, commented on the numbers of students willing to be 'out' about their identities within (some) schools. Though this cannot be linked directly to IEIE, it does suggest that more inclusive environments, over time, are understood to enable more 'open' students. It was suggested that as more pupils 'come out', this lessens the use of the phrase 'that's so gay' in that year group; conversely, when there are more 'jokes' about (homo)sexuality within a peer group, this was thought to make people more reluctant to 'come out'. When staff interviewees were asked to identify what lessons they had learned from being involved in the project, increased

empathy for, and understanding of, students' needs was one of the most often identified. Another key lesson was about the importance of staff knowledge, at both secondary and primary level, because as participants suggested, "you don't know it all" and "with the right training teachers really will change their language [and] behaviour".

Implications for future practice

Given the volume of 'diverse' gender and sexual self-identities present among secondary pupils (and to a certain extent the numbers of primary pupils identifying as 'tomboys'), survey data indicate that schools need to engage with, and keep abreast of, these developments. Fortunately, there may be pupil support for this: over half of secondary pupil respondents thought their school should include more about LGBT identities in both pre and post surveys, with supportive comments also featuring in pupil focus group data. There were calls from pupils for more engaging lessons, in particular drawing on 'real life' experiences of people who had some connection with the topic (see Formby, 2013 for further discussion of this approach).

Offering individual support to pupils, particularly those who may be questioning their gender identity, was commonly described as a growing issue for schools, and yet one which staff were (at least initially) often less familiar or comfortable with, highlighting the important role of specialist training and/or external support in this field. A challenge for those delivering training is how to balance the diverse needs of trainees with the realities of school settings which often result in limited time available. This may necessitate thinking about the most effective ways of engaging initially disinterested staff and/or working with smaller groups of appropriate staff who may be able to build capacity within schools.

Both survey and focus group data collected from secondary pupils indicate that biphobia and transphobia, and bisexual and trans identities, are less likely to be included within schools than homophobia and/or gay identities, which was a cause for concern for some, and which could be addressed in future delivery. Though there were differences reported in relation to advertising groups or services for LGBT young people in secondary schools, numbers were still relatively low. This could be improved in future school practices, taking inspiration from partnership schools beginning to use 'equality boards' to disseminate this (and wider) signposting information. Where schools do not signpost or provide relevant information, evidence shows that pupils will look elsewhere, which previous research indicates may be problematic (Formby 2011a, b). Growth in the provision of LGBT or equality groups in schools may be a positive step in supporting identities and/or the provision of information, but care needs to be taken that these are not (seen to be) operating in isolation and/or without appropriate external or staff support.

Both school staff and consortium partners identified that the baseline evaluation surveys were useful to be able to subsequently target and tailor the support offered in schools. This was seen to be a particular strength of the IEIE project, which might be something for organisations to consider in future. Equally, most staff valued the opportunity to network and share experiences or practice suggestions with other schools, suggesting that in future, local networks (whether formal or informal), supported by those with expertise, could facilitate and support further work in this field. Evidence from across the evaluation indicates that teachers are more likely to respond positively to interactive sessions focussed on potential classroom activities and responses, rather than broader 'awareness-raising' delivery approaches. Schools may need to consider how any continuing professional development (CPD) is advertised or offered (see also above), as it may be that

compulsory training appropriate for both teaching and non-teaching staff is more likely to facilitate a 'whole school' approach, and thus greater impact in schools. In future practice, thought may also need to be given to the diversity of school pupil backgrounds, with support tailored appropriately. Consideration needs to be given to the timescales of project funding and delivery, too, in order to allow maximum time for the development of input, as well as the time to foster and evidence impact.

Qualitative data indicate that there are supportive frameworks and agendas to enable delivery of this work, with a number of school leads talking about the importance of Ofsted. These external agendas, together with SLT support, were often seen as important, if not crucial, in giving staff the confidence and 'permission' to address these issues in their practice. Across the staff and consortium partner interviews, there was much discussion of schools as 'pressured' environments, which was frequently linked to the perception that agendas are often in 'competition', meaning that addressing HBT bullying may be de-prioritised. This was often related to the steer given (or not given) by SLT. For some schools, it was a juggling act to balance time allocated to a range of issues, whilst for other schools LGBT identities and HBT bullying had not been on their 'radar' prior to the IEIE project. Another challenge concerned fears about parental disapproval, but it was felt that greater support from DfE could address some of these issues, for instance by making PSHE compulsory and/or publishing guidance on school-based support for trans and gender questioning pupils. It was thought that actions such as these would bolster support in schools, sending a message that HBT bullying is, and should be, 'high on the agenda'. These policy changes could thus support and extend the impact of the DfE/GEO HBT bullying grants programme, within which the IEIE project was funded. Addressing HBT bullying and/or LGBT inclusion in schools may not be an easy task, but this evaluation demonstrates the potential of expert provision, and suggests that with long-term support, change can be achieved.

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