

LGB&T Children and Young People's Sub Group

Notes of Meeting

9/5/13, Youth Action, Belfast

Attendees

Nicola Dornan, SAIL; Lee Kane, NIABF; Natalie Corbett, Rainbow; Gavin Boyd, Rainbow; Gail Neill, Youth Action; Amanda Stephens, Youthnet; Rosemary McAnerney, SHSCT; Gabrielle O'Neill, SEHSCT; Andrew Hawthorne, HSCB/CYPSP; Hilary Johnston, PHA

Apologies

Deidre McNamee, PHA; Maurice Leeson, HSCB/CYPSP; Sharon Bingham, NHSCT; Mark Brown, Cara-Friend, Jill Trotter, BELB, Elizabeth Gilhooley, BHSCT

Co-Chair

Gavin Boyd agreed to be the co-chair for the group and to chair alternate meetings with Hilary Johnston. PHA/CYPSP to continue to provide administrative support to the group.

Terms of Reference

Members noted that the ToR circulated by email with the papers could not be opened. A hard copy was circulated. All agreed the ToR should be signed off once the matter of the co-chair was added.

Dates of meetings for the rest of the year

The following dates were agreed and noted:

17th June at 1pm, 7th August at 10am, 2nd October at 10am and 6th November at 10am.

Action Plan

This was the main agenda item. All acknowledged and thanked Andrew Hawthorne for the preparation work he had undertaken in collating the vast amount of research and information shared at, and after, the workshop.

It was agreed that the group would discuss the qualitative information presented under each of the 6 outcomes and highlight possible actions for this year (and potential for future years) plans. It was agreed that possible actions would be written up and discussed further and prioritised at the June meeting.

Summary of Discussion

Gavin Boyd updated the group on a recently released Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education. One of the recommendations of the report is that the necessary legislation should be brought forward for schools and other educational institutions to be designated as public authorities under section 75 and hence have to comply with the associated statutory duties. The report also recommends that an independent review should also be undertaken of the curriculum in relation to Personal Development and Mutual Understanding and Local and Global Citizenship as well as the Curriculum Framework for Youth Work. All agreed this would be very helpful and that it is unfortunate that there is no clear pathway as yet for taking the recommendations forward.

Nicola Doran noted that as some schools (manly in the integrated sector) have models of good practice already in place and suggested that this sub group could be influential in sharing this good practice with other schools, with the possibility of providing training and/or resources to roll out this good practice..

Lee Kane advised that the NIABF have a business case with DE at the minute to take forward a conference/masterclass for school staff looking at equality issues around bullying. The plan is that the conference would be supported with localised events. It should be known in the next few weeks if DE agree to support the proposal.

Lee Kane reminded the group of the imatter audit toolkit which is in development and which will provide schools with a resource to self evaluate the whole school community on emotional health and wellbeing. Hilary Johnston advised that she is part of this work and that she will check with the chair of the group if the toolkit can be shared with this group. It was noted that whilst the toolkit is to support policies such as Every School a Good School there is no mandate for schools to comply and there is no funding attached to the initiative.

Nicola Doran highlighted the need for education around gender identity issues in primary schools around treatment of the child and knowing how to communicate with the parents/carers. There was a discussion around the need to get to teachers at an early stage during training. Gavin Boyd noted tht Rainbow have given some guest lectures at Stranmillis, St Mary's and QUB but it is felt there is some way to go before the colleges have the issues built into the core curriculum. There was some discussion on the possible development of an accredited module for teacher training. It was noted that working through neighbourhood renewal areas/partnerships may be a way to get information to schools/parents as they have to comply with section 75.

The group discussed the Grasping the Nettle report and the excellent recent launch event which many members of the group attended. From this report one area of work that this group may be able to influence is getting information on the under 18 gender identity pathway highlighted to all GPs.

Nicola Doran noted that the sharing of information on young people with gender identity issues from primary to post primary schools is not done effectively.

Rosemary McAnerney noted that it would be useful to use section 75 as part of the selection criteria for the Roots of Empathy programme and asked if any same sex couples had every been recruited. Hilary Johnston agreed to check this.

There was a group discussion around books for the use of schools that cover LGB&T issues. It was agreed that it would be useful to have additional resources available.

It was noted there is a need for training for P1 teachers.

It was noted there is a need for a pathway for dealing with transgender issues in schools and that it should link with Billie Hughes' service.

Nicola Doran and Amanda Stephens shared with the group the experience of a young transgender person in an FE college and how they were taken out of college to attend a course for behaviour issues without the course provider being made aware of the young person's background. They are following up with the college.

All agreed the need to improve the knowledge of GPs.

Rosemary McAnerney agreed to follow up the CAWT review of the literature around LGB&T.

All agreed the need to promote generally the concept of good health behaviours around the need of young men, including the need for testing. It was noted the teaching of safe sex in schools is hetro focussed. This is also true around the teaching of "good relationships". It was noted that 1 in 4 men living with HIV don;t know it.

The ideal would be health checks being available in FE colleges.

The need for training on transgender issues within sexual health services was noted.

There is a communications need around public media campaigns and how gender identity is represented.

There was considerable discussion around the issue of hate crime. A key issue is that this should be noted by PSNI at the time of first recording the complaint. Under reporting is a big issue, particularly with young people. There is a need to raise awareness in schools that homophobic bullying can be treated as a hate crime. It was noted that some work is ongoing with PSNI community officers going into schools.

There was a discussion around the data hub pilot in the southern area which will be helpful when rolled out to all council areas. It was agreed that Eddie Curtis should

be approached to see if it would be useful for someone from the pilot to join this group.

Gavin Boyd noted that the pilot was based on the Scottish model of dealing with hate crime.

It was agreed that someone from PSNI should be invited to join the group. Gavin (?) agreed to follow this up.

There was a discussion around internet safety and inappropriate images. All agreed this is major issue but is beyond the remit of this group. One issue that could be tackled is the filter system in schools which blocks organisations such as Rainbow.

The group agreed there is a lack of LGBT role models but that is outside the remit of this group.

There was a discussion about the need for training and support within the foster care system.

Nicola Doran also noted the need for support mechanisms for young trans people who felt they couldn't attend school.

The Women's Aid Safe Zone model was noted as a model of good practice.

All agree the action plan should combine a bottom up and top down approach.