


 case
study
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Teacher
Ricards Lodge High School, South London

Ricards Lodge is a community school for girls in Wimbledon with over 1,180 pupils and a diverse multicultural intake.

The school has a mixed sixth form. Our approach to safeguarding was judged outstanding by Ofsted in 2010 and this was in part due to the fact that the school is an inclusive environment where all are safe to teach and learn. The school's approach to equality is led by the headteacher, senior leadership team and Equality Working Group (including staff and students) in close partnership with the governing body.

The school has a comprehensive equality policy which is embedded throughout the curriculum. This is complemented by regular training, monitoring, reporting and reviewing procedures. The equality policy, statement and training schedule are published on the school website – initiatives all developed and led by the senior leadership team. The policy explicitly highlights the school's commitment to sexual orientation equality for all and outlines the strong commitment to preventing homophobic bullying. The senior leadership team have explored these issues in detail with staff through the equality working group and a range of staff training sessions (including hosting two borough-wide conferences for primary and secondary schools). The school equality statement is displayed throughout the school building, website, prospectus and student planners. With the support of the senior leadership team, a range of staff have also attended the annual Stonewall Education for All Conference.

All students have participated in LGBT History Month assemblies, and explored the issue in a range of PSHE and Citizenship lessons (including studying the Stonewall film *FTT*). In addition, equality is promoted in a central display within the school and this makes prominent use of Stonewall's '*Some People Are Gay. Get Over It!*' materials. Crucially, any incidents of homophobic bullying are addressed promptly; students are supported and educated as to why this is not an acceptable form of behaviour; incidents are monitored and homophobic bullying is an explicit element of our anti-bullying policy. As a teacher, it is important to me to know I have the support of the headteacher and senior leadership team to do so.

As a consequence of this work and the ethos set by the school's senior leadership team our staff and students have felt more able to discuss issues of sexuality openly and with confidence. Furthermore, the school's approach to this work is monitored and adapted regularly and in the future the school will be working closely with other schools as the London Borough of Merton has recently joined Stonewall's Education Champions programme.

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Top ten tips

1 ACKNOWLEDGE AND IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM

Compile evidence using Stonewall research such as *The School Report*, *The Teachers' Report* and *Different Families*, pupil surveys, homophobic bullying monitoring and attendance figures and share this with the school community

2 KNOW WHAT'S REQUIRED OF YOU AND YOUR SCHOOL

Make sure you are aware of, and keep up to speed on, relevant legislation and policy and ensure its effective implementation

3 SET THE STANDARDS FOR YOUR SCHOOL

Have a clear vision for the school and communicate this to the whole school community

4 IDENTIFY ALLIES

Work with key individuals in your school community who have a strong influence and will help bring others on board

5 INVOLVE THE WHOLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Include governors, all staff, parents, carers and pupils in the development of policies and procedures. Listen to their concerns and reassure them

6 DON'T REINVENT THE WHEEL

Learn from good practice in your own school, neighbouring schools, the local authority and the wider community

7 PROVIDE INFORMATION AND TRAINING

Make sure that governors, senior leaders and staff receive training in order to understand and implement the school's policies and procedures

8 PROMOTE A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT

Make sure your school clearly celebrates difference and diversity. Use assemblies, displays, posters and the curriculum to create a positive school environment where homophobia is not tolerated

9 ENCOURAGE ROLE MODELS

Encourage LGB people, including same-sex parents, to become governors and to take an active part in school life. Create an environment where LGB staff feel able to be themselves

10 CELEBRATE ACHIEVEMENTS

Acknowledge and celebrate progress so that governors, staff, parents, carers and pupils are aware of the ongoing success of the work taking place



Further information

For further information on Stonewall's **Education for All** campaign, supported by over 70 organisations and 50 local authorities, or to find out more about our events, reports, materials and teaching resources please visit:

www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool

www.stonewallscotland.org.uk/atschool

www.stonewallcymru.org.uk/atschool

or www.stonewallcymru.org.uk/ynyrysgol

FURTHER RESOURCES www.stonewall.org.uk/resources

- *Education for All* A summary of our work with secondary schools
- *The School Report* (2007) The experiences of over 1,000 lesbian, gay and bisexual young people in British schools
- *The Teachers' Report* (2009) YouGov polling of over 2,000 primary and secondary teachers and other school staff
- *Different Families* (2010) The experiences of 82 children and young people from age four upwards who have same-sex parents
- *Celebrating difference – Challenging homophobia in primary schools* A summary of our work with primary schools including a 28 minute primary school staff training DVD
- *Spell It Out* A training DVD for secondary school teachers and staff which covers issues such as how to challenge homophobic language in the classroom and staffroom and how to react when a young person comes out
- *'Oh no! Not the gay thing!'* Lesson ideas on how to integrate lesbian, gay and bisexual issues into the curriculum for 7 subject areas at Key Stages 3 and 4 or S1-S4 in Scotland
- *FIT* DVD An interactive feature-length film and teaching resource on homophobic bullying for Key Stages 3 and 4 or S1-S4 in Scotland. It includes a teaching resource pack and online lesson plans
- Education Guides: *Challenging homophobic language; Supporting lesbian, gay and bisexual young people; Including*

different families and *Working with faith communities*

- *Different Families* posters
- *Some People Are Gay. Get Over It!* materials including stickers, posters, postcards, t-shirts and travelcard holders

FURTHER LINKS AND INFORMATION

- *What's in my area?* database for local LGB community and youth groups www.stonewall.org.uk/whatsinmyarea
- For links on issues such as health, faith, family and friends www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool/links

STONEWALL PROGRAMMES

- **Stonewall School Champions programme** provides tailored support and guidance to primary and secondary schools in challenging homophobic bullying and celebrating difference. Schools which are part of the programme work with Stonewall and each other to address homophobic bullying and promote a safe and inclusive learning environment for all children and young people. www.stonewall.org.uk/schoolchampions
- **Stonewall's Education Champions programme** provides bespoke support and guidance to local authorities in tackling homophobia and homophobic bullying with their local schools. Local authorities work with Stonewall and each other to establish ways in which they can address homophobic bullying and promote a safe and inclusive learning environment for all young people. www.stonewall.org.uk/educationchampions
- Information for young people and the **Youth Volunteering programme** for young people aged 16-21 www.youngstonewall.org.uk



Supported by National College for School Leadership

To find out more about how the National College supports and values equality and diversity within school leadership, visit their web pages at www.nationalcollege.org.uk/diversity-in-schools.

In addition if you would like to share any views with the National College please email the team at diversity@nationalcollege.org.uk

Education for All is Stonewall's national campaign to tackle homophobic bullying in Britain's schools

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www.stonewall.org.uk/atschool

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www.youtube.com/user/stonewalluk

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Effective school leadership

