

Consultation on guidance for schools in England on Gender Questioning Children

Many of the questions in the consultation offer the option of answering 'Yes' or 'No'. Comments will be read, but the number of 'Yes' and 'No' responses will also be totalled. Those who want schools to affirm transgender ideology and practice are likely to answer 'No' to most or all of these questions. Therefore, **we suggest answering 'Yes'**.

After each yes/no question is a further question for those who answered 'No' to give their reasons. However,

you can still comment even if you responded 'Yes', explaining that you think the guidance should go further or just making some comments in support of the guidance.

We have included some suggestions below but **please use your own words**. If lots of responses use similar wording they will be given less weight. If you don't have time to come up with your own words, **it is still valuable to go through the form, just selecting 'Yes'**.

The draft guidance isn't very long. To read it before responding to the consultation, find it online at: bit.ly/ConsultGuidance

You can see the questions and give your responses to the consultation at: bit.ly/GQConsult.

(If asked about 'cookies', you will need to agree, otherwise the online form will not work.)

Don't forget to click 'Submit Response' when you've finished, or your response won't be counted.

If you cannot use the online form, you can read the

consultation questions online at bit.ly/ConsultGQCDoc and send in your responses either by email to gqcguidance.consultation@education.gov.uk or by post to:

Consultation Response - Guidance for schools and colleges: gender questioning children
Department for Education
Life Skills Division
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Questions 1-10: About You

These questions ask about you so that the Government knows whether you have experience as a teacher, parent etc. If you have relevant experience, it is helpful to say so.

Questions 11-14: Structure and overall guidance

The guidance is well framed. It does not refer to 'transgender children', but focuses instead on what children questioning their gender might ask a school and how a school should respond to those requests. It sets out clear principles and a clear process. It reminds schools that the best interests of a child may not be the same as what they want, and that they must consider other children. Although we would like it to go further in places, in the main it gives good practical advice.

- 👉 We suggest answering 'Yes' to questions 11 and 13. There is no need to answer questions 12 and 14.

Questions 15-18: Responding to Requests and Engaging parents

The guidance is right to instruct schools to inform parents and give their views great weight while also, later in the guidance, placing limits on what a school can agree to.

- 👉 We suggest answering 'Yes' to question 15

Question 16 asks for more detail only from those who answered no, but you can still answer. We suggest selecting 'How schools and colleges should involve parents in decisions' and making some of the following points, **in your own words**:

- The guidance should qualify its statement that teachers do not have an automatic duty to inform

parents if a pupil shares questions with them about their gender. Children can be seriously harmed by pursuing these beliefs about gender, so parents should be informed in all but the most exceptional cases.

- The guidance says schools can signpost services to parents. It should also instruct schools not to refer the child to third party services themselves because schools are not competent to make a judgement on whether a service is appropriate. Some children have been harmed through inappropriate referrals by schools.
- The only approach which will help children questioning their gender in the long term is for them to be reconciled to the reality of their body. Schools should be clear with children that a boy cannot be a girl, or vice versa.

Question 17 **must** be answered. It asks about the process schools should go through if a gender questioning child asks the school to make changes to accommodate them. The approach is very sensible and easy to follow: a huge improvement over what is currently done in most schools. The guidance should prohibit some of the things it leaves open for schools to agree to, but this can be addressed in later questions.

- 👉 We suggest answering 'Yes' to question 17.

There is no need to answer question 18 unless you want to make further comments.

Questions 19 and 20: Registration of Name and Sex

We suggest answering 'Yes' to question 19. There is no need to answer question 20.

Questions 21 and 22: Changing Names

Question 21 asks when schools should agree to use a different name to refer to a pupil who is questioning their gender. The guidance does not go far enough, but we recommend answering 'Yes' and then qualifying your answer in question 22.

We suggest selecting the following in question 22:

- 'How schools and colleges should make a decision about a child's request to change their name'
- 'When schools and colleges might refuse a request in relation to a child changing their name'

You could then make some of the following points, but **in your own words:**

- Schools should establish a culture in which truth is sincerely pursued and teachers never deliberately mislead their pupils. Children should be able to rely on this.
- The guidance is right to say that using different pronouns is a significant decision. Name changes can also be significant. It will be much more common for the pupil to be affirmed with this new name, as third-person pronouns are not commonly used in the presence of the relevant person.
- If a pupil wants to be called by a different name because they want to be viewed as belonging to the opposite sex, agreeing to change the name used communicates that the gender transition is real, and is to be affirmed. This encourages the pupil's rejection of their body, potentially setting them on a course to irreversible hormonal and even surgical treatment. It promotes a falsehood to other children. The guidance should state categorically that schools and teachers should use a child's birth name, at primary or secondary level.

Questions 23 and 24: Pronouns

This section of the guidance should go further, but we suggest you answer 'Yes' to question 23.

For question 24, we suggest selecting 'When schools and colleges should refuse a request in relation to a child changing their pronouns'.

You could then make some of the following points, **in your own words:**

- Using sex-based pronouns is truthful and should not be described as an "honest mistake". Using any other pronouns would be dishonest.
- No school should agree to use pronouns that do not match a pupil's sex, nor should any teacher use them.
- Using preferred pronouns is harmful for the child concerned, affirming their false belief and rejection of their body. It is at the core of social transition, which the Interim Cass Review states is not a neutral act: it has psychological effects on the child.
- Using preferred pronouns communicates a falsehood to other children.
- The recognition that no teacher or pupil can be compelled to use preferred pronouns is welcome.

Questions 25-29: Single-Sex Spaces

We suggest answering 'Yes' to questions 25 and 27 (which both **require** an answer) and question 28. There is

no need to answer questions 26 and 29.

Questions 30 and 31: Uniform

We suggest answering 'Yes' to question 30, which **requires** an answer. There is no need to respond to question 31.

Questions 32-35: PE and Sport

We suggest answering 'Yes' to question 32 and question 34 (which **requires** an answer). There is no need to respond to questions 33 and 35.

Questions 36-39: Single-sex Schools

We suggest answering 'Yes' to question 36, which **requires** an answer.

The guidance is helpful, except that it leaves the door open for single-sex schools to admit pupils of the opposite sex 'incognito'. The law does allow single-sex schools to admit pupils of the opposite sex in small numbers, but in answer to question 37 we suggest selecting 'Something else' and making some of the following points **in your own words:**

- School admissions must be transparent and fair.
- Boys must not be covertly admitted to a girls' school, or vice versa.
- If a boy takes a place in an oversubscribed girls' school, it prevents a girl from being admitted.
- Parents must be able to appeal a refusal of a place based on knowing whether the same-sex school is admitting pupils of the opposite sex, and if so, under what criteria.
- It is biological sex, not self-identified gender, which is relevant for admissions to a single-sex school, so schools should not be collecting information on a child's gender identification for the purpose of decisions on admission.

If relevant to you, please answer questions 38 and 39.

Question 40: Public Sector Equality Duty

Question 40 **requires** an answer. If you do not want to respond, you can simply enter one character (e.g. a full stop).

Here are some points you could make, **in your own words:**

- Some schools promote gender activist views, and try to coerce all pupils into celebrating the cause, for example, through dressing in colours of the pride flag on a day dedicated to LGBT activism.
- This failure to engage with other views implies different opinions amount to hostility or even hatred.
- This leads to lack of understanding of different opinions and damages relationships, for example between pupils who hold the protected characteristic of belief and those who are questioning their gender.

Questions 41 and 42: General

You can answer these questions if you have any further comments to make.

Almost done...

Provide an email address if you want. Select 'Submit Response'.