

---

<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Education &amp; Communities Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>8 March 2022</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Corporate Director Education, Communities &amp; Organisational Development</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>EDUCOM/22/22/RB</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Ruth Binks</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712748</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Health and Wellbeing in Schools - Guidance on Supporting Transgender Pupils in Schools and the National Health and Wellbeing Survey</b>		

---

## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Committee about the national guidance on supporting transgender pupils in schools and to seek approval to undertake an adapted version of the national Health and Wellbeing survey in Inverclyde schools.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Supporting transgender pupils is an area where schools often seek support to get the best for all the young people involved. In a recent national survey it was found that more than half of transgender pupils had self-harmed and over 80% had experienced bullying.
- 2.2 A group was established to further develop guidance for Inverclyde. During ongoing meetings it became clear that the Scottish Government guidelines were significantly more comprehensive and of greater utility to school staff than the local developing ones. As a result of this the group recommended adoption of the Scottish Government guidance and that this should be preceded by a one page statement stating why this was the case. The Scottish Government guidance can be accessed at:
- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-transgender-young-people-schools-guidance-scottish-schools/>
- 2.3 Inverclyde has undertaken two specific Health and Wellbeing (HWB) surveys in secondary schools, the first in 2013 and the subsequent survey in 2019. The first survey led to the establishment of Clyde Conversations aimed at taking a deeper dive into some of the topics and to listen to young people about issues that are affecting them. The surveys, alongside Clyde Conversations, have given useful information on which to base decisions and has identified how best to support young people in their health and wellbeing.
- 2.4 A national HWB survey has now been developed by the Scottish Government, for use by local authorities. This gives the opportunity to have comparator information across the country, something that was not available for the 2013 and 2019 surveys. At the meeting on 25 January 2022, the Education and Communities Committee considered the survey and decided that officers be instructed to ascertain:
- (i) the possibility of creating two versions of the survey, one of which will include questions on sexual health and the other which will not contain questions on sexual health, and that pupils and parents will thereafter be given the choice as to which survey they complete, and
  - (ii) if the Scottish Candidate Number can be removed from the survey.

- 2.5 Officers have been working with the Scottish Government on the adaptations to the survey requested by the Education and Communities Committee and all of the requests from the January Education and Communities Committee are able to be progressed and are outlined in section 5.2 of this report.
- 2.6 The questions on sexual health for the S4 – S6 survey have been adapted and are attached as Appendix 1 to this paper.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 The Committee is asked to:

- note the national guidance in place for best practice in supporting transgender pupils in schools
- agree to the adapted Health and Wellbeing survey being implemented in Inverclyde schools

**Ruth Binks**  
**Corporate Director**  
**Education, Communities & Organisational Development**

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

### **4.1 Guidance on supporting transgender pupils in schools**

- 4.1.1 In 2020 Inverclyde had established a group to further develop guidance for schools in respect of transgender issues arising in our education establishments. This is an area where schools often seek support to get the best for all the young people involved. In a recent national survey it was found that more than half of transgender pupils had self-harmed and over 80% had experienced bullying.
- 4.1.2 The trajectory of the group changed in August 2021 when the Scottish Government issued its guidance in this area of work. It was realised then that the group required to revisit its work. As well as legal services, CLD workers and educational psychologists were involved in the group. The group had significant representation from educational psychology as, during termly negotiation with our schools, this issue has emerged as one where school staff requested significant levels of guidance. The first task that the group undertook was to look at the developing local guidance and to cross reference against the Scottish Government guidelines to look at areas that were missing or that superseded the local guidelines in terms of quality of advice.

### **4.2 2021/22 National Health and Wellbeing Survey**

- 4.2.1 Inverclyde has undertaken two specific Health and Wellbeing (HWB) surveys in secondary schools, the first in 2013 and the subsequent survey in 2019. The first survey was the inspiration for Clyde Conversations, aimed at taking a deeper dive into some of the topics and to listen to young people about issues that are affecting them. The surveys, alongside Clyde Conversations, have given useful information on which to base decisions and has identified how best to support young people in their health and wellbeing.
- 4.2.2 At the meeting on 25 January 2022, the Education and Communities Committee considered the new national survey and decided that officers be instructed to ascertain:
- (i) the possibility of creating two versions of the survey, one of which will include questions on sexual health and the other which will not contain questions on sexual health, and that pupils and parents will thereafter be given the choice as to which survey they complete, and
  - (ii) if the Scottish Candidate Number can be removed from the survey.

## **5.0 PROPOSALS**

### **5.1 Guidance on supporting transgender pupils in schools**

- 5.1.1 During ongoing meetings of the group formed to further develop the local guidance it became clear that the Scottish Government guidelines were significantly more comprehensive and of greater utility to school staff than the local developing ones. As a result of this the group recommended adoption of the Scottish Government guidance and that this should be preceded by a one page statement stating why this was the case. The Scottish Government guidance can be accessed at:
- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-transgender-young-people-schools-guidance-scottish-schools/>
- 5.1.2 In order to take things forward in the future it is felt that further engagement with our young people will be required and, consequently, an exercise will take place at Clyde Conversations in February 2022 to gain the voice of our pupil population. In light of the level of requests for support from school staff it was also felt that further support for school staff should also be offered to help them to support the young people and their families and to meet any challenges that they face.

5.1.3 It is important to remember that guidance is meant to provide support and examples of good practice to those who are helping young people and their families face difficult and sensitive situations. It is not a set of inflexible rules that are set in stone. Every situation differs depending on the circumstances and the context and it is paramount that practitioners work with young people and their families to provide the best support they can.

## 5.2 2021/22 National Health and Wellbeing Survey Proposals

5.2.1 Officers have been working with the Scottish Government and another local authority on the adaptations to the survey requested by the Education and Communities Committee. All of the requests from the January Education and Communities Committee are able to be progressed. This means that:

- The Scottish Candidate number is removed from all surveys
- There will be an “opt in” for permission to complete the survey rather than an “opt out”
- That 2 surveys will be offered in S4–S6. The first being a survey without any sexual health questions. An additional second survey will be offered for S4-S6 which will only include the sexual health questions
- That the surveys will be made available to parents prior to completion

5.2.2 Officers are liaising with other authorities and the diocese to adapt and agree the final wording of the sexual health questions in the second survey for S4-6. The proposed questions are attached as Appendix 1 to this paper.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

### 6.1 Finance

#### Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

### 6.2 Legal

Legal Services were represented on the group considering the national guidance for supporting transgender pupils in schools.

### 6.3 Human Resources

N/A.

## 6.4 Equalities

### Equalities

- (a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required

- (b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO

- (c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

X	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
	NO

## 6.5 Repopulation

N/A

## 7.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 Consultations have taken place with representative groups from head teachers, parents and pupils to inform this paper.

## 8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Education & Communities Committee – 3 November 2020 - agenda item 16a - Inverclyde Council Schools Health and Wellbeing Survey 2019  
Education & Communities Committee - 25 January 2022 – agenda item 16 – Guidance on Supporting Transgender Pupils in Schools and the National Health and Wellbeing Survey