

Sharing practice

Examples of practice that aim to counter the effects of gender stereotypes and unconscious bias, from educational establishments in Scotland.



Background

- The Improving Gender Balance and Equalities (IGBE) programme is working with school clusters to explore and assess interventions to address gender imbalances in participation, curricular preferences and learner pathways at every stage (3 – 18 years).
- We know that children receive and absorb gender stereotyped messages about what they can and cannot do as a girl or as a boy from a very early age.
- Research strongly suggests that there is no inherent difference between girls and boys which should limit their interests, capabilities or ambitions. And yet, we recognise that subject choice, and many subsequent work and life choices, are highly gendered.
- We promote a whole-establishment approach, in order to tackle the root causes of gender imbalances, in a sustained and embedded way.

This booklet shares approaches that educational establishments can use to begin to address gender inequality and counter the effects of unconscious bias and gender stereotypes. Some examples will work in any setting; others will need to be adapted to your particular context. We hope you will find the ideas relevant, pragmatic and inspiring.

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Early learning and childcare



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CRADLEHALL EARLY LEARNING CENTRE, HIGHLAND: WHOLE SETTING APPROACH - BEGINNING THE JOURNEY

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Noted that children as young as three were already showing gender- based choices and beliefs. When asked questions around stereotypical based jobs (e.g. astronaut, train driver, dancer, teacher) the children would all answer either man or lady, not both.
- There had also been several comments regarding appearance (boys can't have long hair) which challenged us to work towards an environment free from bias.
- Watched 'No more boys and girls' documentary.

What was tried?

- Received training from IGBE officer on gender stereotypes and unconscious bias
- Staff reflected honestly and critically about their own gender bias which included things like:
 - Assumptions that dads are still the main breadwinners and mums do the majority of childcare
 - Commenting on girls appearances more than boys
 - Setting up in traditional ways (all the home corner and baby stuff together...all the building stuff together)
 - Using the term "girls and boys" and language used
- Completed Gender Friendly Nursery environmental audit
- Bought new books to cover unconscious bias issues (same sex families, different families, beliefs, gender preference)
- Changed the way we set things out so that the home corner is more central thus more inviting to all
- Challenged each other on how we speak to the children (avoiding boys/girls)
- Introduced boy baby doll, black baby doll and more neutral clothes
- Introduced more drama/games to allow freedom of expression
- Larger loose parts outside to encourage more active play/risk for all
- Introduced a mantra to build self- esteem/belief (We are loved, we are strong, we've got this – and I believe in you)

Time taken - 6 months

Sharing practice



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CRADLEHALL EARLY LEARNING CENTRE, HIGHLAND: WHOLE SETTING APPROACH – BEGINNING THE JOURNEY

What was the outcome / what was noticed?

- Children are beginning to understand that anyone can be anything regardless of gender, race, religion etc.
- They are more understanding towards different family groups and that boys can like pink, have long hair and even wear dresses if they wish, whilst girls can be soldiers, astronauts and have short hair and might not like pink.
- Children are more accepting when someone behaves or shows preferences that are outside gender norms, understanding it is the choice of the individual.
- The loose parts outside have seen girls become more active in risk taking – climbing on the crates, building obstacle courses, and this allows the boys to see them as equals in such activities.
- The children have engaged much the same way with the home corner, although it has been noted that the children who do access the home area are using more loose parts from the baskets etc – possibly because the whole area is more open.
- The mantra has been positively received with parents commenting that the children are doing it at home as well. One parent said that during dinner their little girl (aged 3) turned to her dad and said “Daddy, I believe in you”.

What will happen next?

- Decide on the five things to develop as per the audit
- Review policy
- Plan on informing parents about aspirations to become a gender friendly nursery
- Write a list of resources that need replacing or adding to
- Read 'Just like a child'
- Review how the above changes have impacted the children
- Observe children's interactions with arts/crafts to note any differences/changes we could make to this area

Further details and resources

- No More Boys and Girls - BBC documentary
- Let Toys Be Toys
- Growth Mindset concepts - Carol Dweck



Sharing practice

IMPROVING GENDER BIAS IN EARLY YEARS SETTINGS

WOODLANDS FAMILY NURTURE CENTRE, PAXTON NURSERY & METHILHAVEN NURSERY, FIFE

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- The wish for all children to experience learning and play activities without prejudice.
- To provide an environment which gives equal opportunities for all our children to develop their interests and skills.
- The wish for all children to have the freedom to be accepted in the choices they make as they develop their personalities.
- Observed that displays and books don't always reflect alternatives to stereotypes.
- Attended Gender Aware Leadership course which prompted reading and discussions raising awareness of unconscious bias, gender bias and stereotyping.
- Research was carried out (including 'Gender equal play in early learning and childcare') and starting with yourself was identified as a first step.

What was tried?

- In-service day training was planned to explore stereotyping and unconscious bias that exists in society and how this has subconsciously affected attitudes and behaviours across all 3 settings.
- The sessions were interactive and gave opportunities for very small groups of staff to discuss thoughts and observations, reflect on the world around them and also consider their own attitudes and behaviours.
- A post-training questionnaire was used to gather impact of the training and to identify potential next steps for practitioners and the individual settings. 2 open ended questions were asked and collated into themes:
 - What have you learned from today's training session?
 - What will your next steps be following today's training session?
- Following on from this, meaningful discussion time was created to explore further how many of the stories or narratives adopted presume monsters to be male and weaker characters to be female.
- Completion of an Education Scotland 'Primary/Early Learning and Childcare Environment Audit'.
- Regular staff discussions which challenge stereotyping.
- One room is carrying out a small test of change to introduce a photo book with a range of images which challenge stereotypes. The aim is for this to stimulate discussion with children and for staff to use these discussions as a platform to gather an understanding of the children's gender bias.

Time taken - 6 months and ongoing



IMPROVING GENDER BIAS IN EARLY YEARS SETTINGS WOODLANDS FAMILY NURTURE CENTRE, PAXTON NURSERY & METHILHAVEN NURSERY, FIFE

What was the outcome / what was noticed?

- Staff members became more aware of many things which influence children's identities, e.g. many toys stereotype girls into caring roles, clothing typically stereotypes boys to be boisterous and adventurous, whereas girls are stereotyped to be gentle and pretty.
- Staff became more aware of language used with children.
- Highlighted good practice in the nursery including how staff promote all activities for all children, without stereotyping by gender e.g. there are no instances of girls/boys being seen as different groups or having different opportunities available to them. It also showed all children are actively encouraged to explore different roles through a variety of dressing up clothes and opportunities for children to express themselves are embraced.
- Physical environments are free from limiting stereotypes and they provide opportunities for all children to engage in free choice of activities and encourage children to play with peers, without prejudice.
- Evaluation showed that overall preconceptions about what boys/girls can or cannot do are not evident.

What will happen next?

- Look for more ways in which stereotyping can be challenged e.g. more displays which feature women in construction, female doctors etc. (While some rooms have these on display, consistency across all rooms in all three settings is needed).
- Use professional development time to create small working parties to take forward specific aspects which develop practices that:
 - encourage staff to consider how unconscious bias impacts children
 - encourage all children to achieve potential regardless of gender
 - reduce stereotyping through language
 - ensure environments are gender neutral
 - display diverse resources
 - encourage new storylines (in imaginative and role play activities etc.) which challenge gender bias

Further details and resources

- Care Inspectorate 'Gender Equal Play' (2018)
- Improving Gender Balance Scotland/ Gender Stereotypes: an introduction for practitioners in schools and early learning centres
- Improving gender balance self-evaluation framework
- You can be - Zero Tolerance



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GENDER EQUAL PLAY IN THE EARLY YEARS

NORTH BERWICK HIGH SCHOOL TOTS AND TEENS, EAST LoTHIAN

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Experience from a previous role where the use of 'boys and girls' to gain the children's attention was questioned and replaced with terms like 'children' or 'everyone'. The culture of requesting 'big strong boys' for jobs was also questioned and replaced.
- Observed that where 'boys and girls' was used, boys were almost always called first.
- Reflection on the long-term impact of this. (If boys are always first, boys are better? Possibly leading to lower self-esteem for girls? And vice-versa – boys thinking girls are not as good because they are always second).
- Personal experience of own children complaining about experiencing gender bias in their classroom.
- Questioning gender roles from own upbringing as they didn't seem fair.

What was tried?

- Changed nursery rhymes and songs to make them more gender balanced.
- Checked books and removed examples of gender imbalance.
- Fabric introduced to construction/block area to try to encourage more girls to engage in this area.
- Introduced non-gendered dressing up and encouraged the idea that anyone can use any of the costumes.
- Challenged what gender the toys/characters take on when interacting with the children at play – try to challenge stereotypes.
- Children praised for being 'strong' regardless of gender.

Time taken – 6 months and ongoing

What was the outcome / what was noticed?

- As a result of changing the nursery rhymes and songs, a couple of the girls now insist on having female characters in the rhymes and songs. One boy objects, so we sing it with a male character for him.
- Fabric in the construction/block play area was discarded by children - it was getting in their way! However, when monitored girls and boys are both using the activity.
- Challenging what gender toys and characters take on has impacted the dialogue the children give the characters.
- The steps taken have helped all areas of the playroom (indoors and out) be accessible to everyone. The small team can and do support each other to 'call out' any imbalances/stereotypes as they are found.



GENDER EQUAL PLAY IN THE EARLY YEARS

NORTH BERWICK HIGH SCHOOL TOTS AND TEENS, EAST LoTHIAN

What will happen next?

- Continue to regularly assess resources in the playroom – who is using them and how?
- Question any assumptions the children make that are based on gender.
- Gender policy being written and will be introduced to the other settings in our group.
- Work with parents to ensure they are aware of our policy.

Work with the 'teens' who volunteer with us to:

- help them challenge their own unconscious bias
- have them challenge us
- share their ideas and opinions

Try to encourage more boys to volunteer with the service.

Further details and resources

- Breaking the Mould - challenging gender stereotypes (National Education Union)
- Care Inspectorate 'Gender Equal Play' (2018)
- *No More Boys and Girls* – Can our kids go gender free? (BBC documentary)



Primary



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STEM IMPROVEMENT – PRIMARY BEARSDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL, EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Attending STEM roadshow in Glasgow City Chambers, speaking to various people/companies about gender equality, highlighted approaches that we hadn't thought of before
- Looking at some of our outdated resources highlighted the need for a change
- Professional learning from Improving Gender Balance and Equalities team
- Open and honest individual and collective reflection about biases

What was tried?

- Developed action plan
- Language - reflected on language and made small changes (e.g. stopped using boys and girls)
- Carried out environmental audit
- Reviewed seating plans
- Tried some gender equality lessons and evaluated these
- Made gender equality part of school improvement plan as part of STEM focus
- Pupils in one class carried out pupil enquiry project with an equalities theme
- Enquiry projects were shared on school blogs which meant families could also engage in discussion around this topic
- STEM week focus on gender equality in STEM - used STEM ambassadors that subverted stereotypes

Time taken - 1 year, still ongoing

What was the outcome / what was noticed?

- There is a lot more professional dialogue in the school about gender equality following the training
- Teachers carry out more lessons about this topic and it makes up part of our science planning
- The children are becoming more confident in talking about equality, bias and gender stereotypes

What is Discrimination in Sport?



Discrimination is a big problem all around the world, but in the world of sport it affects many people in different ways.

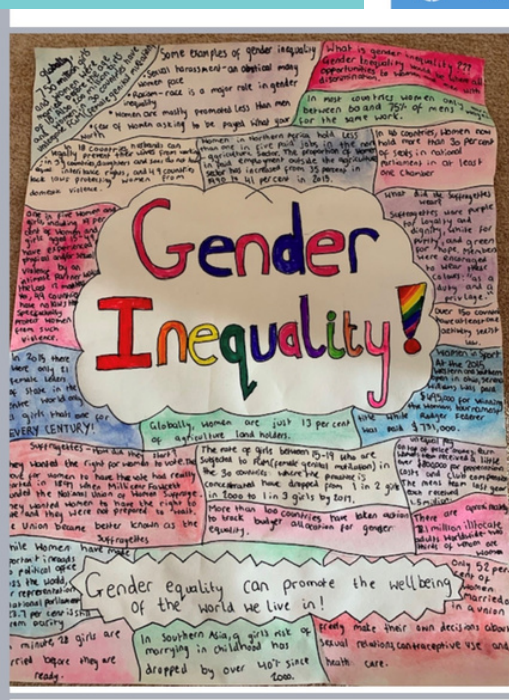
Types of discrimination are racial discrimination, religious discrimination, gender discrimination, discrimination and ageism. Problems faced include discrimination and abuse because of the colour of your skin, wage differences because of your gender and age, not being included because of that may require extra work... we will talk about some of these during this powerpoint.

A sport I am very involved in so will be a focus for me but it is important to remember that racism in one way or another is a problem in all sport.



Gender Equality

- Gender Inequality is one of the main problems in the world of sport at this moment of time, the women you see are few of the thousands of women trying to get equality for women in sport...
- The problems that may show are...
- Wage Difference
- Less Televised Coverage
- Less Sponsorship deals
- Lower fan base in certain sports
- Less opportunities e.g. Referees, commentators and obviously players.



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STEM IMPROVEMENT – PRIMARY **BEARSDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL, EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE**

What will happen next?

- Next session, STEM and gender equality will remain a part of our improvement plan
- We hope to organise another STEM week and invite people from various science careers to promote STEM jobs. This will probably be done via video calls. Last year we had a lot of female visitors and hope to have the same again this year
- Carry out lessons relating to the gender pay gap and gender stereotypes

Further details and resources

- STEM ambassadors website - how to find and request a STEM ambassador
- Skills Development Scotland - My World of Work



What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Teacher attended improving gender balance and equalities overview professional learning session which raised awareness of barriers to engagement.
- Became aware that there was a reduction in participation in STEM subjects in high school (and beyond) and that this could be improved by work in primary schools.
- We didn't have a gender imbalance in terms of interest in STEM but wanted to keep it this way.
- Regularly reinforce and revisit gender equality to ensure good practice is maintained.
- Interest in the impact of language and the need to raise awareness and challenge unconscious bias in school and school community.
- Questions over gendered toys and the need for early intervention.

- Professional learning input from IGBE officer to review current STEM books for gender stereotypical characters and storylines, as well as diverse representation more widely.
- Explored gender stereotypes through targeted lessons and activities e.g. asked pupils to list words they associate with girls/boys and jobs they associated with girls/boys and 'draw a....'activity.
- Entered Education Scotland primary level competition (see images on next page).
- Began to address unconscious bias in resources by looking at teaching resources, in particular reviewed worksheets relating to the world of work.
- Created and shared a Let's Focus on STEM information leaflet for parents including: Girl Toys v Boys Toys , unconscious bias and gender inequality, Let Toys Be Toys and Let Books Be Books resources, Toymark.

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STEM IMPROVEMENT – PRIMARY

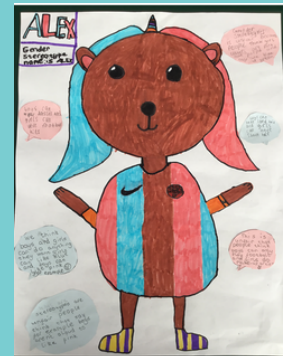
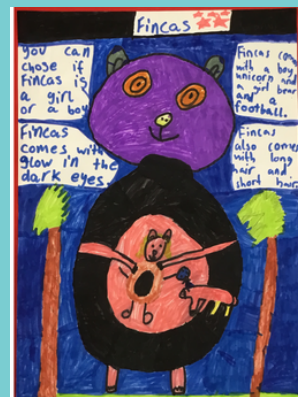
MOSSHEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL, EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE

What was the outcome /what was noticed?

- Surprised how many STEM books including female characters still represented boys/girls and men/women stereotypically - decided to use as a discussion point with children.
- Children are very aware of gender bias.
- Discussion with children made them likely to report what they've seen/read and it made the teachers think more about everyday stereotyping too.
- Greater awareness of gendered language eg policeman.
- An equal split in uptake of pupil leadership roles eg digital/STEM leaders.

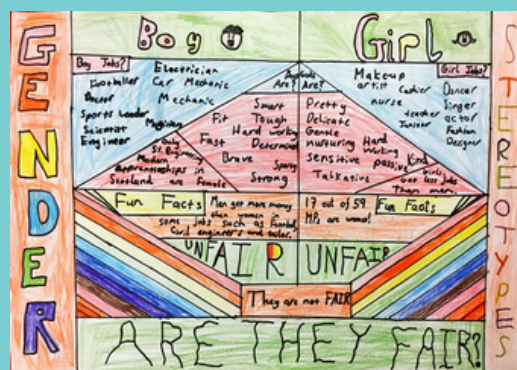
What will happen next?

- Continue to focus on this through school improvement plan
- Explicit DYW planners linking the world of work in day to day learning
- Use of My World of Work including exploration of gender balance by sector and pay
- STEM a Story incorporated into all stage planners
- Diversity celebrated through events such as Show Racism the Red Card
- Engagement in the Young STEM Leader programme with 2 staff members certified tutor assessors and 32 Young STEM leaders out of 42 Primary 7's
- Monitoring gender balance within YSL programme – even mix of boys and girls (75% P7 girls and 77% P7 boys are STEM leaders)
- Whole school participation in Science Week, Maths Week Scotland and Careers Week
- New STEM/gender books including the Collins Big Cat series Dani Binns and Tara Binns
- Developing links with local partners eg McLaughlin Harvey Construction & Architects Holmes Miller – Whole school design competition, mini COP26 Homes for the Future
- Participation in Digital Pedagogy project with Local Authority and Education Scotland



Further details and resources

'Draw a ...' test information



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GENDERED PLAY IN P1

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Personal relevance of having studied engineering and been only one of a few females on course
- Professional relevance in noticing boys and girls tended to play with different toys and interact with them differently
- STEM was chosen as the vehicle as it was found parents and teachers didn't want to explore the issue of gender but focusing on STEM and jobs was a good route to open this up

What was tried?

- Phase 1 - Baseline observation of children playing with Lego sets (hospital, school, laboratory, garage, shop, hairdressers), noted which gender they were and the frequency of interaction with Lego plus which type of Lego each gender was interacting with.
- Phase 2 - Four STEM lessons delivered focusing on STEM jobs and working towards Experience and Outcome SCN0-20a.
- One of these was drawing what they wanted to be when they grew up. Asking learners to explain the picture and talk them through the pictures was insightful.
- Other lessons involved watching videos about what a biologist does, an astronaut etc. as well as inviting in speakers who subverted gender stereotypes to discuss their jobs.
- Phase 3 - Undertook baseline observation again.

Time taken - 3 weeks

What was the outcome / what was noticed?

- Stereotypes existed which later on would perpetuate occupational segregation and gender pay gap.
- Lego was a great proxy to not only determine their understanding of gender stereotypes in STEM but the skills and knowledge the participants would have learned by using Lego.
- Initially more boys playing with Lego (60% to 40%) and they played with largely gender stereotypical sets (girls with hairdressers, boys in garage etc.).
- The drawings of what they wanted to be when they grew up showed that a lot of the girls wanted to go into lower paid jobs and the boys went beyond domestic jobs. The majority of the jobs the boys chose were in more highly paid jobs.
- After the four STEM lessons, slightly more girls were playing with Lego (56% boys to 44% girls) but interestingly the proportions of who interacted with which set changed slightly. It was found more girls played with laboratory and hospital Lego sets than before.
- The teacher has an influence on the way the children construct gender stereotypes by providing the children with the skills and knowledge to make more informed ideas and believes it has had an impact on the participants views on gender stereotyping.
- Mindsets of the learners can change.

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GENDERED PLAY IN P1 CONTINUED..

What will happen next?

- Funding for Lego kits
- Repeat this intervention in other schools throughout the local authority
- Compare data from different schools
- Articulate similarities/differences between different classes
- Examine the impact of Lego play on behaviour (as practitioner had noticed in this study that it had a calming effect on learners who previously had found it difficult to engage).

Further details and resources

Play pedagogy and gender balance webinar: <https://youtu.be/nFrcB0iBCWc>



Sharing practice

DUNBLANE LEARNING COMMUNITY, STIRLING – CLUSTER APPROACH

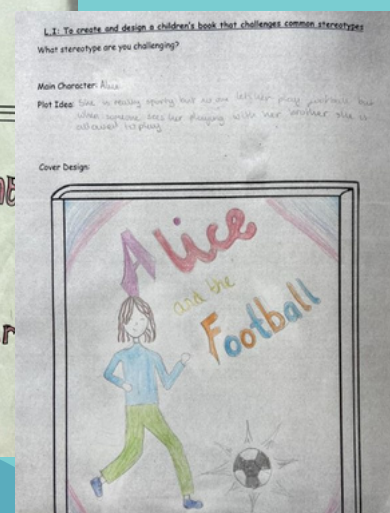
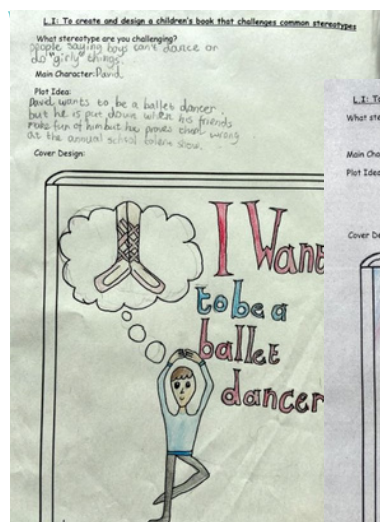
What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Self-evaluation processes recognised the need to increase understanding and celebrate diversity within our learning community
- To build staff confidence when approaching or addressing diversity and the recognition for staff to feel empowered
- Increased awareness, interest and discussion around current issues in the media e.g. Black Lives Matter movement, further prompted the need to be proactive in our approaches

What was tried?

- Diversity was identified as a priority on school improvement plans.
- Local authority contact matched Dunblane Learning Community with an IGBE officer.
- Three professional learning sessions on stereotypes and unconscious bias delivered on in-service days throughout the year (sustained approach).
- Staff reflected, made small changes to, and monitored their language (such as finding alternatives to 'boys and girls') as well as asking learners what they would prefer and generally adopting gender neutral language.
- Plans were made to challenge stereotypes on a day to day basis using existing materials and through language. For example within one learning context focus on Fairytales explored 'Cindafella', 'Jackie and the Beanstalk' and compared gender stereotypes in characters. Children also explored assumptions made regarding names in relation to gender.
- Staff further considered how learning contexts could be more gender aware and how the topic of gender stereotypes could be built into all areas of the curriculum. This also tied in with identifying links with the Global Goals. Gender inequalities within STEM jobs and other careers were explore through an Evolving Inventions context and prejudice and discrimination was linked to the novel study of Wonder.
- Contexts based around Women in Science and Gender Equality were identified and covered across different stages.
- A variety of lessons were tried and explored including; rules were changed depending on gender/characteristics (e.g. only girls allowed to speak out), sorting jobs or statements into gender categories and follow up discussions, exploring assumptions in advertising, research on the history and significance of the different colours of the Rainbow Flag and creating characters in story writing which challenge gender roles.
- In play based learning, the layout of spaces was considered to ensure a more inclusive approach.
- Generated and agreed core attributes for a gender aware setting allowing a shared vision and understanding throughout the learning community.

Time taken - 1 year so far



Sharing practice

DUNBLANE LEARNING COMMUNITY, STIRLING – CLUSTER APPROACH

What was the outcome / what was noticed?

- School leaders were able to observe initial confidence levels of staff and that significant learning took place around this topic
- Staff felt empowered and confident to discuss topics relating to diversity with learners
- There is a genuine interest and passion from staff for making changes (both personally and professionally)
- Staff also acknowledged that it is OK to make mistakes and that this learning process will take time
- There were lots of reflections around ensuring young people feel empowered to achieve their goals and interests without being limited by stereotypes
- Through experiences offered so far children were further along in their understanding than expected

What will happen next?

- Continued focus on school and learning community improvement plans
- Each school will use the agreed core attributes and shared vision to self-evaluate
- Now that staff are equipped, more direct work with learners and families
- Possibility of auditing planning and resources so diversity is considered at planning stages
- Further explore wider diversity topics aside from gender
- Strengthen DYW links with consideration given to gender balance and equality
- Link with local secondary school and build on shared understanding and goals for our young people

Further details and resources

Futuring activity carried out by the cluster:

Futuring - 5 years from now

suspend some of the current constraints you may feel and generate solutions, ideas of where you would like to be as a practitioner or as a whole school in 5 years time



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USING THE GENDER10 TOOLKIT – DALRY PRIMARY SCHOOL, EDINBURGH

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Generally, boys and girls play and group together separately in the P4 class. Pupils were overheard talking about girls/boys colours and toys.
- Heard statements such as: “you can’t play football” by a boy towards a girl and “I want to be a famous footballer, but I can’t because I am a girl”.
- Although children say that boys and girls can do and play with what they want during discussions on the topic, this is not demonstrated when they are playing and talking to each other.
- Pupils in different stages have made sexist comments in relation to gendered roles.

What was tried?

- Observations of pupils’ activity choices during Golden Time have been gathered over a 6-month period - data has demonstrated that pupils in main play together in gendered groups and mostly with toys/activities that fit with societal norms for roles of boys and girls.
- Evaluated and adjusted Golden Time choices with the pupils and new resources were purchased.
- Raising pupils’ awareness of gender, gender issues and sub-conscious messages using the Gender10 Toolkit lessons in P4 class, then with the pupil equality group, with a view to the middle - upper years then carrying out these lessons within their class. The plan is for the equality group to feed back and to discuss action points for the school.
- One activity to draw what they thought a specific job role person would look like, such as an astronaut revealed in the main pupils drew people that would fit with social norm, e.g. a man for a firefighter and many pupils chose the name Bob. There were around one or two pupils who drew someone who didn’t fit the norm.
- Pupil conversations were used as an indicator of change focusing on questions such as: Are there fewer instances of pupils making sexist comments? Are pupils making different choices during Golden Time? Are pupils noticing examples of sexism independently? Are pupils able to articulate their thoughts on gender stereotypes confidently?

Time taken: 6 months so far

Sharing practice



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USING THE GENDER10 TOOLKIT – DALRY PRIMARY SCHOOL, EDINBURGH

What was the outcome / what was noticed?

- Many pupils noticed instances of sexism. These pupils were also able to articulate their opinions and experiences more clearly during class conversations, such as discussing a report on sexism in politics on Newsround.
- Positive impact where pupil voice has been increased, highlighting a development in the necessary language to begin to unpick and tackle gender inequalities.
- Pupils' play choices during Golden Time have adjusted slightly, but this could be due to the wider variety of choices during Golden Time.

What will happen next?

- Deliver these lessons to equality group.
- More work on the school community's unconscious bias in relation to gender, for example, reviewing gendered pictures for pegs.
- Continue to increase pupil voice and encourage them to develop the necessary language to unpick and tackle inequalities with other characteristics.
- Focus on LGBTQ+ next session, as majority of pupils shared in an equalities questionnaire that they are not sure what it means and how it affects lives.

Further details and resources

Gender 10 Toolkit (Dalmellington Primary School)



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GENDERED SPACES IN THE PLAYGROUND – TORPHICHEN PRIMARY SCHOOL, WEST LoTHIAN

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Observation of playground behaviours during break and lunch playtimes identified that the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) was exclusively used by boys to play football.
- The MUGA was very rarely used by girls, and never for more than a few minutes.
- Following noticing the apparent trend, the MUGA was sampled across a fortnight (including a mix of break and lunchtimes). Subsequent consultation with Pupil Support Workers, who attended to playground supervision, confirmed that this was an ongoing occurrence.
- The perception of the footballing space belonging to boys is one that can negatively impact on girls' self-concept, in addition to negatively reinforcing a damaging gender stereotype (those who play are masculine and those who don't play are not masculine) to all (Clark & Paechter, 2007). Feeling included is an important part of school life and, following discussions with one Primary 5 pupil, it became apparent that the girls did feel excluded from this particular space. In addition to concerns over the impact on emotional wellbeing for all pupils, there is evidence to suggest that exclusion from this space could reinforce the existing gender gap in regards to levels of physical activity (Dudley et al. 2018).
- A focus group of Primary 5 and 6 girls identified a skills gap between boys and girls as being a barrier to mixed groups playing together.
- Girls had some concerns about some boys playing too hard against them or getting frustrated with them if they were to make a mistake. In particular, girls in the focus group were concerned that the boys would shout at them when they made a mistake.

What was tried?

- P3-7 pupils who were beginners at football were offered a 6-week football skills development opportunity (between January and March 2022) with two advanced pupils supporting in a coaching role.
- At the same time P5/6 classes were taught a block of football for one P.E. lesson a week (January - March 2022).
- Following the initial girls' focus group (but before the beginners football skills development sessions started), informal discussions with boys who played daily highlighted that they were unsure of the reasons why girls did not join them. They assumed that the girls just weren't interested in football.
- Following the end of the 6-week intervention (March - June 2022), regular opportunities were provided for all pupils in P3-7 to play in mixed stage matches.
- In June 2022, the school entered two school teams (development and advanced) into a local tournament for P5-7 pupils. Girls were encouraged to participate and all pupils who wanted to play were given a place on one of the teams (dependent on their experience).

Time taken: 6 months so far and ongoing

GENDERED SPACES IN THE PLAYGROUND – TORPHICHEN PRIMARY SCHOOL, WEST LoTHIAN

What was the outcome / what was noticed?

- An increased number of pupils (both boys and girls) were playing football in the MUGA, with girls playing daily.
- Most pupils who applied for skills development were girls and all those who applied to be coaches were boys.
- Boys who have never trained or played football have asked for football skills development to be offered again.
- The more advanced players in the P5/6 class (all boys) began to encourage everyone in the class to play with them.
- Those pupils who attended skills development were much more confident when playing against the more experienced players, marking and assertively tackling even the most experienced players.
- 18 out of the 32 upper school pupils participated in the local tournament including 5 who had attended the development sessions (4 girls and 1 boy).
- Focus group (same pupils as pre-intervention) reported feeling more confident when playing football.
- One Primary 5 pupil now understands that sometimes boys are shouting to be heard while directing play (and she has since been observed shouting to direct play herself). This change in understanding has allowed for a barrier to be reduced (the assumption that the more experienced boys were getting annoyed or angry with less experienced players had been worrying for some of the girls).
- The increased skill level of the girls who participated in both the beginners intervention and class P.E. lessons led to the more experienced boys being more willing to pass the ball to the newer players.
- Informal discussion with two Primary 6 boys (the coaches for the intervention) highlighted that they had more trust in passing to those players, as they now knew what to do with the ball when they received it. They expressed past frustration that the less experienced players would often pass to the opposing team or play towards their own goal, which validated the initial feeling that the girls were not welcome on the MUGA.
- Informal discussion with the girls who played in the tournament highlighted that they had enjoyed playing as part of a team, a new experience for them. They all felt more confident as football players following the tournament.
- The parent of one girl who had been unable to attend has confirmed that her daughter has already added the date for the 2023 tournament to the family calendar so that she doesn't miss out next year!
- In the 2022/23 session, football has been offered as a P.E. elective. Of pupils in P5-7, 93% of boys and 75% of girls selected football as their first choice.

Sharing practice

GENDERED SPACES IN THE PLAYGROUND – TORPHICHEN PRIMARY SCHOOL, WEST LoTHIAN

What will happen next?

- Continue to offer skills development to mixed age groups (one of these will be as a pupil-led lunchtime club for any interested Primary 1 - 4 pupils).
- Three upper school girls will collaborate with an SFA qualified coach to develop activities for younger pupils to support development of basic ball skills. It is hoped that promoting boys and girls playing football together in the lower school will allow the shared ownership of the MUGA to become the norm.
- Promote the role of women in football by working with a female SFA qualified coach.
- Work with colleagues to monitor gender balance in different learning and social spaces in the school.
- All staff from P3 - 7 will incorporate P.E. offerings into weekly practice.

Further details and resources

- Clark, Sheryl & Paechter, Carrie. (2007). 'Why can't girls play football?' Gender dynamics and the playground. Sport Education and Society -SPORT EDUCSOC. 12. 261-276.
- Dudley, D.A., Cotton, W.G., Peralta, L.R. et al. (2018) Playground activities and gender variation in objectively measured physical activity intensity in Australian primary school children: a repeated measures study. BMC Public Health. 18. 1101
- Education Scotland. (2021). Data guide Primary schools and early learning and childcare settings.
- Institute of Physics, Skills Development Scotland, Education Scotland. (2017). Gender Stereotypes: an introduction for practitioners in schools and early learning centres.
- Martínez-Andrés, María & Bartolomé, Raquel & Rodríguez-Martín, Beatriz & Pardo-Guijarro, María & Martinez Vizcaino, Vicente. (2017). "Football is a boys' game": children's perceptions about barriers for physical activity during recess time. International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being.



Sharing practice

RAISING AWARENESS OF INSPIRATIONAL SCOTS WOMEN ROSEBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL, EDINBURGH

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Library book audit showed there were very few female role models, and particularly Scots women, to inspire learners.
- P5 & 7 survey about famous Scots revealed very little knowledge and limited recognition of women.
- Work in Scots week showed there is very little written about achievements of women in books.
- A need to raise awareness of inspirational Scots women was identified.

What was tried?

- Class discussion around an article about the lack of statues in Edinburgh of notable Scots women. This included discussion about the campaign to create a statue for Dr Elsie Inglis.
- Class were set a task to find books with strong female role models.
- Worked with the Equalities Group (which included learners and parents) and identified 22 inspirational Scots women. Pupils then created information cards about them.
- Pupils created a trail of posters around the school and a quiz for classes to develop their knowledge.
- Equalities Group created a presentation for International Women's Day assembly including a vote for the most inspirational Scots woman.
- A video about successful Scottish businesswomen was created in collaboration with Scottish Women's Enterprise which was shared with other schools in the learning community.
- Curriculum was reviewed with regard to equalities - progressive plans for Literacy, Maths, Social Studies, Science, RME, Technologies, Expressive Arts and Health & Wellbeing were reviewed with an equalities lens and where a focus on gender, race, additional support needs etc. could explicitly be taught. Age was identified as one area that was missing. Work was done in P6 and 7 with Vintage Vibes.

Time taken - 6 months and ongoing



Sharing practice

RAISING AWARENESS OF INSPIRATIONAL SCOTS WOMEN ROSEBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL, EDINBURGH

What was the outcome / what was noticed?

Learners have:

- a greater awareness of the achievements of women.
- a greater understanding of the struggles women have faced including the Suffragette movement.
- a greater understanding that aspirations can be achieved in any field regardless of gender.

Schools in the learning community also undertook the trail and quiz, and sharing the video raised awareness of role of women in business.

What will happen next?

- Research suitable books and continue to add resources to library.
- Continue to audit books and resources to ensure representation of diversity and equalities.
- Create stories by changing the gender of the main character eg Jill & the Beanstalk.
- Continue discussions around gender stereotypes through HWB curriculum and [RSHP website](#).

Further details and resources

- Books with Baby - Leading Ladies
- Celebrating Scotland's Women
- Children's Library Lady
- Edinburgh Live 7 Inspiring Women from Scots History
- Elsieinglis.org
- Nurturing Anti Racist Kids



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BOYS' ATTAINMENT – FENWICK PRIMARY SCHOOL, EAST AYRSHIRE

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Concern that boys' attainment was not maintained as they progress from Early Years to P7.
- More boys than girls present with negative behaviour or are being referred for additional services eg (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), xchange counselling).

What was tried?

- Action Plan developed to track attainment of pupils from starting Nursery to the end of Primary School (using the East Ayrshire tracking and monitoring tool)
- Action plan also involved:
1. Create an audit form
 2. Decide who will conduct the audit
 3. Complete the audit
 4. Review the audit
 5. Formalise recommendations based on the audit
 6. Phase 2 was to design gender neutral posters for being healthy.
- One class was selected to be a focus group, to further examine pupil expectations eg. Future job opportunities, discussion on awareness of rights of all, discussion on boys/girls toilets and changing areas.
 - A survey was completed with P7. They focused on colours eg pink/blue (what did these mean, what did yellow imply etc, what was their favourite colour) and asked 'What would they like to do as a future career?'
 - An observation was completed for P1 children during free play. Children were asked their opinions eg. why did you choose to play with the buggy?
 - An environmental audit was carried out focusing on early years but extending to the whole school - observations were used for the displays and discussions with the classes involved staff.

Time taken: 6 months so far

Sharing practice

BOYS' ATTAINMENT – FENWICK PRIMARY SCHOOL, EAST AYRSHIRE

What was the outcome / what was noticed?

- Resources provided were not gender dependent and a variety of home life was displayed/discussed.
- One parent did not want their child to experience the variety of genders, family life.
- Discussion revealed: there was a wide variety of occupations listed eg graphic designer, artist, chemist, scientist and the children in this class had an excellent spread of occupations with the children not being gender specific. This also led to a great deal of discussion on what to do once they left secondary eg. apprenticeship, college, university.
- Observations of play revealed: All children were keen on dress up and they didn't have a preference for what outfit. Construction area was used by entirety of the class. All other areas accessed equally.
- When children were asked about their choices e.g. 'why did you choose to play with the buggy?' some replies were 'my dad pushes my wee brother, I want to be like him' I want to play with...'
- Data showed that throughout their time at Nursery/School, boys progress was maintained. There was a good balance of high attaining boys and girls in each class. Approximately 16% of each year group had children who were exceeding their level.

What will happen next?

- Continue to monitor the balance of attainment through Nursery to P7.
- Continue to have work based events, in order that all children can investigate future options.

Further details and resources

- Breaking the barriers to Boys Achievement by Gary Wilson
- A Guide for Getting it Right for Every Child – Scottish Government (2012)
- IGB self evaluation framework



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USING DATA EFFECTIVELY TO TACKLE THE POVERTY RELATED ATTAINMENT GAP

LOCAL AUTHORITY SUPPORTING PRIMARY, WEST LoTHIAN

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

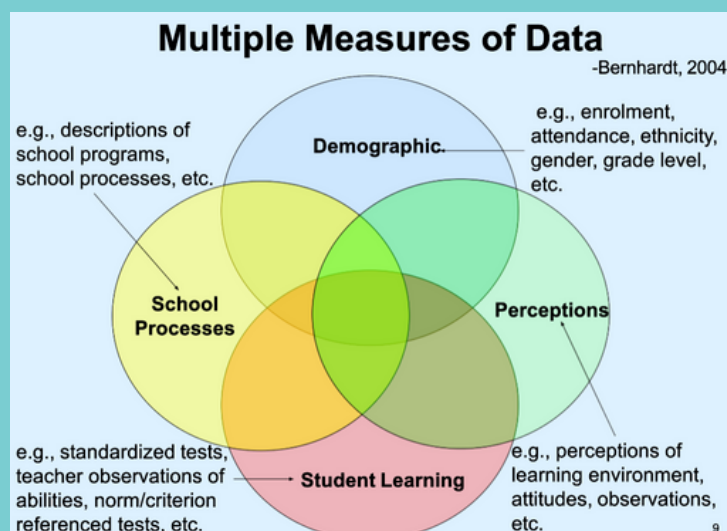
- Practitioners reported frustration with the amount of data they had while being unsure of the relevance of this to their practice or how to use it most beneficially.
- The Equity Team were keen to find a way to support practitioners to make effective use of data.

What was tried?

- Practitioner survey information was collected around how confident practitioners felt in using data to inform their planning.
- A CPD session was delivered around Bernhardt's 4 lenses: Demographic; Perceptions; School Processes (input); Student Learning (output);
- In the session the lenses were used as a tool to assist practitioners to dig deeper and make sense of the data in a manageable, straightforward, time-efficient way and focus on the faces behind the data.
- **Time taken - Promoting and using the 4 lenses for 12 months now and are continuing to roll out their use across ELC settings and schools.**

What was the outcome / what was noticed?

- In the initial survey, before any intervention, practitioners on average rated their confidence in using data effectively as a 3 on a scale from 1 - 6. Following a CPD session this increased to 4.5.
- Looking at data through multiple lenses gave a much more vivid picture of the data in relation to the particular setting/learners.
- Analysis of the data through the 4 lenses allowed for actions/interventions to be planned to best meet the needs of the learners.



Sharing practice

USING DATA EFFECTIVELY TO TACKLE THE POVERTY RELATED ATTAINMENT GAP LOCAL AUTHORITY SUPPORTING PRIMARY, WEST LoTHIAN

What was the outcome / what was noticed? continued

- Practitioners were confident using the data in the School Process and Student Learning lenses but were less familiar with the Demographic and Perceptions data.
- Using the Demographic lens led to increased awareness of gender imbalances which had previously not been uncovered.
- Practitioner feedback around using the 4 lenses was positive with practitioners saying they found it an effective tool for analysing their data.
- Interrogating the data through the 4 lenses also revealed assumptions and unconscious bias which were able to be explored and addressed.

For example:

- In one school it was initially thought there was a gender imbalance in numeracy in all classes with boys outperforming girls throughout the school. However, using the 4 lenses led to the discovery that this was not the case in ELC, P1 and P2. This led to exploration of why this may be the case.
- In another school it was assumed that a group of P7 girls who were not on track in numeracy would have negative attitudes towards numeracy and mathematics. However, further exploration showed they enjoyed numeracy and mathematics.
- In another school it was thought that boys who were not on track in writing would respond well to using digital technologies for their writing. However exploring perceptions revealed using digital technologies wouldn't work for this group.

What will happen next?

- Continue to use the 4 lenses with practitioners.
- Extend out to partners eg Speech & Language therapists.
- Continue to ask questions of the data to delve deeper into how gender, race and poverty intersect and how this information can be used to improve outcomes for children.

Further details and resources

- Bernhardt, VL (2017) Data Analysis: For Continuous School Improvement (4th ed)
- Datnow, A, Park V (2018) Opening or closing doors for students? Equity and data use in schools (P131 - 152)
- Education Scotland (2021), Improving Gender Balance Self-evaluation Framework
- Scottish Government (2021) Attainment Scotland Fund Evaluation: Fourth interim report



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Sharing practice

USING IMPROVING GENDER BALANCE SELF-EVALUATION FRAMEWORK – A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH LETHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL, WEST LOTHIAN

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Data showed a group of P7 girls with low attainment in numeracy and maths
- Data was further interrogated to look at the story behind it – diamond 9's were used to explore views/confidence/self esteem

What was tried?

- Research carried out into various topics: Self-efficacy/ confidence, Maths anxiety, Spatial awareness, Language, Interactions, Feedback, Curriculum/ environment
- Used Improving Gender Balance Self-Evaluation Framework (IGB SEF)
- HWB Champion and pupil support worker became gender aware leaders within the school
- Further baseline data gathered through Google forms, using pupil voice, observations, collecting thoughts and experiences of the staff who supervise break times (e.g. Do you think there is a gender bias in the activities children participate in at playtimes? (for example boys do certain activities and girls do certain activities?))

Action plan developed from this information which included:

- analyse data to inform any gaps in curriculum
- changing the outdoor space to accommodate a wider variety of activities with more of a literacy and numeracy focus as well as 'zoning' areas for sporting activities
- staff training to support the implementation of LGBT inclusive education
- inform all stakeholders of plan
- carry out classroom observations to create awareness of unconscious bias
- set up gender equality pupil focus group
- use of RSHP resource to educate children on equality and diversity
- links to rights respecting schools and the UNCRC

Longer term goals include a continued focus on the school improvement plan (SIP) curriculum resource development and tracking and monitoring of attainment and LGBT certification

Time taken - 6 months and ongoing



Sharing practice



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USING IMPROVING GENDER BALANCE SELF-EVALUATION FRAMEWORK – A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH LETHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL, WEST Lothian

What was the outcome / what was noticed?

- Audit revealed outdoor spaces were being used differently by children of different genders e.g. "Boys mainly play football but girls join in with that too. Very rarely see boys skipping etc." "yes boys always playing football and basketball, boys seem to rule the playground"
- Girls tending to use the periphery of playground areas for their activities with older girls (with a few exceptions) preferring to chat, read or engage in writing activities
- Physical activity tending to be limited to gymnastic or dance related pursuits. Very few of the girls involved in any other physical activity especially where a ball was involved which was particularly noticeable in the upper age groups

What will happen next?

- Challenging incidents to be included on SIP next year
- Two classes to explore further Section 3 from IGB SEF – Learning and Teaching and use the challenge questions.
- Continue to build staff capacity and carry out training
- Playground to be zoned, early in the next session, to encourage better use of the areas and reduce the level of ball related sport but also to encourage girls and boys to participate in more activities. Quiet areas to be developed to allow all children to take part in a wider range of activities. Additional resources have been purchased to allow all children increased options for participation in a range of activities eg reading shed, giant games, table tennis
- Review of pupil and staff attitudes to the use of the playground space and whether this has reduced the number of challenging incidents
- Further work to be done on classroom interactions to inform staff about unconscious bias and gender stereotyping and how this can be improved to improve outcomes for all

Further details and resources

- Letham Sway - action plan and progress
- IGBE data guide for primary and ELC
- IGB self-evaluation framework
- RSHP.scot
- LGBTeducation.scot
- Epstein, Blake and Gonzalez (2017) *Girlhood Interrupted: The Erasure of Black Girls' childhood.*
- Cooper, V, and Holford, N (eds) (2021) "Exploring Childhood and Youth" Abingdon, Routledge pp35-48
- Epstein, D .et al (2001) Boys and Girls come out to play: making masculinities and femininities in school playgrounds. *Men and Masculinities*, 4(2), 158-172.



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Sharing practice

A BLOCK PLAY INTERVENTION – PUMPHERSTON AND UPHALL STATION COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL, WEST LoTHIAN

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- During free play in Primary 1, boys tended to choose building resources more than girls.
- Boys often sat in a group away from the girls when building constructions.
- Conflict would often arise as the boys would compete to complete their own Lego construction rather than collaborating and interacting with others.
- The block play area was seldom used during class time.
- Previous training courses on block play highlighted that incorporating block play into the timetable could be beneficial to the class and perhaps raise attainment in Literacy.

What was tried?

- Weekly block play sessions were started, initially encouraging the class to build structures relating to topic work, e.g. a castle, a boat or a post office, then later they were given free choice.
- Children were asked to work in pairs or trios so that they had to work together and share the resources.
- Whilst the children were building, an adult checked in with them regularly to provide encouragement, interact and question them about their constructions.
- Photographs were taken of each finished structure and the children were given the opportunity to present and describe what they had built to the class.

Time taken - 3 months and ongoing



Sharing practice

A BLOCK PLAY INTERVENTION – PUMPHERSTON AND UPHALL STATION COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL, WEST LoTHIAN

What was the outcome / what was noticed?

- After a number of sessions of playing with the blocks, the girls appeared to gain more confidence, starting with more purpose and building more elaborate structures.
- The girls began to include loose parts and resources from other areas in the classroom.
- When working together on their construction the boys began playing much more cooperatively.
- There was lots of dialogue happening within groups as the children shared ideas, described what they had done, and praised one another for their efforts.
- All pupils were on task and appeared engaged during block play sessions. There were also fewer disputes amongst peers whilst building as they cooperated to solve problems.
- The children became more confident at presenting to their peers and explaining what they were building.
- Children started choosing the wooden blocks during free play and mixed gender groups started playing collaboratively together.
- Block play sessions gave all pupils the opportunity to build confidence and develop skills within STEM and Literacy.

What will happen next?

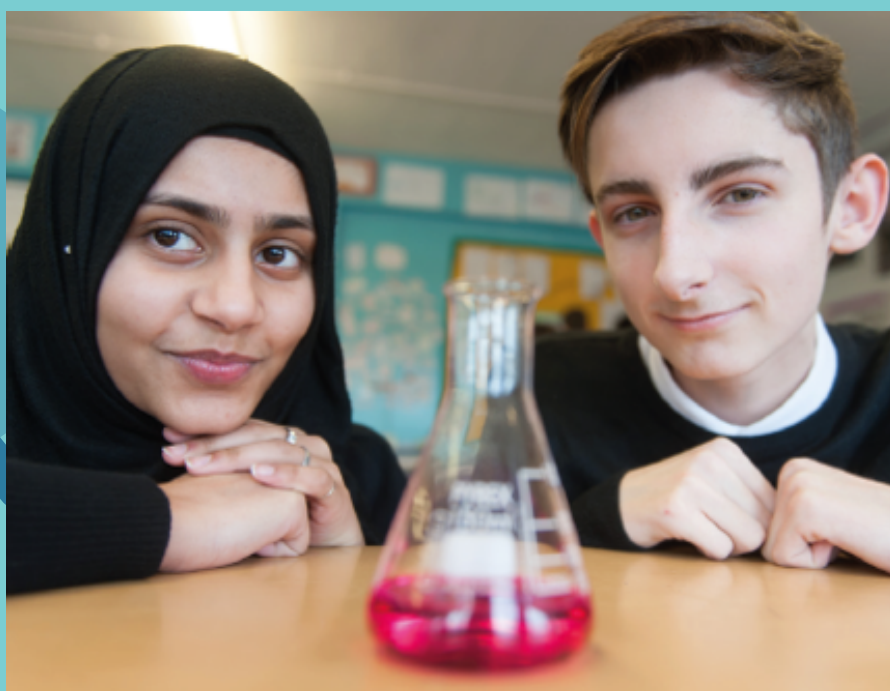
- Continue to plan block play sessions and lessons regularly to ensure that all pupils have ongoing opportunities to build confidence and develop skills within STEM and Literacy.
- Add more loose parts, figures and writing resources to the block play area to encourage planning, mark making and creativity.
- Continue to observe the play choices of boys and girls in class to ensure a balance of skills development and address any gender bias and stereotypes.

Further details and resources

- Whinnet, Jane (2020). Froebel's Gifts and Block Play Today. London: Froebel Trust.
- Care Inspectorate (2018). Gender Equal Play in Early Learning and Childcare.
- Glasgow City Council. Early Literacy and Numeracy Through Block Play.
- No More Girls and Boys: Can Our Kids Go Gender Free? BBC (Programme)
- Education Scotland (2020), Block Play [series of videos], accessed via Education Scotland - YouTube



Secondary



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KNOX ACADEMY, EAST LOTHIAN: FEEDBACK DURING LOCKDOWN – SECONDARY

Context: During the Covid-19 pandemic, schools were closed from January 2021 until March 2021 and learning took place in an online environment. The observations in this example are from this time period.

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Noticed a lack of engagement online during remote learning from more boys than girls.
- There seemed to be more communication from girls when doing online lessons and in response to feedback.
- However there was a risk of bias in identifying who was engaging less, therefore potentially skewing monitoring reports.
- Girls are often more likely to take the subject (Modern Studies) onto senior level.

What was tried?

- Google form asking pupils in National class questions such as:
 - What type of feedback on your learning do you prefer?
 - Do you think you receive enough feedback?
 - Does the feedback you receive help support your next steps?
- Results showed there were no significant differences between boys and girls when asked if they felt they received enough feedback or whether they felt it was effective.
- There was a slight difference in the type of feedback they preferred - girls tended to prefer written feedback whereas boys preferred verbal.
- This may have contributed to engagement levels online given that more teacher time was spent giving written feedback whereas individual verbal feedback was rarely provided.
- On return to face to face teaching, attempts have been made to vary the type of feedback, in particular review verbally some written feedback with boys who were perhaps struggling to engage returning back to school.

Time taken - 2 months

What was the outcome/what was noticed?

- Given social distancing measures it was difficult to fully observe impact before the change of timetable.
- Ensuring varied feedback is provided will be an ongoing strategy to improve attainment and uptake but also promote more positive relationships.

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KNOX ACADEMY, EAST LOTHIAN: FEEDBACK DURING LOCKDOWN – SECONDARY

What will happen next?

- Continue to work on feedback techniques and observe if this has an impact on pupil attainment and course choice

Further details and resources

- Tom Sherrington - The Learning Rainforest
- Dylan William - Using assessment strategies to support feedback
- Dylan William - The secret of effective feedback
- Austin's butterfly - Critique and descriptive feedback
- Hattie and Clarke (2019) Visible Learning Feedback. Routledge: London and New York



Sharing practice

STEM IMPROVEMENT GROUP – SECONDARY **LARBERT HIGH SCHOOL, FALKIRK**

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Noticed gender imbalance in STEM subjects and identified it as an improvement priority
- S1s were asked at the start of the year what they would likely pick and it already showed gender stereotypical patterns - wanted to investigate what difference could the S1 course make
- Work with cluster primaries also highlighted these views start early

What was tried?

- Staff completed Harvard Implicit Bias test and reflected
- Small team/working group took this forward and collaborated on a list of achievable targets for the year
- School improvement group staff reviewed documentation and examples of practice from IOP to evaluate what we are already doing and what we could do in the future
- Professional learning input at STEM Faculty meeting which involved discussion of scenarios around how people may unwittingly stereotypically treat girls and boys in a classroom e.g. provide scrutiny over girls' work but praise a 'misbehaving' boy just for being on task
- Lesson observations to monitor interactions and environment - Who speaks more in class? Who does teacher interact more with?
- Developed top 5 tips for teachers campaign - posters and key messages delivered through staff meetings, assemblies and STEM week
- Incorporated addressing gender stereotyping into mental, social, emotional and physical health lessons
- Human bingo activity with staff to reveal and challenge bias
- Professional learning and follow up session at cluster primaries meeting
- Training materials and tools shared with cluster primaries

Time taken - 8 months initially (and still ongoing)

What was the outcome/what was noticed?

- Evaluations from the professional learning at the STEM meeting showed that some staff were completely unaware of their unconscious bias and the impact that this has. Staff found the activities eye-opening in most cases and took away valuable insights for their own practice
- Results from interactions monitoring showed that boys tended to answer more, put their hand up more and have questions directed at them more. Girls tended to ask more questions
- Staff then became more aware of these tendencies and made alterations to their questioning techniques in the classroom
- Some cluster primaries used materials to cascade key messages

Sharing practice

STEM IMPROVEMENT GROUP – SECONDARY LARBERT HIGH SCHOOL, FALKIRK

What will happen next?

- Potential to have a teachmeet across the school and make it a focus for their professional enquiry topic for next year
- Look into options choice booklets
- Develop shared language for self-evaluation of improving gender balance
- Further examine effective questioning in light of gender stereotypes and bias
- Learner involvement in campaign
- Meet with SLT to plan input at whole school level for pupils through Mental Emotional Social Physical (MESP) lessons for different year groups S1-6 – similar activities to those undertaken by staff to highlight and extend awareness
- Liaise with Larbert cluster for STEM week celebrations and provide an opportunity for staff CLPL
- STEM Academy girls are all applying for the S2 Young Weir Wise programme at Strathclyde and then S3 when it opens up

Further details and resources

- Human bingo activity (available soon via IGBE toolkit)
- LHS 5 top tips campaign poster (see image below)



Tips for Improving Gender Balance in Education @ LHS

Challenge discriminatory language

There is still a surprising amount of sexist language used: challenge this just as you would racist and homophobic language in a constructive manner

Monitor your interactions with different genders

High-achieving boys are more likely to put up their hands and dominate discussions. Low-achieving boys sometimes contribute least of all. Self-evaluate your own interactions.

Refer to careers which use skills from your subject

Are a range of careers presented and described? Is the full range of pathways and choices evident? When describing jobs, do you use adjectives as well as verbs?

Use gender-neutral contexts whenever possible

Encourage students to identify and challenge gender stereotypes, unconscious bias and their effect.

Expose pupils to a diverse range of role models

Is there a range of positive role models for all children? Are women and men portrayed in a range of roles in both the workplace and the home? Do your resources celebrate diversity?



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BOYS' ATTAINMENT AND GENDERED EXPECTATIONS

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Professional learning around barriers to boys' learning
- Department exam results showed boys' attainment was significantly weaker than girls, especially those from lower SIMD areas
- More boys presented for identified learning needs (ADHD common)
- More boys presenting negative behaviour

What was tried?

- Short life working group set up after staff professional learning
- Mindset surveys with S1 and S2 boys, collated data and presented to senior leadership
- Staff mindset surveys about benefits of teaching girls and teaching boys and discussion on this
- Staff discussion about barriers to boys' learning matched up with pupil surveys (perceptions of subjects boys choose as less challenging/academic, expectations from society/home, unable to talk about feelings, low expectations, lack of male role models)
- Consulted pupils on what would be useful for them
- Teachers, guidance staff and support for learning staff identified boys for the intervention (those who were peer influencers and potential role models)
- Further staff professional learning
- Work with partners that included:
 - S1 boys created a lifestyle magazine targeted at their age group/ P7 learners coming into S1
 - S2 boys created a book about what they wish people knew about teenage boys
 - Staff from Edinburgh Castle & Mercat Tours delivered training to the boys on how to be ambassadors for their school. Boys devised tours which are given to VIPs, guests and visitors
 - Worked with a slam poet to devise poetry
 - Yoga and mindfulness sessions
 - Worked with associated primaries - reading to P1/nursery, peer mentors for P7s
 - Challenged laddish culture, racism, homophobia and sexist thinking and introduced gender balanced approach to work, tone and language. Tried to challenge idea of literacy being perceived as feminine
 - Provided activities avoiding male stereotypes, discussion before extended writing tasks, group challenges not individual competition, mixed ability sets to remove 'bottom set' mindsets
 - Stopped using writing as a punishment, used positive male role models, praised process and effort
 - After first year- repeated mindset surveys, consulted learners, staff and partners and made modifications

Time taken: 2 years of research and planning to get to delivery point - still ongoing

“We cannot inspire change if we passively accept our own low expectations of boys”

BOYS' ATTAINMENT AND GENDERED EXPECTATIONS

What was the outcome /what was noticed?

- Improved attainment
- More boys presented for N5 English
- Calm and focused start to lessons, improvements in behaviour overall
- S1 boys had significant improvements in self-belief
- S2 boys had significant improvements in pride in their work and confidence for completing school assignments
- Raised awareness with staff of issues through professional learning and coaching
- Changed mindsets and made literacy feel more 'real life' for the boys

What will happen next?

- Expand beyond S1/S2 (up the school and with P6/P7s in associated primaries)
- Consider how to use seniors as peer mentors
- Use lessons learned to engage boys who are at greatest risk of missing out on learning
- Considering using tracking and monitoring for targetted groups and think about how to measure impact
- Increase access to specific study support
- Inputs on careers and further study

Further details and resources

A more detailed account can be found in the GTCS Teaching Scotland magazine, page 50

It's 'no wonder' that boys are doing less well than girls | Tes

Texts that supported this enquiry:

- Breaking the Barriers to Boys Achievement by Gary Wilson
- When the Adults Change, Everything Changes by Paul Dix
- Boys Don't Try, by Matt Pinkett and Mark Roberts
- Making it Better for Boys, by Ali McClure
- Education Endowment Foundation - Setting or Streaming

IMPROVING THE NUMBER OF GIRLS IN DESIGN TECHNOLOGY SUBJECTS CLEVEDEN SECONDARY SCHOOL, GLASGOW

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Gender imbalance in the uptake of the following subjects, with girls being the minority (as indicated by % in brackets): S3 Design and Manufacture (30%), National 5 Practical Woodwork (15%), Higher Design and Manufacture (26%), National 5 Design and Manufacture (28%), National 5 Graphic Communication (45%).
- When asked why, girls reported that they: often felt their work and progress is overshadowed by the behaviour of boys in their class, were encouraged to focus elsewhere - particularly humanities subjects - when choosing their options, saw Practical Woodwork as a subject for boys who significantly disrupt and misbehave in other classes. A lack of female teachers was also noted by some girls during the 2021/22 academic year.
- Biases around expectations and interactions were revealed.
- Reflection on environment (Is there more than 1 female role model displayed in our rooms? How many wall displays contain artefacts that are considered 'masculine'? Is the classroom environment warm and inviting? Do classrooms reflect the contents of our learning? Is enough pupil work displayed?) led to the conclusion that most of the curriculum revolves around typically 'masculine' objects such as; Tools, Machinery, Construction.

What was tried?

With pupils:

- Both woodwork classes are now taken by female members of staff.
- Two S6 female practical woodwork candidates have been appointed as 'Tech Captains' and come into different S1 and S2 classes to help and chat to pupils.
- S5/6 pupils have been conducting 'Q+A' sessions with S1 classes, answering their questions about the subjects offered - with significance placed on where girls fit into the subjects.
- STEM week was focused on the growth of Women in STEM and delivered to all S1-3 classes.
- Teamed up with Science and Maths to create an S2 girls in STEM programme (targeted at pupils who excel in technology-based subjects but don't necessarily express interest).

With teachers:

- Discussions surrounding the unconscious bias that staff may have regarding boys and girls in technology subjects took place. Biases included boys being viewed as: more interested and capable, dominant in the classroom, more likely to be disruptive (especially in practical lessons), taking up more teacher time, given more positive feedback than girls, interact disproportionately more with male teachers than girls.
- An 'open door policy' was encouraged within the department, where interactions and overall learning environment were monitored.
- Behaviour policy was revisited and amended regarding minor and continuous disruptions. New policy was monitored and revisited during departmental meetings to monitor success.
- Pupil voice surveys were used to allow pupils to feedback to staff their thoughts and ideas for the classes and the curriculum.
- CLPL sessions were undertaken by staff focused on constructive and neutral feedback.
- 'Pupil of the week' and 'Pupil's pupil of the week' were started to encourage pupils and staff to show appreciation to pupils where they felt extra recognition was deserved.
- All staff made a conscious effort to be more present around the department, speaking to both male and female pupils.
- All verbal and written feedback was influenced by the knowledge gained through CLPL sessions, and the effects on pupils' work and demeanour in class were noted.

Continued on next page

Sharing practice



IMPROVING
GENDER
BALANCE &
EQUALITIES

IMPROVING THE NUMBER OF GIRLS IN DESIGN TECHNOLOGY SUBJECTS CLEVEDEN SECONDARY SCHOOL, GLASGOW

What was tried? continued

- Introduced more neutral or feminine projects such as the National 5 Practical Woodworking model
- Classrooms were redecorated to display both male and female designers, engineers and architects.
- Introduced a STEM working group
- Primary school transition visits with an emphasis on design technology projects that are either neutral or 'feminine' based artefacts.

Time taken: 6 months and ongoing

What was the outcome/what was noticed?

- Gender imbalance in uptake for next years' cohort was vastly reduced:
0% of S3 Design and Manufacture and Graphic Communication pupils are dropping it in S4; 48% of S3 Design and Manufacture pupils will be female (18% increase) ; 45% of Higher Design and Manufacture pupils will be female (19% increase); 70% of Higher Graphic communications will be female.
- Educating both teachers and pupils on the gender stereotypes that they may come across, and reinforce themselves, helped highlight how to avoid them without inviting the risk of stereotype threat.
- Inspired change within the school and showing that Design and Technology subjects are as much for girls as they are for boys.
- Introducing new pedagogy into the classroom allows pupils to have a say in what they learn, allowing for more neutral and feminine subject matter and adding a relevancy to the curriculum.

Further details and resources

- Downloadable STEM Role Models Posters
Celebrate Women Innovators As Illustrated By
Women Artists (womenyoushouldknow.net)
- WISE campaign
- Andreucci, C. and Chatoney, M., 2017.
Perception by French students of
thegendered nature of material artifacts
studied in technology education. *International
Journal Of Technology And Design Education*,
27(1), pp.1-18.
- Sultan, U.N., Axell, C. and Hallström, J., 2019.
Girls' engagement with technologyeducation:
A scoping review of the literature. *Design and
Technology Education: an International Journal*,
24(2), pp.20-41.
- Raabe, I., Boda, Z. and Stadtfeld, C., 2019. The
Social Pipeline: How Friend Influence and
Peer Exposure Widen the STEM Gender Gap.
Sociology of Education, 92(2), pp.105-123.

What will happen next?

- Continuing to develop new project and curricular materials that are gender neutral or interesting to female students. Also, continuing to redecorate classrooms so that they are more welcoming to girls.
- Encouraging conversations with other faculties within the school to have open and honest discussions about the gender biases that occur within their subjects/ teaching practice.



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GENDER IMBALANCE IN COMPUTING SCIENCE LINLITHGOW ACADEMY, WEST LoTHIAN

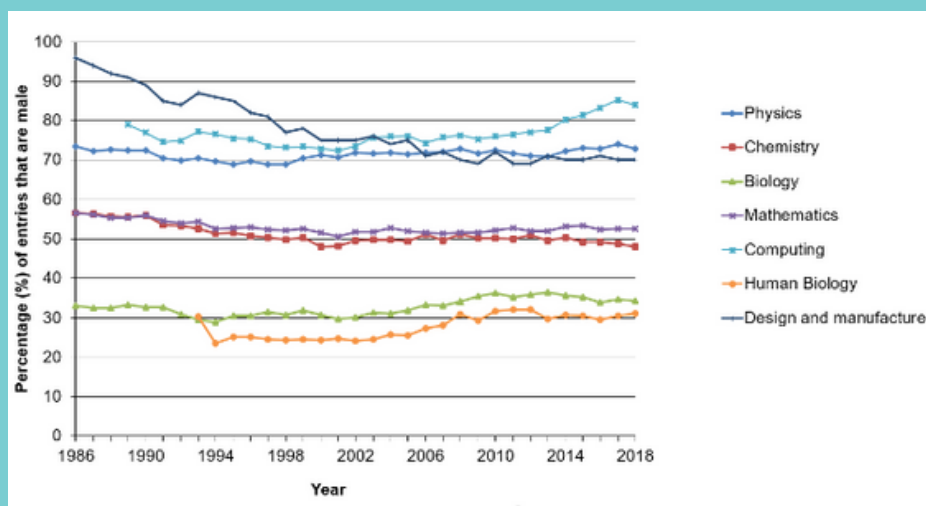
What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Data revealed that there were no girls studying Computing Science beyond S3.
- Experience showed that when girls continued to study Computing Science up to Higher level there was no difference in ability and attainment between boys and girls.
- There is a decline in the number of entries into Computing Science due to both falling numbers of Computing Science teachers and a decline in student uptake.
- An increase in the number of girls continuing to study Computing Science will lead to an overall increase in numbers of students choosing Computing Science.

What was tried?

- Prior to any intervention a Menti word wall was used to gain a snapshot of S2 pupils' views of a Computer Scientist. This was repeated post-intervention (see image on next page).
- Former female Computing Science students created a brief summary of where they are now and how their current role involves Computing Science (including a photo that showed them out with their Computing Science role).
- These were displayed on classroom walls and also used for a 'role model a week' project leading up to course choice time.
- A presentation was created to promote Computing Science showing short videos of female professionals working in Computing Science.
- Course choice information was adapted to include details of a diverse Computing Science workforce including pathways and roles.
- Changes were made to S2 curriculum including inclusion of 'Tech for the Planet' lessons delivered by two female presenters.

Time taken: 6 months and ongoing



Sharing practice



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GENDER IMBALANCE IN COMPUTING SCIENCE LINLITHGOW ACADEMY, WEST LoTHIAN

What was the outcome/what was noticed?

- Within the cohort experiencing the interventions there was an increase in the number of S2 girls who chose to continue to study Computing Science (22% more than the previous year).
- When the Menti wordwall activity was repeated more positive words were used to describe a computer scientist post-intervention.

What will happen next?

- Continue to measure quantitative and qualitative data in the coming years to identify trends over a longer period of time.
- Develop some of the role models further to clearly explain their pathway to their current role and their career aspirations for the future.
- Look for opportunities for girls to meet and interact with 'non-stereotypical' Computer Scientists.
- Work with primary cluster colleagues to both deliver Computing Science lessons and establish a perception of Computing Science that girls can identify with from a much earlier age.
- Extend intervention to all S2 classes then potentially across all STEM subjects.

Further details and resources

- Children's Implicit and Explicit Stereotypes on the Gender, Social Skills, and Interests of a Computer Scientist; Shirley De Wit, Felienne Hermans, Efthimia Aivalogou (2021)
- "I'm Not a Science Nerd!": STEM Stereotypes, Identity, and Motivation Among Undergraduate Women; Christine R Starr; 2018
- Increasing Diversity in K-12 Computer Science: Strategies from the Field; Joanna Goode; 2008
- STEM: improving gender balance, equity and equality, IGBE; 2020

	Pre Intervention	Post Intervention	<i>Graphic 7</i> *where there are four words two or more were equal prominence. Where there a two words, two were prominent with the other words much more diverse and less prominent.
Class	Top Words	Top Words	
2.2	smart, nerd, coding, computer	smart, skilled	
2.3	smart, coding, nerdy, glasses	smart, rich, nerd	
2.5	smart, nerd, glasses	smart, computer, scientist	
2.8	smart, games, nerdy	smart, coding	
2.15	smart, nerd	smart, intelligent, patient	



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MALE CARERS GROUP IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL FORRES ACADEMY, MORAY

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Due to bereavement and break down in familial relationships (from COVID-19), there were dads who very suddenly had become sole or main carers. There was concern about the toll this would take on them; the impact it would have on their relationship with their children and the emotional issues that may arise due to this sudden change in home life.
- After consultation with colleagues in the cluster, many felt dads would benefit from further support/communications and they agreed that there was nothing in the local area specifically tailored to help encourage dads' partnership with school to support their child or children in their education and futures.
- Main carers listed on schools system were female (i.e. mums/ step-mums etc.).
- Dads often represented negatively in official documentation images and in the media.
- No local groups available for dads to meet and work together to support their children (educationally and emotionally).

What was tried?

- Checked in with QIO to see if there were any existing groups like this.
- A survey ([Microsoft Forms duplicate link](#)) and cover letter (explaining that we wanted to ensure all our dads felt their voice was being heard and they were involved) was created and sent to all families from S1-S6 to provide most accurate data for dads in the community (rural, small town with strong military links and many military children).
- To build up trust and relationships with our prospective male carers group we:
 - contacted all of our dads and spoke to them directly to try and help them to feel more comfortable/ relaxed about attending the group.
 - requested pupils reassure their dads by explaining how relaxed and easy they found it to work with us.
 - encouraged the pupils to call their dads while we were in the room so we could have a bit of a light-hearted informal chat with them too.
- Selected a small group of dads (10-12) who would benefit from meeting other dads and ensured timings worked with their work patterns (shift/offshore etc.).
- Posted invites and follow up phone calls a few weeks prior to sessions beginning as well as weekly reminder texts.
- Planned and carried out weekly 2 hour sessions between March and May in the local community centre (as association with school was a barrier for some).
- Sessions followed same structure and invited local male role models well known in the community to help parents feel more relaxed. First 2 sessions were carers only then sessions 3-6 involved carers and their children.
- Everyone worked together and supported each other on key tasks/activities which could be built around the requirements for Unit accreditation.
- Carried out evaluation of the block of sessions using survey on Microsoft Forms ([duplicate link to survey](#)).

Time taken: each block of sessions ran over 6 weeks

Sharing practice



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MALE CARERS GROUP IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL FORRES ACADEMY, MORAY

What was the outcome/what was noticed?

The whole school survey to male guardians revealed there were dads who:

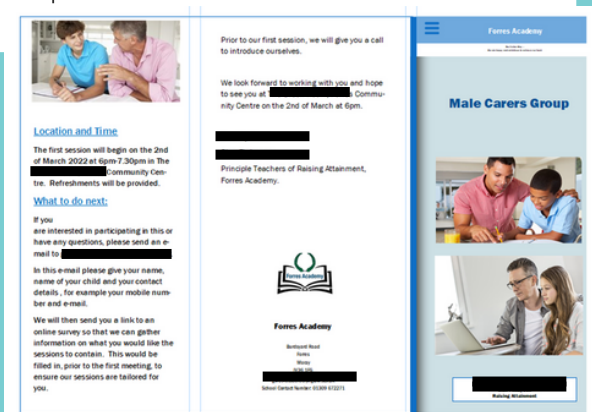
- Wished to receive more communication from school and who also wanted to receive information on key areas such as Mental Health/Well-Being and Curriculum for Excellence.
- Wanted access to key resources.
- Wanted a safe place to go to discuss key issues with other male parents/guardians.

It was also evident that their concerns about their child/children matched our own, for example well-being and they wanted more support/guidance on how they could help.

- Some dads felt their parenting was being questioned/criticised.
- Some mums questioned why they were not being consulted and felt excluded.
- This confirmed previous research on the lack of relational trust that can exist between parents and teachers.
- Block of sessions ran successfully but attendance lower than expected - reflected on why.
- Reasons for not being able to attend - Covid, anxiety, forgot about sessions, youth clubs/local football clubs running on same day.
- Helped staff to see how vital dads are in supporting and motivating pupils, how nurturing they are.

Further details and resources

- Pizza Reading in Renfrewshire
- Family Learning Clackmannanshire
- Men and Children Matter: Case Study 3, Goodlyburn Primary
- Duplicate survey links - before intervention, after intervention
- Link to leaflet sent to male carers (pictured below)
- Link to Powerpoint detailing rationale and plan



What will happen next?

- Form a Local Authority Focus Group to work together on this so we can support male parents/guardians across the authority but this would depend on Covid Funding being provided to facilitate this next session.
- Members of current male carers group to be involved in running the sessions in the future.
- Offer SQA accredited qualifications for dads and pupils.



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Sharing practice

AN ENQUIRY INTO THE DIVERSITY OF REPRESENTATION IN THE LITERATURE THAT WE TEACH **RACHEL ALEXANDER, TEACHER OF ENGLISH**

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- It was suspected that students were still mostly encountering texts written by white men, and/or texts that centred around the experiences of white men.
- The importance of all children seeing themselves reflected in literature.
- A lack of diversity in the literature which was being presented to students.

What was tried?

- Inventory of the drama and prose texts that teachers have access to, with reference to gender balance and representation.
- Audit of the drama and prose texts that volunteer members of the department used in the 2021-22 session.
- Discussion about representation within text choices at departmental level.
- Establishment of a school Equalities Group including pupil Equalities Reps from S1 - 6. This group has met several times to discuss practical ways to make the school a more inclusive environment.
- **Time taken - 6 months and ongoing**

What was the outcome/what was noticed?

- Only 31% of prose texts used were written by female authors.
- Only 14% of texts used featured exclusively female protagonists.
- The majority of texts used were published more than 20 years ago.
- Pupils across S1 - 6 this year have overwhelmingly studied texts written by men, that centre around men and their stories.

"It's important to have diverse characters in books because books give kids mirrors and windows."

Angie Thomas

Sharing practice



IMPROVING
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AN ENQUIRY INTO THE DIVERSITY OF REPRESENTATION IN THE LITERATURE THAT WE TEACH

RACHEL ALEXANDER, TEACHER OF ENGLISH

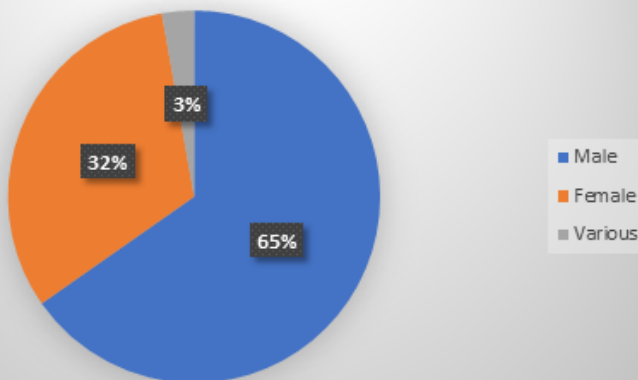
What will happen next?

- Audit to be done of poetry and media texts.
- Through Equalities Reps gather pupil opinions of texts used.
- Create bank of resources to encourage the use of diverse & inclusive texts.
- Texts to remain a departmental meeting agenda item.
- Expand enquiry to other departments within the school.

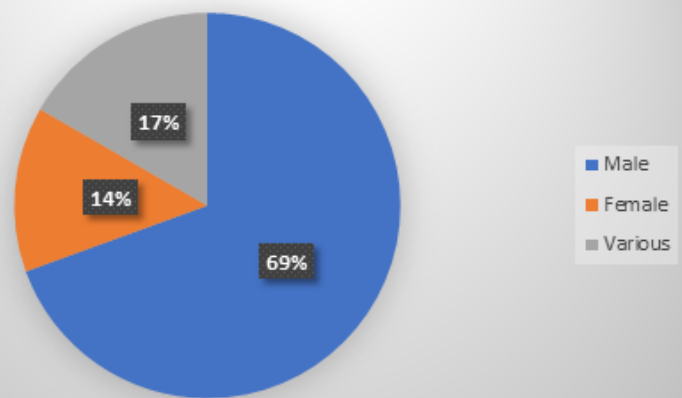
Further details and resources

- Gender Action resources
- Ideas and activities to explore unconscious bias
- Improving Gender Balance – Literature Review
- Time for Inclusive Education
- UNCRC Rights of the child

Author (drama & prose)



Protagonist (drama & prose)



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Sharing practice

AN INTERVENTION TO IMPROVE BOYS' UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR VALUES AND EMPOWER THEM TO BECOME AN ACTIVE BYSTANDER CRAIGMOUNT HIGH SCHOOL, EDINBURGH

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- After examining behaviour related referral data, observed that there was a gender difference in negative referrals.
- It was also highlighted that S2 and S3 showed the biggest gender difference.
- Evidence aligned with other societal statistics around male suicide rate, drug deaths, court appearances and the current prison population being predominantly male and the high prevalence of male violence on women, children and other men. In addition, 81% of schools exclusions were boys.

Category	Positive	Negative	Ratio
Female	9402	-696	93%
Male	9724	-1926	83%
Total	19126	-2622	88%

What was tried?

- Initiated an S2 boys group with a selection of boys who were consistently “on the periphery” of high level misbehaviour.
- The pilot took 25 boys and delivered an intervention for 3 weeks to groups of 5.
- This was a bespoke programme using materials from a variety of sources with the support of the police liaison officer.

The three part course was designed to:

1. Develop relationships between teacher, the young people and the police liaison officer
2. Ask young people to think about their values and “What you permit, you promote”
3. Get the young people to think about why it is becoming so tough for boys and young men
4. Discuss emotional intelligence and being a bystander
5. Think about toxic masculinity
6. Provide the young men the opportunity to discuss these issues in a safe space

Time taken - 6 months and ongoing

Sharing practice

AN INTERVENTION TO IMPROVE BOYS' UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR VALUES AND EMPOWER THEM TO BECOME AN ACTIVE BYSTANDER CRAIGMOUNT HIGH SCHOOL, EDINBURGH

What was the outcome/what was noticed?

- Young men given a safe space to think about their values in isolation of their peer groups.
- Young men given the opportunity to look at masculinity in terms of the "man box".
- Young men introduced to the idea of active bystander and the idea of "pluralistic ignorance" or "the power of one".
- It was noticed that group size and mix were important factors in the success of the intervention.
- It was not necessarily about targeting those who had the highest number of negative referrals. In fact, it was important to target those whose response was often "I didn't do anything" or "I'm not the worst" and consequently didn't recognise their part or impact they have.

What will happen next?

- Run the intervention for the remaining (now S3) students.
- Work with the police liaison officer to deliver the Mentors in Violence Prevention programme to the Senior school.
- Share the programme rationale with the wider community and ask for feedback relating to behaviour, relationships and interactions.

Further details and resources

- Philip Zimbardo: The demise of guys?
- Bystander Tips & Scenarios - NOMORE.org
- Tough Guise
- Australian Chief To Sexist Soldiers: Respect Women Or GET OUT
- A call to men | Tony Porter
- Bystander Approach – Graham Goulden
Cultivating Minds UK
- Everyday Sexism by Laura Bates



Sharing practice



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HOW TO EMPOWER PUPILS TO CHALLENGE CASUAL SEXIST AND MISOGYNISTIC LANGUAGE/ VIEWS IN SCHOOL. DENNY HIGH SCHOOL, FALKIRK

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Sexist announcements about girls and boys dressing for non-uniform days.
- Banning of crop tops, vest tops at PE and the implication that girls are tempting the boys.
- Casual sexist remarks from pupils directed at each other. They would make assumptions about gender, roles and the future of their peers depending on gender.
- Some inappropriate comments directed at female members of staff from pupils.

What was tried?

The IGBE Secondary Audit tool was used to carry out an audit of:

- Uniform Policy - looking for gendered language or different rules for boys / girls
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Inclusion & Equality policy
- Themes and authors of texts used in the English department
- Topics and specific lessons within the PSE programme

Focus group of S6 pupils who had formed a Feminist Reading Group was consulted.

Time taken - 6 months and ongoing

What was the outcome/what was noticed?

- Uniform policy no longer gendered but PE has issues about what is appropriate for girls.
- Focus on combating anti-LGBTQ+ language and racist language for the past several years which seems to be having a positive impact.
- Inclusion policy is very much focused on LGBTQ+.
- In the English department there had been a concerted effort to be more inclusive of all marginalised groups but texts still featured predominately male authors and stories.
- PSE includes lessons about consent and gender based violence.
- Focus group said they would like to see change and their focus on was on language used and assumptions being made about their gender.

Sharing practice

HOW TO EMPOWER PUPILS TO CHALLENGE CASUAL SEXIST AND MISOGYNISTIC LANGUAGE/ VIEWS IN SCHOOL.

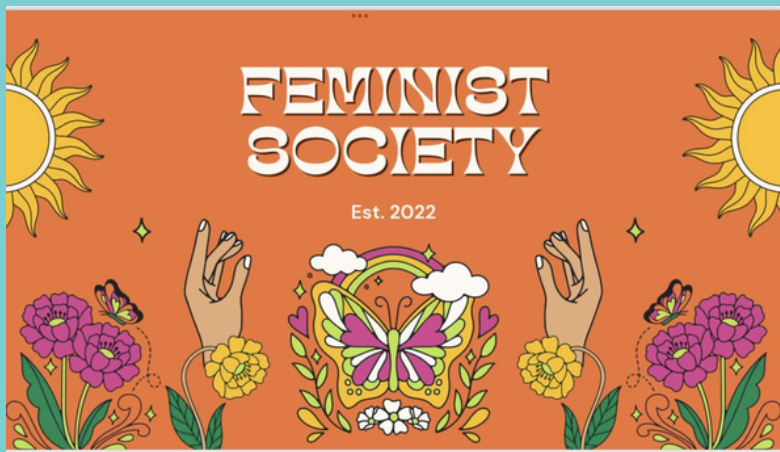
DENNY HIGH SCHOOL, FALKIRK

What will happen next?

- Hoping to set up a group of BGE pupils to develop resources to be used in PSE or to deliver training to staff about challenging gender stereotypes.
- Liaise with staff delivering MVP training to see if they have any insights or if there is something already ongoing that could be built on within the school.
- Revisiting anti bullying policy to bring this in line with challenging racism and homophobia/ transphobia.
- Use the Feminista whole school approach template for moving forward.

Further details and resources

- National Education Forum and UK Feminista (2018) It's Just everywhere - a study on sexism in schools
- UK Feminista (2018) How to take a whole school approach to tackling sexism
- Phipps, Alison, Ringrose, Jessica, Renold, Emma and Jackson, Carolyn (2017) 'Rape culture, lad culture and everyday sexism: researching, conceptualizing and politicizing new mediations of gender and sexual violence', in *Journal of Gender Studies*
- The Guardian (2021) Government still has no strategy for tackling sexism in schools, say teachers
- TES (2020) Girls held back by sexism in school, survey finds
- Stylist UK (n.d.) A Fearless Future: campaign to end male violence against women



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Sharing practice

GENDER AWARE APPROACH TO THE SECONDARY CURRICULUM PERTH HIGH SCHOOL, PERTH AND KINROSS

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- After learning about the concept of the gendered curriculum, senior pupils questioned why this had not been discussed earlier in their school career, especially when making course choices in S3 and S4/5.
- This raised the question of the extent to which the curriculum was gendered, the consequences of this, and how this could be changed.

What was tried?

- Undertook an audit of S4/5/6 pupils and the subjects they studied: The Business Manager was able to provide the data. This was compared with SQA data showing the national picture.
- In addition, 4 focus groups were carried out with pupils (S2 and S5). Senior pupils led two of these focus groups and a member of staff led the other pupil group and a staff focus group. In addition, two unstructured interviews with staff were carried out.
- The quantitative data was gathered during Term 2.
- The focus groups were mainly carried out in Term 3 when pupils choice was going on.
- Staff interviews were carried out in Term 2 and 3.

Time taken - 6 months and ongoing

What was the outcome/what was noticed?

- Despite the evidence, all pupils were clear that there was no subject better suited to one gender.
- Most pupils did not identify certain skills as being 'male' or 'female'.
- Most staff reported they did not discuss gender as an issue in their conversations with pupils regarding their subject and subject uptake.
- All pupils reported that they had no discussions about gender as part of the course choice process.
- The proportion of pupils in each subject by gender roughly reflected the national picture.
- Some staff did not see it as their role to discuss the causes and the consequences of gender imbalance in their subject area.
- Some staff felt they lacked knowledge and or skills to challenge some attitudes of pupils.

Sharing practice

GENDER AWARE APPROACH TO THE SECONDARY CURRICULUM PERTH HIGH SCHOOL, PERTH AND KINROSS

What will happen next?

Present findings to SLT with a view to:

- Recommend using Education Scotland materials to audit whole school policies.
- Change materials used for course choice processes to shift focus to skills.
- Form a short life working group that includes pupils to have an overview of a range of issues; organising staff training, policy audits, and other equity issues, such as examining photographic/pictorial materials used in classes.
- Recommend training for staff that equips them to feel confident in challenging gender stereotypes expressed by pupils and colleagues.

Further details and resources

- Bennett, K.P. , LeCompte, M.D. (1990), How Schools Work: Sociology of Education
- Johns, M., Schmader, T. & Martens, A. (2005) Knowing Is Half the Battle: Teaching Stereotype Threat as a Means of Improving Women's Math Performance, Psychological Science
- Lamb, L., Bigler, R., Liben, L. & Green, V. (2009) Teaching Children to Confront Peers' Sexist Remarks: Implications for Theories of Gender Development and Educational Practice Sex Roles
- Legewie, J., DiPrete, T.A. (2014) The High School Environment and the Gender Gap in Science and Engineering
- Paechter, C. (1998) Educating the Other
- Rippon, G. and Lindsay, L.L. in (2020) The Gendered Brain
- Smith, C. S. & Hung, L.-C. (2008) Stereotype threat: effects on education Social Psychology of Education, 11
- SQA Statistics



Sharing practice

EXPLORING DIVERSITY IN TEXTS – SECONDARY SPEYSIDE HIGH SCHOOL, MORAY

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- An increasing awareness that pupils feel they do not learn about all facets of diversity in the curriculum and that LGBTQ+ pupils often feel that they cannot relate to the examples, texts and information they are given in classes.
- Pupils questioned whether texts used are relevant, why they study them and also pointed out that these texts were no longer directly comparable to their lives as young people.
- A realisation that diversity is needed in what is taught so that pupils can not only see and learn about other types of people in the literature they read, but also see reflections of themselves in what they read no matter their own life experiences or identity.

What was tried?

- Starting small, a range of smaller units of work, activities and tasks to begin the process of challenging gender stereotypes was trialled with a range of classes.
- Undertaking professional learning for LGBT Inclusive education, relevant knowledge and confidence was developed to begin expanding the range of tasks.
- As time went on, this led to tasks naturally developing to question other perceptions of diversity.
- Some school-wide CLPL was arranged on the importance of inclusive and diverse education which was followed up by all staff completing Stage 1 of LGBT Inclusive Education.
- Time for Inclusive Education were then drafted in to undertake Stage 2 Curriculum Development workshops with teaching staff. This led to each department working together to expand their knowledge – not only of LGBT themes, but also of diversity, what this looks like, what it could look like in the curriculum and the small, practical and consistent ways it could be implemented.
- This led to an in-depth discussion on the texts currently used and how these could be further developed into resources that embed diversity in the curriculum. A list of resources within the department and the themes they considered was created as well as researching new resources.

Time taken - 6 months and ongoing

Text:	Diversity Themes:
'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas' by John Boyne	Sex, gender, sexuality, religion, race, disability and age
'They Both Die at the End' by Adam Silvera (<i>new resource</i>)	Gender, sexuality, age
'The Hunger Games' by Suzanne Collins	Sex, gender (presentation and stereotypes)
Wall.E (Media)	Sex, gender (presentation and stereotypes), sexuality
The Hate U Give (Media)	Race
Slumdog Millionaire (Media)	Race, culture, disability, gender
The Fault in Our Stars (Media)	Disability

EXPLORING DIVERSITY IN TEXTS – SECONDARY SPEYSIDE HIGH SCHOOL, MORAY

What was the outcome/what was noticed?

- The activities increased learners exposure to diversity.
- Pupils overall had a very positive response to the activities which was demonstrated through their interest, the thorough work they completed as well as the in-depth discussions and questions.
- Most pupils were able to critically challenge their own opinions and perceptions of gender and several other diversity factors.
- The department has gained confidence of relevant terminology surrounding diversity terms which has reduced apprehension towards teaching diverse materials.

What will happen next?

Short term:

- Continue considering own perceptions of gender stereotypes and other diversity factors in learning and teaching.
- Make changes in practice; particularly in pre-reading strategies, questioning and discussion to facilitate quality discussion around diversity.
- Continue to adapt existing resources in small ways to ensure they are inclusive and diverse.

Long term:

- **Curriculum Development Action Plan;** work as a department to develop and expand the range of diverse texts, resources and activities to improve the inclusivity of teaching materials. This has been incorporated into departmental and whole school improvement plans.
- **Inclusivity Plan;** the Equality and Diversity Staff Working Group are now looking to lead the completion of LGBT Education Scotland's toolkit to achieve excellence in effectively delivering LGBT Inclusive Education. This will work towards making the school increasingly inclusive while engaging the pupils in their learning.
- **Continued input of pupil voice;** this journey was triggered by meeting with the pupils' LGBTQ+ Action Group: To continue reflecting on the learning and teaching journey as an individual practitioner, a department and as a school, ensuring the young people are involved in the decision-making process that will be building this new and diverse curriculum is incredibly important.

Further details and resources

- Exploring Unconscious bias (Sway)
- Gender Action resources
- Improving Gender Balance – Literature Review
- LGBT Education Scotland Toolkit
- Time for Inclusive Education: CPD
- Time for Inclusive Education: Secondary schools



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Other partners



NHS Tayside, Women's Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (WRASAC) and
Education Scotland: Springing the Gender Trap project

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Sharing practice



IMPROVING
GENDER
BALANCE &
EQUALITIES

SPRINGING THE GENDER TRAP

Education, sexual health and sexual violence prevention partnership, Tayside

What highlighted a new approach/intervention was needed?

- Link between gender stereotypes and violence against women and girls
- Observation of the need for training on this topic amongst education settings, parents and professionals

What was tried?

- Three professional learning sessions were developed in partnership between Education Scotland, NHS and a 3rd sector sexual violence prevention organisation.
- They had the following aims:
 - To recognise gender stereotypes.
 - To understand the short and long term impacts that gender stereotypes and bias have on children and young people throughout their lives – Learning; Work; Relationships.
 - To think differently about gender and to reflect on the changes they will make as a result of their learning.
- Sessions were piloted with educators, sexual health professionals and sexual violence prevention workers, feedback provided and tweaks made.
- At the start of the session, participants were issued with an attitude survey. They were also given a workbook to keep notes and complete tasks easily.
- Between each session, participants had a reflection task to carry out.
- At the end of the three sessions, participants repeated the attitude survey.
- Sessions were then advertised to workers in Angus including newly qualified teachers, social workers and nurses working with children & young people.

Time taken - 6 months

What was the outcome/what was noticed?

- Attitude survey was thought provoking and important for gauging any change
- Reflective tasks between sessions really helped to make the topic relatable for the audience
- Partnership working between 3 sectors enhanced the content and made it relevant for a wider audience

Sharing practice



IMPROVING
GENDER
BALANCE &
EQUALITIES

SPRINGING THE GENDER TRAP

Education, sexual health and sexual violence prevention partnership

What will happen next?

- Roll out the programme to selected localities, evaluate and extend the reach further
- Replicate the partnership working in other regions
- Adapt sessions to be delivered with parents and carers through the NHS Speakeasy programme

Further details and resources

This programme was run in the Tayside locality.

If you work here and would like to participate or would like to explore something similar for your region please contact:

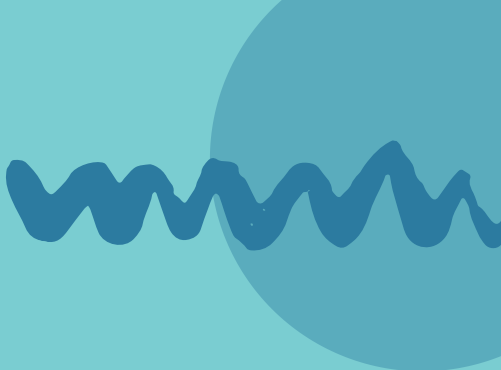
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The practice examples
shared in this booklet
were collected and
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