



Inclusive Language

Introduction

Portlethen Primary School is a nurturing and welcoming school that promotes inclusion for all. We fundamentally feel that it is our duty to embed diversity into our practice, our curriculum and school ethos. We believe that it is our duty to teach and advocate all the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010 (Scotland).

Why is it so important?

- We firmly believe that inclusion means to allow all within our school community to be embraced and that no discrimination should take place on the grounds of sexual orientation, race, gender, religion and belief, gender reassignment and any other form of discrimination deemed appropriate to be challenged.
- Children have a fundamental right to feel accepted and to belong to their school community regardless of any protected characteristic. All within our community have a right to be accepted, recognised, and represented.
- We firmly believe that for everybody to be represented within our community, our school must promote and embed diversity at every level. Portlethen Primary School community is a diverse, rich, and multi-faceted community. It is built upon different faiths and communities living peacefully together. We believe that we have a vital role to play in educating and supporting our young people to be inclusive, welcoming, accepting and accepted in the community in which they live.

The Process

Portlethen Primary School has created a working group of both pupils and staff to identify areas in which the school can become a more inclusive, diverse, and welcoming place to study, work, and visit. We began with a commitment from all our staff and pupils to work towards promoting inclusion and diversity relating to all aspects of the Equality Act 2010 (Scotland). We embedded this through training with staff from LGBT Youth Scotland and the promotion of diversity and inclusion awareness learning for our children.

Pupil Equality Group (PEGs)

A group of children from different age groups volunteered to form a working group of pupils to promote inclusion, diversity, and acceptance at Portlethen Primary School. The group that formed are known as the Pupil Equality Group (PEGs). This group meet regularly with the Senior Leadership Team of the school to discuss ideas on how to promote inclusion and diversity with pupils, staff, and visitors to the school.

Working Group

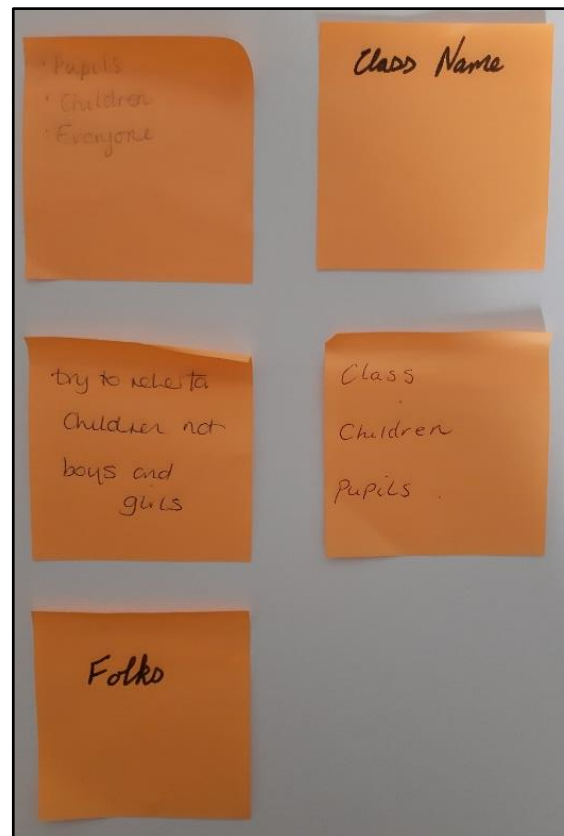
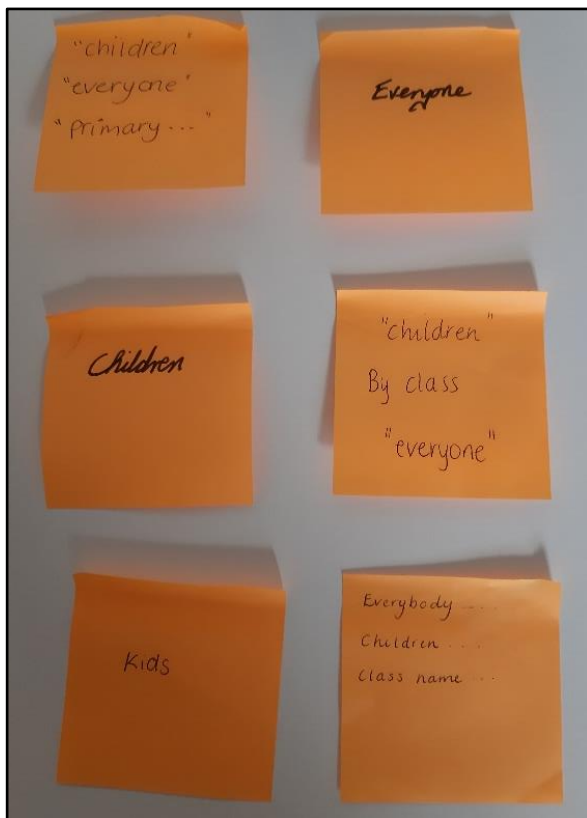
Teaching staff and members of the Senior Leadership Team also formed a working group to drive forward ways to improve and promote inclusive practice and diversity within our school setting. We identified potential areas that prevented us from being fully inclusive such as the gender-based

language we used and resources that represented our community and society, also being mindful of taking small steps to promote inclusion and diversity that were comfortable and manageable for all who were involved. The group spent a period of time working with children, parents, staff members and the LGBT Youth Scotland team to consider how to embed more inclusive practice. It was decided to focus on the language being used in the classroom and whole school setting. It was clear from an audit of language being used, that, for example, staff would address children by their gender and that classroom displays and general classroom routines were specific also to gender.

Inclusive Language

In conjunction with the Pupil Equality Group it was decided that the school would focus on promoting inclusive language. This was chosen as an area to develop as gender-based language was used frequently throughout the school and was embedded into adult discourse when addressing children. Challenging our use of language commenced by brainstorming ideas within the Pupil Equality Group and within staff meetings.

Ideas to promote inclusion in our language is illustrated in the feedback below:



Impact:

The Pupil Equality Group and the staff working group decided on ways to measure the impact of the success of using inclusive language throughout the school. Firstly, the use of inclusive language was measured in three ways to gain an insight into how often it was being used:

- The Pupil Equality Group (PEGs) conducted a pupil survey in each class to measure how each class are adapting to using more inclusive language. The group also gauged pupil opinion on how they felt about the changes in language being used.
- The Senior Leadership Team focussed on the use of inclusive language as part of the school quality assurance processes on learning and teaching, through teacher observation in the classroom.
- Teachers have recorded incidences where exclusive language has been used through the weekly incident reporting system within the school. This data has allowed the Senior Leadership Team to identify whether the modelling of inclusive language has impacted pupil discourse and/or whether exclusive language has been challenged and addressed.

Results

Class surveys conducted by our pupil group found that the use of inclusive language was being used in most classes, but not consistently by all teachers throughout the day/week. Children believed that using inclusive language to address them was more positive than being addressed by their gender and they preferred to be referred to inclusively in this manner.

The Senior Leadership Team observed that inclusive language was being used in all the observed lessons that they participated in and that the language appeared to be well-established in most classes. It was also noted in some classes that inclusive routines had been established such as gender-neutral arrangements had been made with regards to the use of comfort break passes and that gender-neutral role-play corners had been established within the early years classrooms.

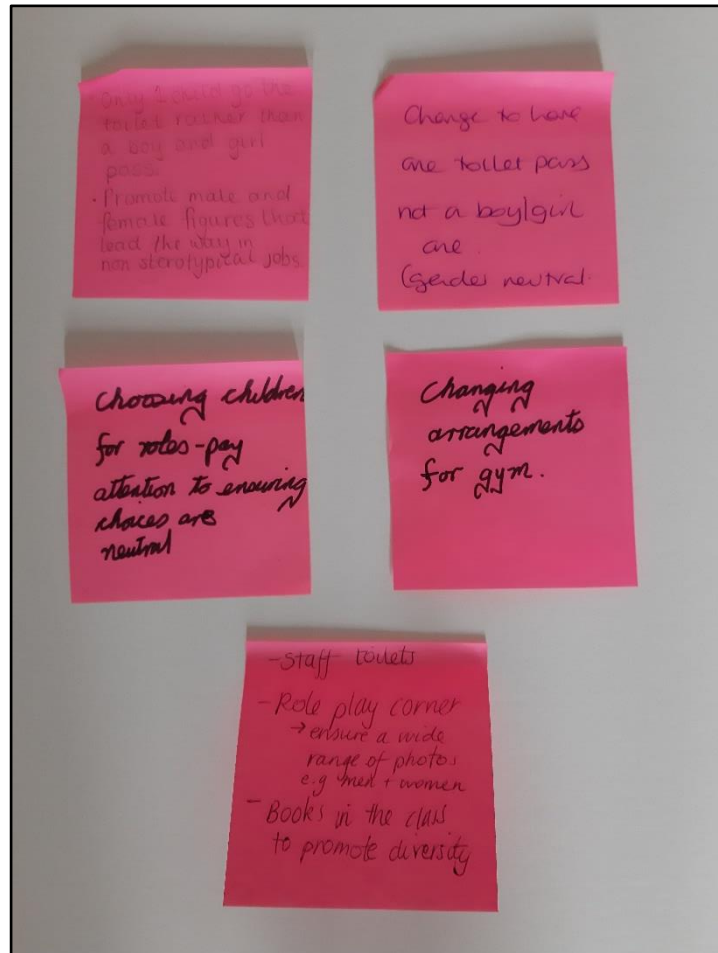
Portlethen Primary School have adapted their weekly incident recording proformas to include the recording of the use of exclusive language which can be used to promote division. Phrases such as 'that's so gay' or 'you're so gay' have been recorded to gauge whether the use of inclusive language and the challenging of these terms has reduced these incidences. The recordings of the use of these terms and the recording of exclusive language by children has been sporadic but incidents have been infrequent to date.

Next Steps:

Several next steps have naturally arisen due to the findings within our case study on inclusive language at Portlethen Primary School:

- Incidents with a focus on exclusive language will continue to be recorded, tracked, monitored and the use of LGBT language used in a negative way will be challenged by all.

- The Pupil Equity Group felt it important that all within the school community used inclusive language including administration staff, janitorial staff, and catering staff.
- Staff identified several next steps that they feel could embed inclusion and diversity within Portlethen Primary School. Please see below:



- Portlethen Primary School LGBT staff working group have identified a range of resources and reading that will be embedded into each class to promote diversity and inclusion.
- The Senior Leadership Team will continue to monitor inclusion and diversity in different forms throughout formal and informal observations in the classroom.

Conclusion

Portlethen Primary School's values embody the LGBT Youth Charter objectives. All involved with the school community seek to ensure that inclusion and diversity are embedded in all we do. The use of inclusive language within our setting has been an area of work that has challenged our thinking and our practice, and it has naturally evolved in to embedding inclusion and diversity into many other aspects of our school life, which further underpin these values. Portlethen Primary School are developing our young people within our community to be responsible citizens, effective

contributors, successful learners, and confident individuals within the 21st century – inclusion and diversity are fundamental to ensuring our young people embody these four capacities.