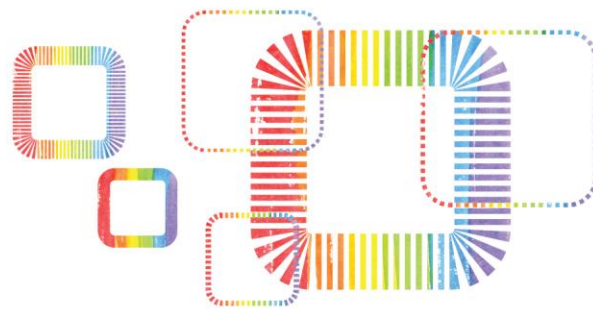


Diversity in Queensland schools

Fact sheet for parents



Fact sheet

Every student is welcome in our state schools, which are a reflection of Queensland's communities. We are committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, including those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+). The Department of Education supports state schools to respond to the individual needs of all students to ensure their wellbeing is nurtured and their learning is maximised.

As discussed in the department's [Parent and community engagement framework](#), schools encourage communication with parents that focuses on student learning and wellbeing, recognising that responding to diversity may require additional considerations.

This document provides helpful suggestions for parents and carers of LGBTIQ+ students when communicating with their child's school about planning and implementing support in the school context.

While it is anticipated that there may be specific areas of support that need to be considered for students who are diverse in their sex or gender identity, parents of all LGBTIQ+ students are welcome to contact their child's school to discuss their support needs.

Organise a meeting at the school

Often setting up a meeting is a good way to talk to school staff about support your child may need.

Contact the school to set up a meeting with a member of the leadership team. Explain that you would like to provide some background for school staff about your child's situation and to discuss areas where extra support may be required.

Schools understand that confidentiality is essential and it is important to provide sufficient information for the staff member to know who you are and the purpose of the meeting.

Depending on the age of your child, you may or may not want them to attend the meeting with you.

Before the meeting

Familiarise yourself with the department's policy [Diversity in Queensland schools – Information for principals](#). This document provides an overview of anti-discrimination legislation (law) and considerations for schools supporting LGBTIQ+ students. It may be helpful in guiding discussions with your child prior to the meeting and also with school staff during the meeting.

Have a discussion with your child to understand their feelings about the meeting such as:

- the level of detail your child is comfortable with you sharing with school staff about their sex, gender identity and/or sexuality
- whether your child would like to be known by a gender or name that is different from what is currently on their school records



- any preferences you and your child have regarding other areas of support outlined in [Diversity in Queensland schools – Information for principals](#) (e.g. the use of bathrooms).

Gather any documentation or information that may be useful to consider when discussing support for your child. Documentation is not a conditional requirement for schools to implement support for LGBTIQ+ students. However, you and your child may have sought advice and support from a professional or a service such as a practitioner with expertise in supporting young people who are diverse in their sex or gender identity, or a specialist in child psychology. Letters or documents from these professionals or services may provide context for the school about your child's situation and how to best support them.

During the meeting

Bring along all relevant documentation as well as the [Diversity in Queensland schools – Information for principals](#) to guide your conversation.

Discuss how support can be provided for your child with respect to:

- their preferred name and gender
- who will be aware of any changes (privacy)
- uniform options
- participation in sport
- use of toilets and change rooms
- mental health support
- recommendations made by a health professional working with your child
- timelines for relevant changes or support to be put in place.

Keep in mind that the meeting is intended as an initial conversation regarding your child's needs. The school may not be able to provide answers to all of your questions at the first meeting. It is anticipated that there will be ongoing communication about what actions will be taken to support your child. This means it is important to provide the school with any relevant new information as it arises. You should establish who the best contact is in the school for future communication.

After the meeting

If you have further questions about how the school can support your child, the nominated staff member is the best person to talk to. If you feel you need to speak with someone else, you can contact the [regional office](#) where your child's school is located or the department's Student Wellbeing team by emailing support.diversity@qed.qld.gov.au.

Parents can also access information and support online:

- [Understanding gender identity – for families](#) (headspace)
- [A parents' guide to their child's sexuality](#) (headspace)