

# Research Findings To Help Inform Your School's Approach to Supporting LGBTQIA+ Pupils

The following study (Jadva et al., 2023) provides findings that are useful in terms of understanding how to support LGBTQIA+ pupils\* at your school.

In a survey completed by young people aged 11-19, at schools in England, Wales and Scotland in 2016-2017, 3713 LGBT young people reported on:

- their history of self-harm
- suicidal thoughts
- suicide attempts
- their experiences of school and homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying.



Lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) young people's increased risk of self-harm, suicidal attempts and suicide compared with heterosexual young people is well established. The study also aimed to find out if these findings also apply to trans young people (T) and to consider what the additional risk and preventative factors are.

The results included:

- A high proportion of the LGBT young people reported self-harm (65.3%), suicidal thoughts (73.8%) and suicide attempts (25.7%).
- Those more at risk included identifying as female, non-binary or trans and being from a low-income background.
- Only a third of young people reported that their school said bullying based on a person's gender or being trans was wrong.
- Bullying and online bullying were associated with an increased risk for self harm, suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts.
- High rates of mental health problems within LGBT young people were recorded.
- A positive school experience was associated with a reduced risk for self harm, suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts. Interventions focused on improving young people's experiences in schools appear to help improve mental health outcomes.
- Extremely high rates of self-harm, suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts were found amongst trans young people compared to their non-trans peers, which is consistent with results from previous studies.
- Risk and protective factors for trans young people are similar to those of LGB young people.

- Young people who were not trans who use their own term to define their gender (which the research paper refers to as non-binary) showed similarly high rates of self harm to LGBT young people (over four times more likely) as well as being twice as likely to have suicidal thoughts and more likely to have attempted suicide compared with other young people.
- Young people from low-income families are at greater risk of suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts, demonstrating a need for greater support of LGBTQIA+ young people who are experiencing financial hardship.

Recommendations for schools and colleges outlined in the paper:

- Teach about LGBTQIA+ people, families and relationships\*\*
- Tackle bullying
- Foster an atmosphere of inclusivity so that all LGBTQIA+ young people feel safe and enjoy being at school and college
- Proactively address the barriers that LGBTQIA+ young people face.

Limitations to the study:

- The sample size for LGBT is small
- The responses were self-reported
- The design of the study meant that causality could not be analysed.

The full paper can be viewed and downloaded for free at:  
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34850220/>

**Reference:**

Jadva V, Guasp A, Bradlow JH, Bower-Brown S, Foley S. Predictors of self-harm and suicide in LGBT youth: The role of gender, socio-economic status, bullying and school experience. J Public Health (Oxf). 2023 Mar 14;45(1):102-108. doi: 10.1093/pubmed/fdab383. PMID: 34850220; PMCID: PMC10017085.

\* LGBTIQIA+ stands for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual and many other terms (such as non-binary and pansexual)"

\*\* In line with the PSHE programme of study.

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