

**Support for LGBT children and young people in Hackney schools by Young Hackney
Briefing for Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission
25th February 2019**

Young Hackney

Young Hackney is the Council's early help, prevention and diversion service for children and young people aged 6-19 years old and up to 25 years if the young person has a special education need or disability. The service works with young people to support their development and transition to adulthood by intervening early to address adolescent risk, develop pro-social behaviours and build resilience.

Work with local schools

Young Hackney works closely with schools to support the delivery of the core Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme as well as to support behaviour management interventions. A curriculum has been developed that is delivered in schools and focuses on topics such as healthy relationships, substance misuse, e-safety and youth participation and citizenship. The majority of secondary schools in Hackney have an allocated Young Hackney team who will work with them to identify students who require additional support to participate and achieve. If schools identify students who would benefit from individual support, Young Hackney will create an appropriate intervention with the school.

Health and Wellbeing Team

The Health & Wellbeing Team offer the following sessions to schools through our PSHE/RSE offer to 5-19 year olds in the City and Hackney (or up to the age of 25 if a young person has Special Education Needs and/or a disability):

- Sexuality & Gender – introduces a spectral (rather than binary) understanding of sexuality and gender identity, decodes acronyms and looks at experiences unique to LGBT+ people.
- Gender Roles & Normativity – what does it mean to be a man/woman in today's society? What are the expectations, norms and stereotypes that young people are expected to conform to, and how does that affect how they feel about ourselves and others?
- Homophobia & Bullying – explores homo-, bi- and trans-phobia, its impact on the lives and wellbeing of survivors and how to prevent/challenge it.
- Positive Sexuality – promotes sexual health and confidence building through the exploration and demystification of sexuality. Addresses sexual delay and agency from an emotional wellbeing perspective.

A full list of all sessions is included in the appendix.

Young Hackney LGBTQI+ Group

This group meets weekly at Young Hackney Forest Road Youth Hub. Each week discussions will take place on LGBTQ+ history, culture, identity, sex and gender, sexual health, relationships and discrimination. There is also time for young people to socialise and make friends.

Project Indigo

Project Indigo is an LGBTQ youth group and counselling service for young LGBTQ people or for people who are questioning their sexual or gender identity. The service is free, meets weekly and is run by Off Centre.

The group gives young people an opportunity to meet other young LGBTQ people in a supportive environment whilst having fun and making new friends.

Here are some of the things that people who come to the group have said about it:

“I was really scared to come the first time, as I didn’t know what the people would be like and I’m not really out to my friends but everyone has been so welcoming and it has helped me loads so far.”

“Hi, I’m someone in Indigo. It has been really helpful for me since I started to come to the Indigo project. It has helped me to be myself and to feel free to be who I am. It will be great to come and join the indigo group guys. Anything you are going through is the same as we are going through so come here and meet with us!”

“Project Indigo is a really awesome group. It has allowed me to explore and become the gender fluid I should have always been able to be.”

“This group is a secure getaway from the outside world where you are surrounded by like-minded individuals that you can empathise with and be your complete, found self.”

Appendix

Health & Wellbeing Team PSHE/SRE Session Topics

PSHE (ages 9-19)

- ✓ **Gender Roles & Normativity** – what does it mean to be a man/woman in today's society? What are the expectations, norms and stereotypes that young people are expected to conform to, and how does that affect how they feel about ourselves and others? (*single-gender sessions*)
- ✓ **Body Image** - addresses increasing concerns around weight and body image and the impact that celebrity and Instagram culture have on young people's self-esteem and emotional wellbeing.
- ✓ **Healthy Living** – an introductory session looking at the importance of health, exercise and wellbeing for growth and development in all parts of an individual's life.
- ✓ **Smoking Prevention** – raises awareness of how tobacco consumption affects the body, and the potential harms associated with smoking.
- ✓ **Emotional Wellbeing** – equips young people with the necessary skills to manage their emotional responses, cope with stress in a healthy way and maintain a sense of perspective when under pressure.

SRE (ages 13-19)

- ✓ **Consent & the Law** – examines the laws relating to sexual activity, alongside discussions around consent and sexual offences.
- ✓ **Relationships & Domestic Violence** – supports young people in identifying the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships. Domestic Violence work focuses on teenage dating abuse to emphasise that DV is not exclusive to adult relationships.
- ✓ **Positive Sexuality** – promotes sexual health and confidence building through the exploration and demystification of sexuality. Addresses sexual delay and agency from an emotional wellbeing perspective.
- ✓ **STIs** – promotes awareness and understanding of sexually transmitted infections, how they are transmitted, what their symptoms are, how to treat and prevent them.
- ✓ **HIV & AIDS** – examines HIV & AIDS, separating facts from fiction: transmission, living with the virus, treatment and the associated social stigma.
- ✓ **Contraception** – gives an overview of the three types of contraception devices available for free on the NHS, alongside an understanding of how contraception actually works.

- ✓ **Sexuality & Gender** – introduces a spectral (rather than binary) understanding of sexuality and gender identity, decodes acronyms and looks at experiences unique to LGBT+ people.
- ✓ **Pornography** – equips young people with the tools and understanding to critically evaluate pornography – including recognising unrealistic expectations and unhealthy gender relationships.
- ✓ **Homophobia & Bullying** – explores homo-, bi- and trans-phobia, its impact on the lives and wellbeing of survivors and how to prevent/challenge it.
- ✓ **Internet Safety & Cyber Bullying** – raises awareness of the risks young people face when using the internet/social media and messenger apps, alongside with cyber-bullying and its impact.

PSHE
(ages
5-13)

- ✓ **Personal Hygiene** – a fun session emphasising the importance of looking after oneself and how good hygiene is essential to healthy living.
- ✓ **Dental Hygiene** – addresses the importance of healthy teeth, and how to look after them properly.
- ✓ **Healthy Eating** – keeping a well-balanced and varied diet and how it contributes to mental and physical wellbeing.
- ✓ **Puberty** - a session to help children through puberty and the physical, emotional and moral changes and development it entails.
- ✓ **Body Image** - supports young people to be more resilient to media and peer pressure around weight and body image, and develop their self-esteem and confidence in their own abilities.
- ✓ **Internet Safety/Cyber Bullying** – raises awareness of the risks young people may be putting themselves at when using the internet/social media and messenger apps, alongside with cyber-bullying and its impact.
- ✓ **Relationships** – assists young people in identifying the differences between positive and negative relationships, primarily in their friendship groups and families.
- ✓ **Smoking Prevention** – raises awareness of how tobacco consumption affects the body, and the potential harms associated with smoking.
- ✓ **Emotional Wellbeing** – equips young people with the necessary skills to manage their emotional responses, cope with stress in a healthy way and maintain a sense of perspective when under pressure.

- ✓ **Assemblies** – a taster of most topics above can be delivered at a school assembly (minimum of 20 minutes) to provide an overview of the subjects that would be explored in a full-length session and gauge pupils' interest.
- ✓ **Peer Educator Training** – part of the Youth Health Movement programme, the training provides an opportunity for young people to develop their personal skills (and, where possible, gain accreditation), maximising the benefit for both the students involved and those they work with.
- ✓ **Training for Teaching Staff** – a comprehensive session for teachers at all key stages aimed at building their confidence, knowledge and skills in delivering effective SRE education, including content, practical guidance on how to approach sensitive topics, deflect personal questions and handle challenging behaviour.

Other Services