



GENDER IDENTITY POLICY

Version	1
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POLICY STATEMENT

This policy explains Dover College's approach to transgender and gender identity matters within the school in an attempt to create consistency and transparency as well as to minimise any distress and/or disruption to all our pupils.

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Dover College acknowledges that gender is a spectrum and that transgender and/or gender neutral people may feel that their external appearance does not match up with the way they feel internally about their gender identity. Transgender is a term used to describe people who identify with the opposite gender to which they were assigned at birth but the term can also include people who do not feel exclusively male or female, such as those that identify as being gender neutral.

Gender can be fluid, and some pupils that do not relate to their assigned gender may never fully transition into the opposite gender, but may choose to use alternative pronouns such as they or them.

Gender dysphoria is a clinical condition which can present from an early age and can only be diagnosed by a medical expert. A person diagnosed with gender dysphoria may require

or desire medical treatment. Some transgender people may never seek or obtain a medical diagnosis and likewise, some people diagnosed with gender dysphoria may not want any medical treatment.

Data Protection Act 2018 – information about a transgender person’s status is considered “*special category data*” and is therefore subject to tighter controls than other personal data. Dover College will ensure that any such data is processed in accordance with all relevant data protection laws.

The Equality Act 2010 – this act ensures legal protection against discrimination, harassment and victimisation for everyone who has one or more of the specified “protected characteristics”. One of these characteristics is “*gender reassignment*”, defined as follows: “*a person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person’s sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.*”

DISCRIMINATION

Dover College does not discriminate against pupils on the grounds of their transgender status and acknowledges that the Equality Act 2010 applies to employment and provision of education.

ANTI-BULLYING

Dover College has a zero tolerance bullying policy. Any trans-phobic or discriminatory incidents should be recorded and dealt with in the same manner as other incidents motivated by prejudice, such as race or sexuality.

TRANSITIONING AT DOVER COLLEGE

Dover College will comply with its legal obligations towards any pupil who identifies as transgender during their time at the school.

If a pupil decided to transition to female/male while at Dover College, this would be treated as an individual case and we would consult with both the student and the parents at all stages. Transitioning is a unique process for each individual and may include any number of changes to a person’s life. We acknowledge that each transgender pupil’s journey is individual and therefore the support they need or want will vary. However, we have set out some general guidance below, addressing the key issues which are likely to arise in the school environment.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

This is a key aspect of the national curriculum and is important to the physical and mental wellbeing of pupils. We consider that physical education develops competence and confidence and a young transgender pupil has the same right to this education as everyone else.

Dover College does not consider that there will be many, if any, issues with transgender pupils participating fully in its physical education programme. If any issues are identified, we will try to manage these within the lessons rather than preventing transgender pupils from participating wherever possible.

Where a transgender pupil is playing in an away match, appropriate enquiries (on a no names basis) regarding the provision of toilets and changing facilities for transgender pupils will be made. The focus will be on protecting the dignity and privacy of the pupil.

BOARDING

Whilst it is not possible for a transgender pupil to be accommodated in a boarding house appropriate to their gender identity, the school will consider what adjustments can be made to ensure the pupil is not excluded or suffers any other detriment. In such instances, a risk assessment will be conducted to inform what adjustments might be made. The assessment will take into account the wishes of the individual pupil, any requests from the pupil as to confidentiality, any health and safety considerations and the potential implications for other pupils and the wider school community. In instances where a single room cannot be provided, this will be explained to the pupil (and where appropriate parents), together with any adjustments which can be made. Where possible, designated bathrooms and changing facilities will be provided.

CHANGING/TOILET FACILITIES

The use of changing room and toilet facilities will be carefully considered, with us needing to recognise the needs of the transgender/gender fluid/gender neutral pupil as well as those of other students. Gender neutral toilet facilities are already provided in the Kent Block. This will be an ongoing consideration as the School constructs new buildings and renovates older ones. Where necessary, alternative changing areas will be offered.

RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

In the case of trips which are residential, the same considerations for boarding and school facilities will apply. How these will be accommodated on the trip should be discussed and agreed with the pupil (and where appropriate parents) at an early stage.

Where the trip involves a foreign destination, laws or cultural considerations may differ to the UK. In some countries being transgender is illegal, and in others there may be a requirement to declare your transgender status. The School will contact the foreign office to establish any additional requirements in advance.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Transgender pupils will be expected to follow Dover College's usual school uniform policy. If any transgender pupil has any particular difficulty with the uniform policy, they should raise this with a member of staff for consideration and these concerns will be considered on a case by case basis.

NAME CHANGING

Where a transgender pupil wishes to change their name and pronoun, this will be carefully considered by Dover College as we acknowledge that respecting these wishes, wherever practicable, is an important part of supporting and validating their identity.

Dover College accepts that a formal name change is not required for us to refer to a young person by their new name and profile where requested. Where appropriate, we will work with the transgender pupil to agree how to communicate and implement any change agreed.

Where a pupil is gender fluid, and may wish to express their gender identity differently on different days, staff will work with the pupil and where appropriate their family, to establish whether or not this is practicable and if so, how staff will recognise which name/pronoun the child wishes to use on a given day.

Where any agreement has been reached about a change to a pupil's name, we will ensure that this is recognised formally on our internal systems to minimise mistakes. Where mistakes are made and identified, staff should apologise.

A transgender pupil may be required to use their legal name, even if the pupil is using a different name at Dover College, for formal exams. In these circumstances, we would speak with the pupil and their family and liaise with the relevant exam board to clarify the situation.

STAFF TRAINING

Staff training in this area will focus on preventing discrimination and providing support based on individual needs. Such training may take place during a whole staff INSET day or be provided for an individual House team.

Staff training will respect the privacy of individual pupils. It is possible that a member of staff could address a pupil by a name or gender that is different from a pupil's name or self-identified gender, regardless of that pupil's gender identity. An instance where a member of staff does this should not be assumed to be a deliberate action on their part; particularly when the pupil is new to the School, they are unfamiliar with the pupil or when the School list that they are basing their identification of the pupil on is not the most up-to-date version. If a pupil feels that they are being addressed by a particular member of staff in a way which has undermined their sense of identity or continues to happen despite polite communication by the pupil with that member of staff, they should speak with their HsM.

COMMUNICATION

Dover College is committed to maintaining an open dialogue with any pupil who identifies as transgender. Specific adjustments or arrangements put in place will be regularly reviewed, to ensure they are working in practice for both the pupil and the school. Such dialogue will ensure that any change in the pupil's preferences are known and respected.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Dover College respects all pupils' right to privacy including the right to keep one's gender identity private at school. Staff should only reveal a pupil's trans status to others, including family, where the pupil has agreed to the information being shared or where they are otherwise legally required or entitled to do so.

KEY TERMS

Cisgender/Cis – someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. Non-trans is an alternative term.

Deadnaming – calling someone by their birth name after they have changed their name.

Gender – often expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity, gender is largely culturally determined and is assumed from the sex assigned at birth.

Gender dysphoria – used to describe when a person experiences discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between the sex assigned to them at birth and their gender identity. This is also the clinical diagnosis for someone who does not feel comfortable with the sex assigned to them at birth.

Gender expression – how a person chooses to outwardly express their gender, within the context of social expectations of gender. A person who does not conform to societal expectations of gender may not, however, identify as trans.

Gender identity – a person’s innate sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else (see non-binary), which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned to them at birth.

Gender reassignment – another way of describing a person’s transition. To undergo gender reassignment usually means to undergo some sort of medical intervention, but it can also mean changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in their self-identified gender. This is a characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010.

Gillick competence – a term used in medical law to decide whether a child is able to consent to their own medical treatment, without the need for parental consent or knowledge.

Intersex – a term used to describe a person who may have the biological attributes of both sexes or whose biological attributes do not fit with societal assumptions about what constitutes male or female. Intersex people may identify as male, female or non-binary.

LGBT – the acronym for lesbian, gay, bi and trans.

Non-binary – an umbrella term for people whose gender identity does not sit comfortable with “man” or “woman”.

Outed – when a lesbian, gay, bi or trans person’s sexual orientation or gender identity is disclosed without their consent.

Questioning – the process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

Sex – assigned to a person on the basis of primary sex characteristics and reproductive functions.

Trans – an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortable with, the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans people may describe themselves using a wide variety of terms, including but not limited to, transgender, transsexual, gender queer (GQ), gender fluid, non-binary, gender-variant, crossdresser,

genderless, agender, nongender, third gender, two-spirit, bi-gender, trans man, trans woman, trans masculine, trans feminine and neutrois.

Transgender man – someone who is assigned female at birth but identifies and lives as a man. Abbreviated to trans man or FTM.

Transgender woman – someone who is assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman. Abbreviated to trans woman or MTF.

Transitioning – the steps a trans person may take to live in the gender in which they identify. For some, this involved medical intervention but not all trans people want or are able to have this. Transitioning may also involve things like telling friends and family, dressing differently and changing official documents.

Transphobia – the fear or dislike of someone based on the fact they are trans, including the denial/refusal to accept their gender identity.

Transsexual – this was used in the past as a medical term to refer to someone whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. This term is still used by some but many prefer the term trans or transgender.