






Concepts for young people - simple definitions







We've included these definitions to refer to **as and when they come up in natural conversation** with your young people.







Accompanying the definition with an example can help bring it to life, especially with young children.







For primary pupils, the most basic definition will usually be the most appropriate. We've included more complex definitions for your reference.







A - D







Concept	Ally
 Most basic definition	An ally (pronounced al-eye) is a friend and supporter of the LGBT+ community.
 Standard definition	Allies are people who are not LGBT+ themselves but still actively support and stand up for the LGBT+ community.
 More nuanced definition	Allies are people who are not necessarily LGBT+ themselves but still support and fight for the rights of the community. This may be by supporting LGBT+ people through coming out, learning about the community, being mindful of using correct language and standing up to HBT (homophobic, biphobic and transphobic) discrimination.







Concept	Asexual
 Most basic definition	Someone who isn't sexually attracted to other people.
  Standard definition	Someone who doesn't feel sexual attraction to others. This doesn't necessarily mean they won't want relationships, for example they may still have romantic attraction.
   More nuanced definition	Someone who doesn't desire to be with anyone sexually. Asexual people may still experience romantic attraction to others, unless they are aromantic (don't feel romantic attraction). Asexuality exists on a spectrum. Some people feel they lie somewhere between sexual and asexual.

Concept	Attraction
 Most basic definition	A desire to be with someone, perhaps sexually or emotionally, or both.
  Standard definition	A desire to be with someone sexually, romantically and/or platonically.
   More nuanced definition	Attraction is a desire to be with someone on a sexual, romantic, platonic and/or emotional level

Concept	Bisexual
 Most basic definition	Someone who feels attracted to both men and women
  Standard definition	Someone who feels attraction to more than one gender and at different points in their life may be in relationships with either.
   More nuanced definition	Someone who feels attraction to more than one gender. Someone who is bisexual may be in a relationship with people of the same or a different gender. If someone who identifies as bisexual enters into a relationship with someone of a different or the same gender it does not then mean they have become straight or gay.

Concept	Biphobia
 Most basic definition	Discrimination towards people who are bisexual.
  Standard definition	Discrimination towards bisexual people. This may be in the form of biphobic language or behaviour.
   More nuanced definition	Discrimination towards people who are bisexual. This may be in the form of biphobic language and behaviour. Biphobia could also mean denying someone's bi identity or treating it as invalid (bi-erasure).







Concept	Cisgender
 Most basic definition	Someone whose gender is the same as the one they were given at birth.
  Standard definition	Someone whose gender aligns with the one they were assigned at birth e.g. someone assigned female at birth who grows up to identify as female.
   More nuanced definition	Someone whose gender aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth e.g. someone assigned female at birth who continues to identify as female. This is the opposite trans where someone identifies as a different gender to the sex they were assigned at birth.




Concept	Diversity
 Most basic definition	Diversity means difference. For example, a room full of diversity would mean a room full of lots of different kinds of people.
  Standard definition	Diversity describes there being a lot of difference in one place. For example diversity on a tv show might mean there are gay, lesbian, trans or bisexual characters or people of different races and nationalities.
   More nuanced definition	Diversity means that people of different groups and characteristics are represented in any given situation. Diversity


	can come in the form of including people of different sexual orientations, gender identities, disabilities, races, faith, and so on.
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E - H




Concept	Equality
 Most basic definition	When everyone is treated with the same level of fairness.
  Standard definition	When everyone is treated with fairness and respect and has the same rights.
   More nuanced definition	When people are treated fairly and granted the same rights as others regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion, age or disability.

Concept	Gay
 Most basic definition	Two people of the same gender (usually men) who want to be together. Some people have two mums or two dads.
  Standard definition	Someone who is attracted to or wants to be with someone of the same gender. 'Gay' is usually used to refer to men but it can also be used to describe a woman who is attracted to other women.
   More nuanced definition	Someone who is exclusively attracted to people of the same gender. This may include sexual and romantic attraction.

Concept	Gender fluid
 Most basic definition	People who don't see themselves as a boy all the time, or a girl all the time.
  Standard definition	Someone whose gender identity changes across a spectrum. Their identity may change daily, monthly, yearly, and so on - it




	doesn't have a fixed period as one thing or another.
 More nuanced definition	Someone whose gender identity is not static. Someone who is gender fluid may identify differently across different days, months or years and this may be reflected in their outward gender expression.




Concept	Gender identity
 Most basic definition	Whether you feel like a boy, a girl, or neither.
 Standard definition	Whether you feel male, female, or neither - this may or may not be in line with your biological sex.
 More nuanced definition	Your perception of having a particular gender, which may or may not correspond with your biological sex and your gender expression (how you choose to present your gender).




Concept	Homophobia
 Most basic definition	Being unfair or mean towards people who are gay or lesbian.
 Standard definition	Discrimination towards gay and lesbian people. This may be in the form of homophobic language or behaviour.
 More nuanced definition	Discriminating against a person or group in reaction to them being gay or lesbian. This can be in person or online and can take the form of words, actions or both. Homophobia is unacceptable and is against the law.

I - L




Concept	Identity
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 Most basic definition	How you see and describe yourself.
 Standard definition	The things which make up who a person is, and how they see and describe themselves. Some things are more important to an individual, and some things are less important.
 More nuanced definition	Who a person is, or the qualities of a person or group that make them different from others. Your identity is formed throughout your life and can change over time. It is often influenced by factors such as where you live, culture, religion, class and whether or not you're LGBT+. Some things are more and less important. You may identify as gay, but it may not be a large part of your identity.




Concept	Inclusion
 Most basic definition	Making others feel included.
 Standard definition	The act of making sure others feel accepted and involved in different places and situations.
 More nuanced definition	The act of ensuring that different groups of people are accepted and welcomed in different situations and places, regardless of identity.




Concept	Lesbian
 Most basic definition	A woman who wants to be with other women. Some people have two mums instead of a mum and a dad.
 Standard definition	A woman who wants to be with other women sexually, emotionally or both.
 More nuanced definition	Someone who identifies as a woman and is sexually and/or romantically attracted to other women.

M - P




Concept	Non-binary
 Most basic definition	Someone who does not see themselves as male or female.
 Standard definition	Someone who does not identify with the gender binary (the idea that there is only male or female). They may feel like their gender does not align to either at all or they may feel like they are somewhere in between the two,
 More nuanced definition	The gender binary is the idea that there are only two genders. This excludes other gender identities such as non-binary. Non-binary people may not feel like they align with simply male or female. They may feel like their identity lies somewhere on a spectrum between the two or is completely outside the spectrum.

Concept	Pansexual
 Most basic definition	Someone who can feel attraction to all genders.
 Standard definition	Someone who is attracted to all genders and/or gender doesn't factor into their attraction to others.
 More nuanced definition	Someone who does not consider gender a factor in their sexual or romantic preferences. This is different to bisexuality which generally encompasses attraction to two genders. Pansexual people feel attraction to people of all gender identities.




Concept	Pronouns
 Most basic definition	Small words used to refer to people instead of their name: he, she, they.
 Standard definition	Words that replace a name in a phrase, which can sometimes indicate gender.
 More nuanced definition	Words that replace names, and can be (but aren't always!) important signifiers of gender for trans people.




Concept	Relationship
 Most basic definition	A relationship is when two people are together. There are different kinds of relationships. For example, being friends, being brothers or sisters. However the word relationship is used most of the time to talk about people who are together and attracted to each other.
 Standard definition	A relationship is what connects two or more people. Platonic relationships include friendships and siblings for example. Sexual and/or romantic relationships are between people who are attracted to each other. Heterosexual relationships are between two people of different genders. Homosexual relationships are between two people of the same gender.
 More nuanced definition	What connects two or more people. This can include friendships, siblings, parents and children. These are known as platonic relationships. Usually the word is used to mean two people who are together romantically and/or sexually for example boyfriends, girlfriends or partners. The people these relationships are made up of depend on sexual and/or romantic orientation.




Q - T

Concept	(Biological) Sex
 Most basic definition	Whether your body has male or female features. (Biological) sex is different from gender - it's to do with your body, and gender is to do with your mind and how you see yourself.
 Standard definition	Any one of the three main categories (male, female or intersex) into which humans are divided on the basis of their body's reproductive functions, such as anatomy, hormones and genes. Your biological sex does not determine your gender.
 More nuanced definition	Either of the three main categories (male, female or intersex) into which humans and most other living things are divided on the basis of their reproductive functions, such as anatomy, hormones and genes. Once you begin to break down

	biological sex, it becomes clear that there is huge variation within sexes - people considered to be the same sex can be very different, biologically, from one another. Your biological sex does not determine your gender.
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Concept	Stereotype
 Most basic definition	A fixed idea that people have about what someone or something is like, especially an idea that is wrong.
 Standard definition	A widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing.
 More nuanced definition	A widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing. This can cause us to have preconceptions about somebody based on what we assume about their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Concept	Transition
 Most basic definition	A time when trans people begin to present as the gender they are by doing things like changing their clothes or their name.
 Standard definition	A period of time when trans people change their appearance, names, etc. to affirm their gender.
 More nuanced definition	A period of time when trans people are open about their gender, changing presentation, names and sometimes having surgery to feel more comfortable day-to-day.

Concept	Transphobia
 Most basic definition	Being unfair or mean towards people who are trans.
 Standard definition	Discrimination towards trans people. This may be in the form of transphobic language or behaviour.
 More nuanced definition	Discriminating against a person or group in reaction to them being trans or non-binary. This can be in person or online and

	can take the form of words, actions or both. Transphobia is unacceptable and is against the law.
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U - Z