

BEYOND GENDER STEREOTYPES

School Information Sheet

INTRODUCTION

Beyond Gender Stereotypes (BGS) is an innovative, evidence-based programme for all children aged 7-11 in England. BGS is part of The Children's Society's [Lifting Limits](#)¹ programme, and of the [Global Boyhood Initiative](#), coordinated by [Equimundo: Center for Masculinities and Social Justice](#)², a US-based non-profit organisation.

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

The BGS programme supports KS2 pupils to understand and challenge limiting gender stereotypes.³

A gender stereotype is a widely held belief about the behaviour, characteristics and roles expected from children and adults based on their gender. Gender stereotypes are internalised early in childhood. They limit children's ability to achieve their full potential, and perpetuate gender inequality. They have negative effects on all children.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

The BGS programme consists of:

- Three 1-hour lessons for Years 3 and 4, and four 1-hour lessons for Years 5 and 6, delivered as part of PSHE. These lessons offer an engaging, age-appropriate and safe learning experience, and support English primary schools' statutory duty to teach Relationships and Health Education;
- A 2.5 hour self-guided online learning course and comprehensive guidance, to equip teachers with the skills and knowledge they need to implement the BGS lessons effectively, and to strengthen their own professional development;
- Engaging PowerPoint slides and downloadable classroom resources;
- Guidance for schools to help them engage with parents/carers to build support for BGS and encourage them to promote its objectives.

WE WANT ALL KS2 CHILDREN TO:

- recognise and break free from gender stereotypes;
- develop healthy relationships and ways of expressing emotions;
- follow any interests and hobbies they want to;
- understand that they can pursue any jobs and careers they choose, unrestricted by gender stereotypes;
- thrive in the world in which they live.



“The teacher training makes us reflect on our own practice... It just reminds you to stop and think, what am I doing?”

- BGS Lead

¹ The Lifting Limits programme helps educators provide support for young children to overcome gender stereotypes. We equip professionals with skills and resources to recognise and overcome gender bias, empowering children to do the same.

² Equimundo is dedicated to achieving gender equality and social justice by transforming intergenerational patterns of harm and promoting care, empathy, and accountability among boys and men throughout their lives. Equimundo has been developing and training partners to implement evidence-based programs with adults, adolescents and children to drive positive societal change for over two decades.

³ See, for example, the Fawcett Society literature review in 2019, Gender Stereotypes in Early Childhood; and Equimundo's 2017 report about being a young man in the UK, US and Mexico, The Man Box.

WHAT EVIDENCE IS THERE THAT BGS WORKS?

In 2024, Beyond Gender Stereotypes was rigorously tested in 5 primary schools across England, gathering detailed feedback through focus groups and surveys with pupils and teachers. The findings were overwhelmingly positive.

The online training was highly rated – with the vast majority of trained teachers feeling confident to teach the lessons⁴. Nearly all teachers said the lessons met their objectives⁵. Many teachers said that the lessons generated very stimulating conversations about friendships, interests, future jobs and fairness. The vast majority of the children were highly engaged in these discussions⁶, found the activities and scenarios very relatable, and developed a clear understanding about gender stereotypes and their impact. Teachers also told us that there were often clear signs of children’s behaviour and attitudes shifting after the lessons: for example who they played with and what activities they engaged in.

Findings from the pilot have been used to further enhance the BGS curriculum.

“One boy (Yr 5) at the end of the final lesson....said that he hadn’t realised how important the conversations were and he was glad that he had taken part.”

- UKS2 teacher

HOW CAN SCHOOLS GET INVOLVED?

The final version of the BGS programme will be delivered in 40 primary schools across England in 2025-26. There are still places left for Spring Term 2026.

These 40 schools will have the opportunity to implement BGS before any other schools, to ensure gender stereotypes don’t hold back their pupils from reaching their full potential. This will also help us to gather evidence of the effectiveness of BGS in challenging gender stereotypes and promoting gender equality.

The final BGS programme will be freely available across England from Autumn Term 2026.

“The ‘script’ for the scenarios was excellent – the children really engaged and I believe that modelling it so clearly for each other will give them support in actual situations they come across.”

- KS2 teacher



“[BGS] tied in so well with our work on careers-based learning. The idea that the world of opportunity is open to all pupils.”

-KS2 Teacher

⁴ 9 out of 10 teachers responded 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale (1 = Not confident, 5 = very confident).

⁵ Average response 4 (1 = Not at all, 5 = A lot).

⁶ LKS2 children - 4; UKS2 children - 4.5 (1 = Poor, 5 = Excellent).

WHAT DO WE EXPECT FROM PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS?

Our core expectation is that participating schools will implement the full BGS programme. Of course, we understand that schools operate in a challenging and sometimes unpredictable environment. We will work constructively with schools around these inevitable uncertainties, but it is important that we work together to limit any variables as much as possible to support the success of the programme.

The key expectations of all primary schools which join the BGS programme are set out below.

1. Schools will select a senior staff member (e.g. Headteacher, PSHE Lead) – the BGS Lead – who will be responsible for supporting the implementation of BGS at the school. The BGS Lead will have support from Lifting Limits throughout the programme, including online meetings and email support.
2. All Key Stage 2 teachers will complete 2.5 hours of high quality, interactive online training, before delivering BGS. The online training will be self-guided and organised into short segments, offering maximum flexibility.
3. Schools will encourage all their other staff (including EYFS, KS1 and support staff) to complete a short introductory online training course about gender stereotypes and BGS.
4. All BGS lessons will be delivered in PSHE teaching time to all children in Years 3-6, by a teacher who has completed the online training.
5. As part of the evaluation of BGS, all KS2 teachers and children (allowing for unavoidable absences) will complete brief online pre and post surveys. All KS2 teachers will also complete short evaluation forms after each lesson. Some KS2 staff and pupils will be invited to attend voluntary focus groups at the end of the project. All these activities will be supportive in nature and not unduly onerous. Their purpose is not to assess teacher performance or wider attainment outcomes of children, but to measure the impact of BGS. Evaluation data will be anonymised except with permission. Full details will be provided by no later than the end of June 2025.
6. As part of the evaluation of BGS, some schools will be asked to allow members of the evaluation team to observe and support in a small number of BGS lessons. This will be voluntary and not unduly onerous for schools, teachers or children. All team members who attend lessons will hold an up-to-date Enhanced DBS Certificate.

NEXT STEPS

Please now complete the full BGS application form as soon as possible, and no later than the end of October 2025. You can find the form [here](#).

We will select participating schools on a rolling basis, so your school is more likely to be chosen if you apply early. We will confirm as soon as possible whether your school has been selected for Spring Term 2026 by no later than the end of October 2025.