



# Safe Schools Alliance UK

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## **Safe Schools Alliance UK supports legal action against Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)**

Safe Schools Alliance UK is supporting unprecedented legal action against Oxfordshire County Council, on the grounds that its use of the [Trans Inclusion Toolkit for Schools 2019](#) is seriously flawed and poses a risk to children.

Safe Schools Alliance UK [SSA UK], a parent and teacher group, first pointed out a number of safeguarding flaws with the Trans Inclusion Toolkit, the official guidance recommended to all Oxfordshire schools and education settings, in February this year.

Although OCC committed to a 'review' of the guidance, they did not address any of the points raised, or respond to the safeguarding issues the group put to the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB), which was managing the review on behalf of OCC.

Tanya Carter, spokeswoman for SSA UK, said: "This guidance fails to take into account all protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010, and will see schools being compelled to allow male pupils to share changing rooms, toilets and dorm rooms on residential trips with female pupils - *without parents' knowledge or permission*.

"It also allows males to take part in sports alongside females. This is in direct opposition to all safeguarding protocols which recommend that single sex provision should be made for children over the age of 8 when sleeping, using toilets and changing and that contact sports should be segregated after puberty for safety reasons."

Miss Carter added: “The guidance also indicates that teachers failing to affirm the ‘gender identity’ of their pupils may face disciplinary action, and makes the damaging assumption that any parent doing anything other than unquestioningly affirming the chosen ‘gender identity’ of their child should be viewed as a source of harm. This is extremely alarming. It is in the best interests of children when schools and parents work together. Schools should not undermine Parental Responsibility (PR). Only courts have the power to remove PR.

“There are many reasons why children may choose not to identify with their biological sex, and compelling parents and teachers to simply affirm these children’s feelings, without questioning what else may be going on in their lives, may be detrimental to their physical and mental health. It is essential that everything going on in a child’s life is taken into account, along with Gillick competency<sup>1</sup>.”

“The physical, mental and emotional well-being of children is absolutely paramount. A collaborative approach with schools is essential to ensure a safe and supportive environment for children.”

One of the claimants, Victoria Edwards, said “Our children need to be taught to value honesty, facts and truth. We as parents cannot teach them to develop healthy boundaries if schools are forcing them to ignore their own instincts and deny reality under threat of sanction and ostracism. Safeguarding applies to everybody and is for the benefit of everybody. By creating a cast of people to whom safeguarding does not apply, the local authority is leaving the door open for abusers to walk straight through into the lives of our children.”

Paul Conrathe, Human Rights Solicitor from SinclairsLaw said: “This confused Guidance to schools misrepresents the law and exposes children and young people to the potential of harm. Central to its legal error is its bold assertion that ‘trans-girls are girls and trans-boys are boys’. This guidance has whole-heartedly embraced transgender ideology at the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/gps/nigels-surgery-8-gillick-competency-fraser-guidelines?fbclid=IwAR0zKsJvh3g4EkzspV3uLaP-epHCl5xymfTTTT8bTlzhidXjIAJOp06XTj8>

expense of the rights of others. It is surprising and concerning that a public authority could issue such a document. My clients will be pursuing a Judicial Review if it is not withdrawn. “

The Crowdfunder campaign supporting the action can be found at:

<https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/challenging-occ-transgender-schools-guidance/>

### **Notes to editors:**

1)

#### **About Safe Schools Alliance UK**

Safe Schools Alliance UK is a group of concerned parents, grandparents, teachers, governors, health professionals, education professionals, and carers from more than 30 local education authority areas in the UK. Individuals are from a wide range of backgrounds and the group has no religious nor political affiliation.

The SSA UK campaign is focused on working with schools and educators to ensure that school policies meet the safeguarding needs of all students, whilst taking into account the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010.

SSA UK endeavours to provide clarity on the law and offer unbiased, evidence-based guidance and support where conflict between protected characteristics arises.

#### **2) Links:**

- <https://safeschoolsallianceuk.net/about/>
- [https://twitter.com/SafeSchools\\_UK](https://twitter.com/SafeSchools_UK)
- <http://facebook.com/safeschoolsallianceuk>
- [info@safeschoolsallianceuk.org](mailto:info@safeschoolsallianceuk.org)

3) Media contact: email [info@safeschoolsallianceuk.org](mailto:info@safeschoolsallianceuk.org)

4) Tanya Carter may be available for interview. Bids should be made by contacting [info@safeschoolsallianceuk.org](mailto:info@safeschoolsallianceuk.org)