



Safe Schools Alliance UK



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**By email to:** Roger Burnley, CEO, Asda UK

18/06/20

FAO of Hayley Tatum, Head of People, Asda UK

Formal Complaint regarding Asda's Distribution of 'Diversity Role Models' Home Learning Packs

Dear Roger Burnley,

We are Safe Schools Alliance UK. We are a grassroots group of parents, teachers, grandparents, governors and other health and education professionals interested in safeguarding. We have come together to uphold safeguarding and the correct use of the Equality Act 2010 in U.K. schools. We receive no funding, have no political or religious affiliations and many of our members are lesbian or bisexual and/or have LGB or Trans-identified family members.

We have been contacted by numerous parents expressing their concerns about the home learning packs you recently distributed to parents via your George at Asda newsletter. We have also received complaints regarding your response to parents who have raised concerns.

We would like to know who reviewed the home learning packs on behalf of Asda prior to the decision to distribute to parents, and what qualifications and experience they have in child development, education and safeguarding. What was the administrative process behind Asda's decision to involve itself in the education of the nation's children, particularly in such a sensitive area?

We would also like to know what the child development, educational and safeguarding qualifications are of the people who wrote the Diversity Role Models Home Learning packs, and what steps Asda took to establish these prior to the decision to promote the pack. Does Asda use any safer recruitment procedures with regards to people it employs to promote material to children?

The complaints around the primary school pack largely centre around the promotion of the slogan 'love has no age limits' and 'love is love'. Parents subjected to sexual abuse in their childhoods have been caused particular distress by the promotion of this by a family-friendly supermarket. Children will understand and interpret these statements in the context of their experiences and there will be many children who hear similar statements from those who



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are grooming and abusing them. It is apparent that Diversity Role Models do not understand this and therefore should not be in the position of producing such materials.

Concerns have also been raised regarding the promotion of the book 'Red: A Crayon's Story'. The book essentially suggests that if someone 'isn't very good' at behaving in the way people expect them to, that they are in the wrong body - instead of suggesting that it is the expectations that are themselves harmful.

With regard to the secondary school home learning pack, the concerns raised largely centre around children aged 11+ being directed to read or google inappropriate materials, particularly the 'Beyond Magenta' book and the Pink News website. The Pink News website contains adult themes, many of a sexual nature. The book 'Beyond Magenta' contains a first-person description of a six-year-old performing oral sex, told as if this is a normal and un-concerning act instead of child abuse

We note that various parts of the pack have now been withdrawn, following the concerns raised. This reinforces our suspicions that whoever signed the pack off had an insufficient knowledge of safeguarding to do so. It is not acceptable to issue materials on the sensitive subject of Sex and Relationship Education that are open to misinterpretation or could be used for nefarious purposes. The entire Diversity Role Models pack now needs to be withdrawn and reviewed by somebody with a sufficient understanding of safeguarding.

Some of our members are old enough to remember organisations such as PIE (Paedophile Information Exchange) and NAMBLA (North American Man/Boy Love Association) piggy-backing on civil liberties movements in the seventies and eighties and the damage it caused, resulting in Section 28. We are horrified that a supermarket has chosen to promote materials that has caused the public to conflate the LGBT community with paedophiles once again.

We look forward to your answers to our questions and your suggestions for how you will be rectifying this deeply damaging situation. We feel fourteen days to be a reasonable time scale for this response.

Yours faithfully,

Tanya Carter and Tracy Shaw  
[on behalf of Safe Schools Alliance UK](#)