

**A study of trainee teachers and their awareness and
perceptions of sexual diversity in primary schools**

Manuel López Pereyra

PhD

University of York

Education

December 2015

Abstract

Research on sexual diversity in primary schools has shown that primary school children are aware of and exposed to harassment, bullying and discrimination in schools. This study was undertaken to explore the extent to which trainee teachers are aware of and perceive sexual diversity discourses in primary schools. I focus on concern about the ways primary schools address the nature of gender stereotyping, homophobic bullying and same-sex families. Within these themes, I explore trainee teachers' perceptions of addressing sexual diversity issues in the primary school classroom. A total of eleven trainee teachers and three educational non-governmental officers were interviewed and 198 trainee teachers responded to the questionnaire from twenty-one different universities across the United Kingdom. A feminist and queer approach was used in the research design; the analysis and interpretation of the data collected was done through interpretative phenomenological and thematic analysis. Trainee teachers' positive perception of sexual diversity is reflected in the questionnaire data, 76.3 % of trainees think it is necessary to teach primary school children about gay and lesbian families. Nonetheless, the questionnaire data suggest there is a lack of training on addressing sexual diversity issues in the schools. The interview data showed that trainee teachers perceive themselves as role models with the responsibility of being inclusive to all students. Also, trainees acknowledge the lack of confidence to address and deal with sexual diversity issues in the school classroom. Overall, this study enhances our understanding of gender and sexualities in primary schools and extends our knowledge of trainee teacher experiences in primary schools. Drawing on these findings, future research is needed into what trainee teachers programmes should promote as teaching practices that involve diversity and inclusive pedagogies.

List of contents

Abstract.....	2
List of contents	3
List of tables.....	7
List of figures.....	8
Acknowledgments.....	9
Declaration	10
Introduction.....	11
<i>Focus of the research</i>	13
<i>Structure of the thesis</i>	15
Chapter 1. Understanding sexual diversity in primary schools	19
1.1 Sex, gender and sexuality.....	20
1.2 Feminist and queer approaches for sexual diversity in education... 26	
1.2.1 Feminist approaches in education	28
1.2.2 Queer approaches in education.....	31
1.2.3 Queer and feminist approaches: the social construction of sexuality 33	
<i>Sexualities in primary schools</i>	35
1.3 Sexual diversity and primary schools.....	37
1.3.1 Gender stereotypes in the primary school context.....	41
1.3.2 Homophobia and homophobic bullying in primary schools.....	46
1.3.3 Same-sex families in the primary school context	50
<i>Summary</i>	53
Chapter 2. Educational polices and pedagogical practices in education towards sexual diversity in primary schools	55
2.1 Educational policies and the development of sexual education.....	55
2.1.1 Law and educational policies on sexual education.....	56
2.1.2 Sexuality educational framework: an international perspective.....	60
2.1.3 Sex and Relationship Education.....	64
2.2 Exploring primary school practices towards sexual diversity.....	67
2.2.1 Challenging homophobia in primary schools.....	67
2.2.2 Celebrating same-sex families in the primary school classroom.....	71
2.3 Pedagogies and sexual diversity in schools.....	74
2.3.1 Pedagogical frameworks and sexual diversity	75
2.3.2 Inclusive education and social justice in education.....	80
2.3.3 Queer pedagogy.....	85
<i>Summary</i>	88

Chapter 3. Research design and methodology: exploring trainee teachers and sexual diversity	90
3.1 Interpretative phenomenological analysis and thematic analysis... 91	
3.1.1 Interpretative phenomenological analysis.....	92
3.1.2 Thematic analysis in education	96
3.2 Research design and methods..... 99	
3.2.1 Mixed methods approach.....	100
3.2.2 The questionnaire design.....	104
<i>Development of the questionnaire</i>	105
3.2.3 The interview design.....	107
<i>Development of the interview</i>	109
3.3 Research considerations	111
3.3.1 Ethical considerations	114
3.3.2 Trustworthiness and authenticity.....	115
<i>Interviews and interactions with trainee teachers</i>	117
3.3.3 Pilot Study.....	118
3.4 Doing research with trainee teachers	119
3.4.1 Sample composition	122
3.4.2 The trainee teachers.....	125
Chapter 4. Trainee teachers and the awareness and perceptions of gender stereotypes in primary schools	130
4.1 “Very subtle, very invisible”: trainee teachers and the awareness of gender (sex) stereotypes.....	131
4.1.1 “The boy who once dressed up as a princess”	135
4.2 “Girls’ football teams and boys’ poetry quests”: trainee teachers and the perceptions of gender stereotypes.....	141
4.2.1 ‘Sissy’ or ‘tomboy’	146
4.3 Undoing gender stereotype in primary schools.....	151
<i>Summary</i>	156
Chapter 5. Trainee teachers and the awareness and perceptions of homophobia in primary schools.....	159
5.1 "That’s so gay”: trainee teachers and the awareness of homophobia in primary schools.....	161
5.2 “Excuse me, what do you mean?”: homophobic language and homophobic bullying in primary schools.....	164
5.2.1 Trainee teachers and the perceptions of homophobic language	166
5.2.2 Trainee teachers and the perceptions of homophobic bullying.....	171
5.2.3 “What is on the telly?”: trainees’ perceptions of LGBT issues in popular media	175

5.3 Challenging homophobia in primary schools	181
5.3.1 Trainee teachers' awareness of LGBT pupils in primary schools.....	187
<i>Summary</i>	191
Chapter 6. Trainee teachers and the awareness and perceptions of same-sex families in the primary school.....	193
6.1 Trainee teachers and the awareness of same-sex families in the school context.	194
6.2 Trainee teachers and the perceptions of same-sex families in primary schools.....	198
6.2.1 Same-sex families in the primary schools.....	202
6.2.2 Trainees' perceptions on addressing same-sex families in the classroom	205
6.3 Celebrating same-sex families in the primary school classroom	208
<i>Summary</i>	211
Chapter 7. Trainee teachers and the perceptions of sexual diversity in primary schools	213
7.1 Trainee teachers, sexual diversity and educational discourses	214
7.1.1 "Piece of legislation": Section 28	214
7.1.2 Sexual diversity and the educational context.....	216
7.2 Trainee teachers and the perceptions of their roles and responsibilities.....	219
7.2.1 Trainee teachers on "being inclusive rather than teaching inclusivity"	227
7.3 Trainee teachers queering the primary school classroom.....	225
7.3.1 "Under one umbrella": diverse identities in the classroom	226
7.3.2 Trainee teachers perceived barriers to the challenge of homophobia and sexual diversity	231
7.3.3 Trainee teachers on challenging sexual diversity in the classroom.	234
<i>Summary</i>	240
Chapter 8. Addressing sexual diversity: identities of the trainee teachers and primary schools spaces.....	242
8.1 Eva: sexual identities and religious schools	243
8.2 Brooke: religious identities and sexual diversity in schools.....	246
8.3 Joshua: modern families in primary schools.....	249
8.4 Rosie: trainee teachers and social agency	252
<i>Summary</i>	254

Chapter 9. Conclusion	256
9.1 Key Findings	257
9.1.1 Gender Stereotypes in primary schools.....	259
9.1.2 Homophobic bullying and language in primary schools	260
9.1.3 Same-sex families and primary schools.....	261
9.2 Implications and recommendations	262
9.2.1 Implication for policy makers	263
9.2.2 Implication for teacher trainee programmes.....	264
9.2.3 Strengths and limitations of the study	265
9.3 Recommendations for future research	266
9.4 Conclusion	268
Appendices	270
Appendix 1: Information Data Sheet.....	271
Appendix 2: Questionnaire on Awareness and Perceptions of Sexual Diversity in Primary Trainees.....	273
Appendix 3: Semi-structure Interview.....	277
Appendix 4: Children’s storybooks.....	278
Appendix 5: Interview vignettes.....	279
List of references	280

List of Tables

Table 1. Interpretative phenomenological analysis.	95
Table 2. Thematic analysis.	98
Table 3. Inferences in qualitative research.	116
Table 4. Sample composition.....	122
Table 5. Background information of trainee teachers.....	124
Table 6. The trainee teachers.....	127
Table 7. Trainee teachers and the awareness of gender stereotypes.....	133
Table 8. Trainee teachers and the perceptions of gender stereotypes.....	144
Table 9. Trainee teachers and the awareness of homophobic language and bullying.	162
Table 10. Trainee teachers and the perceptions of homophobic language.....	165
Table 11. Trainee teachers on challenging homophobia.....	184
Table 12. Trainee teachers and the awareness of same-sex families.	195
Table 13. Trainee teachers and the perceptions of same-sex families in the classroom.	199
Table 14. Trainee teachers addressing same-sex families in the classroom.	206
Table 15. Trainee teachers, sexual diversity and the educational discourses..	217
Table 16. Trainee teachers and diverse identities in the classroom.....	228
Table 17. Trainee teachers and sexual diversity in primary schools.....	236

List of figures

Figure 1. Diagram of sex, gender and sexuality.....	22
Figure 2. Pedagogical frameworks and sexual diversity.....	79
Figure 3. Mixed-method research design.....	102

Acknowledgments

This research was possible thanks to the grants provided by the Mexican Council for Science and Technology (CONACyT) and the Mexican Secretariat of Public Education (SEP).

My thanks and appreciation to my supervisor Dr Vanita Sundaram. Also thanks to Prof Paul Johnson and to the facilitators and participants of this research. I dedicate this work to my family for their constant support and unconditional love.

Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis and that this thesis has not been submitted for examination at this or any other institution for another award. I further declare that this thesis is my own original work, except where reference is made in the text of the thesis to the work of others. I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Introduction

Research focusing on primary schools and sexual diversity has shown that children are aware of homophobic assaults, in the form of homophobic language, in the playground, the classroom or even in the school corridors (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Guasp, 2012; Guasp et al., 2014; HRW, 2001; Mathison, 1998; Meyer, 2010). Moreover, recent studies have found that negative attitudes to the sexual minorities community have become commonplace in primary schools (Gerouki, 2010; Skelton, 2006; Atkinson, 2002; Robinson, 2008; Poteat & Rivers, 2010). The available research focusing on sexual diversity and primary schools has explored the heteronormative discourses in primary schools that concern and interrogate gender and sexualities in school spaces (Atkinson, 2007; DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; DePalma & Jennett, 2010; Skelton, 2002). The aim of this study is to explore the extent to which trainee teachers are aware of and perceive sexual diversity in primary schools based on this understanding.

My interest in this study derives from my previous Masters research on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) youth in high schools. In these LGBT youth narratives, early school years were seen as the beginning of exposure to derogatory language and discrimination. As a gay man and researcher, I can relate to these narratives where heteronormative discourses are portrayed in everyday school activities. A pioneering four-year research project in UK, *No Outsiders* (Atkinson, et al, 2009), explored, critiqued and interrogated these hegemonic heteronormative discourses, and identified the lack and/or invisibility of representation of sexual diversity in primary schools (i.e. same-sex families). This work has influenced a body of research that has explored gender, sex and sexualities in the educational context. In many ways my research is framed by the future research questions recommended by Atkinson, et al (2009) who studied how teachers in primary schools could support and advocate sexual diversity discourses in the classrooms. Similarly, in the past decade, there have been several reforms to the legislation on sexual

minorities that have provoked positive changes in the social and political aspects of the sexual minorities community (i.e. same-sex marriage).

Sexual diversity in primary schools covers many issues such as gender stereotyping, homophobic language and bullying, and same-sex families. Accordingly, this study is more concerned with the understanding of sex, gender and sexualities and the heteronormativity discourses in the primary school spaces than with primary school pupils who identify as LGBT. Nonetheless, research has shown that pupils who are LGBT or belong to an LGBT family have often been involved in incidents such as discrimination, social exclusion and prejudice in educational spaces (Lindsay, et al., 2006; Lambert, 2005; Lipkin, 2002; Whitlock, 2014). In accordance with the literature review, these discriminatory and exclusive incidents have to be challenged with pedagogical approaches that encourage social inclusion, anti-oppression and anti-discrimination between students and the school environment. This includes emotional developments in family life and relationships in primary schools. Therefore, it is necessary to consider pedagogical frameworks that address the education of morality, equity and social justice. It is proposed that whilst teachers address diversity and inclusion in their classrooms, sexual diversity is still a controversial issue in schools.

Overall, this study is derived from a concern about how sexual diversity discourses in primary schools are portrayed. Curran, Chiarolli and Pallotta-Chiarolli (2009) argue that addressing issues of sexual diversity is not talking about sex (i.e. intercourse) but rather about diversity. Other discourses of sexualities in primary schools, such as Mellor and Epstein's (2006), focus on heteronormative discourses which challenge children's non-conforming gender expectations. For instance, teachers' assumptions that all boys are sporty can be a challenging experience for non-sporty boys. As Meyer (2010) and DePalma and Atkinson (2009) suggest, sex roles that assume 'pink for girls' and 'blue for boys' are sexual representations which are strongly constructed since early childhood and which promote dominant values for gender and sexualities in school spaces.

Focus of the research

DePalma and Atkinson (2009) exposed teachers' perceptions of the LGBT community and questioned the school praxis on "how can sexual orientation be addressed for children in ways that are relevant to their experience and growing understanding of personal identity, love and family diversity?" (p. ix). Similarly, Gerouki's (2010) study of children's non-conforming behaviour and their teachers' experiences questioned teachers' awareness of gender and sexualities in primary schools. These experiences are often related to incidences of bullying at school, where the assaults or aggressions are subjective ways of demonstrating power over and abuse of the outsider (Smith, 2004). Thus, one of the key issues to consider in the discourses of sexual diversity in the schools is homophobia, which García (2008) describes as a negative attitude, by insults or harassment, towards the LGBT community. In 2001, Human Right Watch (HRW) investigated violence and discriminative practice against LGBT youth in schools:

In schools, intended to nurture the development of children, violence may be a regular part of a child's experience...students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender have been beaten, kicked, spit on, cut with knives, strangled, thrown against lockers, and dragged down flights of stairs (HRW, 2001, p. 3).

Although, the experiences indicated in above quotation may be more evident in middle and senior schools, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), in U.S., point out that students in primary schools are sensitive about harassment, discrimination and homophobia to a clear degree (GLSEN, 201, p.55). Focusing on primary schools, DePalma and Atkinson (2009) explored the construction of gender, sex and sexuality and explained the influence of hetero-sexist gender roles and issues of other sexual practices in the school context. In this sense, there have been limited efforts to study the attitudes and perceptions of trainee teachers about these discourses of sexual diversity (Gerouki, 2010; Kissen, 2002).

Trainee teachers' awareness of equal rights, a multicultural context and social diversity promotes positive attitudes and perceptions to challenge homophobia and other discriminative practice in schools has been discussed (Gerouki, 2010; Curran et al, 2009; Milton, 2003; Kissen, 2002). Allan, Atkinson, Brace, DePalma and Hemingway (2008) argue that teachers, in this case trainee teachers, should take responsibility for helping students to recognise sexualities and therefore portray them in positive ways through discussions about social justice, diversity and understanding. Similarly, Villegas and Lucas (2002) argue that teachers should address sexual diversity in their classrooms in order to promote a more diverse and inclusive society. Therefore, it is intended that these pedagogical frameworks will develop new approaches towards sexual diversity that can help enact social and cultural discourses of gender and sexuality. This would have the potential to empower different values and principles in the primary school context through discourses of equity and social justice.

In this study, trainee teachers' awareness and perceptions are not meant to be representative of the trainee teacher population in the UK as a whole. On the contrary, these trainee teachers decided to answer the on-line questionnaire and some of them decided to participate in the interviews. Thus, they should be read and represented as those trainees who are already engaged with questioning the representation of sexual diversity in primary school settings. In addition to the trainee teachers, an educational city council officer and two educational officers of a non-profit organization were interviewed. Some trainees and officers also identify themselves as part of the sexual diversity community. They expressed their sexual identities during informal conversations or during the interviews, some of them through personal experiences. Therefore, these teachers' sexual identities are embodied in the narrative of their insights and opinions of the schooling of sexual diversity in primary schools.

I argue throughout the analysis that a teacher's sexual identity and/or their experiences with the sexual diversity community may make them more

aware of the school's heteronormative spaces and view them differently. For me, as a gay researcher, as with some trainees, this has advantages and disadvantages. It is not the aim of this study to look for an objective statement of events but instead to understand the perceptions and feelings that are involved for trainees in regard to the question of sexual diversity in primary schools.

Structure of the thesis

The aim of this study, then, is to explore these trainee teachers' awareness and perceptions of sexual diversity in primary schools. In doing so, the study aims to explore how trainee teachers perceive sexual diversity in their classrooms, as well as their insights about gender stereotyping and homophobia, and their impressions of the challenges of addressing sexual diversity in primary schools. Within this discourse, the research also aims to examine the perception of primary schools as heteronormative spaces. This study is presented in nine chapters.

Following this introduction, Chapter One explores the concept of gender, sex and sexuality in the educational context. In this chapter, I consider gendered and sexualised discourses in school spaces, and how these discourses of sexualities in primary school are perpetuated through everyday school activities. I also argue that feminist and queer frameworks are key to inform policies and discourses about sexual diversity in the educational context. Here, having reviewed the understanding of sexual diversity in the primary schools, I argue that gender stereotypes, homophobia and same-sex families are seen as the focus of this study.

Through this discussion, Chapter Two examines educational policies and pedagogical practices in education towards sexual diversity in primary schools. It focuses particularly on the so-called Section 28 and how this controversial provision in the act has shaped the sexual education debate within government and educational settings for several years. I also discuss pedagogical frameworks and educational practices that challenge hegemonic

heteronormative discourses in primary schools. Chapter Three discusses the methodological approach of the study. I argue that the mixed method approach was appropriate to this study. I also discuss the use of interpretative phenomenological and thematic analyses to analyse and interpret the data. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews and an on-line questionnaire. Finally, this chapter presents the trainee teachers as the sample population of the study.

I decided to organize the analysis and discussion chapters in segments reflecting quotations from the interviewees, which characterize a cluster of their ideas in a simple narrative. These quotations are directly related with the thematic paths examined in the literature review: (1) gender stereotyping; (2) homophobic language and bullying; (3) same-sex families, and (4) addressing sexual diversity in primary schools. In this study, it makes sense to position these abstract ideas such as gender stereotype in the words of the trainees and give their own account of their understandings of sexual diversity in primary schools in a more narrative discourse. The moments in the conversations when these concerns appear in the narratives are significant too and so they are presented in the same way in the analysis. The analysis and discussion of the findings are presented in five chapters.

Chapters Four, Five and Six present the findings of the main themes in the study. Chapter Four explores trainee teachers' awareness and perceptions of gender stereotypes in primary schools. The chapter examines how gender (sex) expectations are framed around social and cultural heteronormative ideas of what gender means. In this sense, there is an awareness and perception by trainee teachers of these essentialist binary constructions of gender in primary school spaces. Chapter Five discusses trainee teachers' awareness and perceptions of the use of homophobic language such as 'gay' or 'poof' in primary school pupils, and the narratives of homophobic bullying of the sexual diversity community. However, I argue that some trainee teachers undermine children's use of homophobic language as a result of the idea of primary school children's naivety and innocence. There is a perception that homophobia in primary

schools is a product of gender stereotyping and sexism. By introducing the concept of same-sex families, Chapter Six explores the representation of the intersection between gender, sexualities and family relationships as a non-traditional or non-conforming heteronormative social and cultural framework. Trainee teachers' perception of same-sex families is influenced by the discourse of loving and caring portrayed in the concept of (hetero) normative families discourses. Overall, trainee teachers show a positive attitude to advocate sexual diversity issues in primary schools; nonetheless, there is in general a sense of lack of training and confidence to address these issues.

Chapters Seven and Eight build on these main themes and explore trainee teachers' perceptions of addressing sexual diversity in the primary school classrooms. The first of these refers to the barriers and challenges to teaching sexual diversity issues in schools. This chapter also discusses trainees' perceptions of inclusiveness and queerness discourses of diversity in the primary school classroom. For instance, trainee teachers perceive themselves as responsible for being inclusive rather than teaching about inclusion. Following trainee teacher experiences, Chapter Eight explores how trainee teachers' identities influence their awareness and perception of sexual diversity discourses in primary schools. Four trainee teachers' stories briefly explore the intersection between gender, sex, sexualities, religion and family relationships and addressing sexual diversity in primary schools.

Finally, Chapter Nine presents the conclusions of the study. The chapter summarises the key findings: gender stereotyping, homophobic language and bullying and same-sex families in the primary school context. In the findings, trainee teachers' perceptions of addressing sexual diversity in the primary school classroom lead to recommendations for policy makers and teacher training programmes. Directions for future research and further development of pedagogical practices that advocate sexual diversity discourses in primary schools are also presented. The pursuit of inclusive educational discourses and sexual diversity schooling are social and cultural challenges to any form of exclusion or discrimination against sexual minorities. The aim of these inclusive

strategies is to find theoretical frameworks and practices (political and educational) that advocate a positive and inclusive understanding of the intersection between gender, sex and sexuality in the educational context.

Chapter 1. Understanding sexual diversity in primary schools

Choices about whether to divide the primary school classroom into two groups, boys and girls, to say that pink toys are for girls and blue toys are for boys or to represent occupations such as nurses as women and doctors as men, shapes sex, gender and sexualities in the primary school context. Thus, these hegemonic gendered and sexualised heteronormative discourses of sexuality are (re)presented in educational settings. These narratives have been criticized in different studies on primary school contexts and sexualities (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Kissen, 2002; Letts & Sears, 1999; Meyer, 2010; Payne & Smith, 2014; Renold, 2007; Wallis & VanEvery, 2000). Such discourses on sexualities in primary school settings are shown to be created through daily social and cultural normalised heterosexualised behaviours in school spaces, for example, reading stories and providing toys with hypersexualized characters and bodies (Allan et al, 2008; Renold, 2002; Renold & Ringrose, 2008).

These gendered and sexualised discourses in school spaces have been seen as heterosexual matrices and stereotype notions of femininities and masculinities that are (re)presented in the educational context in everyday educational narratives too. As Weeks (2003) points out, human sexuality has “a wide variety of needs and desires: for love and anger, tenderness and aggression, intimacy and adventure, romance and predatoriness, pleasure and pain, empathy and power” (p. 1). These strong desires and emotions have shaped social, cultural and political discourses that have divided individuals’ morals and beliefs (Weeks, 2003, p.2). This study investigates the understanding of sexual diversity in primary schools. The first chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the concept of sex, gender and sexuality and how these concepts have been the subject of continuous social debate. This section also explores how gender and sexuality identities are constructed in school spaces. The second section aims to understand the social and cultural issues around sexual diversity in primary schools such as gender stereotypes, homophobic language and bullying and same-sex families in the school context. Finally, the third section seeks to

discuss feminist and queer theories as a framework to understand the concepts of gender, sexualities and sexual diversity in the educational context. These theories frame the theoretical context, the methodological design and the analysis and discussion of this study.

1.1 Sex, gender and sexuality

In this section, I discuss the concept of sex, gender and sexuality. The terms 'sex' and 'gender' are popular and frequently used to mean the same thing (Curra, 2013; Meyer, 2010; Ollis, 2010). In reality, these two concepts are entirely distinct but as Meyer (2010) points out, sex and gender are "closely related concepts that describe aspects of our bodies and identities" (p. 27). This view is supported by Fausto-Sterling (2012) who argues, "sex and gender presentation are in the body and mind of the presenter" (p.7). Curra (2013) describes these two concepts where sex is defined as a biological categorization and gender is defined as a social framework:

Sex reflects the operation of chromosomes and body chemicals (testosterone or estrogen) on the development of anatomical structures (e.g., ovaries, testes, uterus, scrotum, vagina, clitoris)...Gender, however, refers to the psychological aspects of being masculine or feminine, as well as the social statuses, roles, and cultural prescriptions and proscriptions for acting, thinking, and feeling in sex-appropriate way (Curra, 2013, p. 228).

As Curra (2013) notes, sex is a biological category that identifies different types of physical bodies such as male, female, and intersex. Meyer also (2010) discusses up to four sex categories based on Fausto-Sterling and Kessler's research, which classify these biological categories based on chromosome genotypes (Curra, 2013; Fausto-Sterling, 2012). In the same vein, Curra (2013) refers to gender as the social and cultural differences between a man and a woman, such as the social construct of masculinity and femininity in society (Meyer, 2010; Weeks, 2011). Similarly, Weeks (2011) argues that

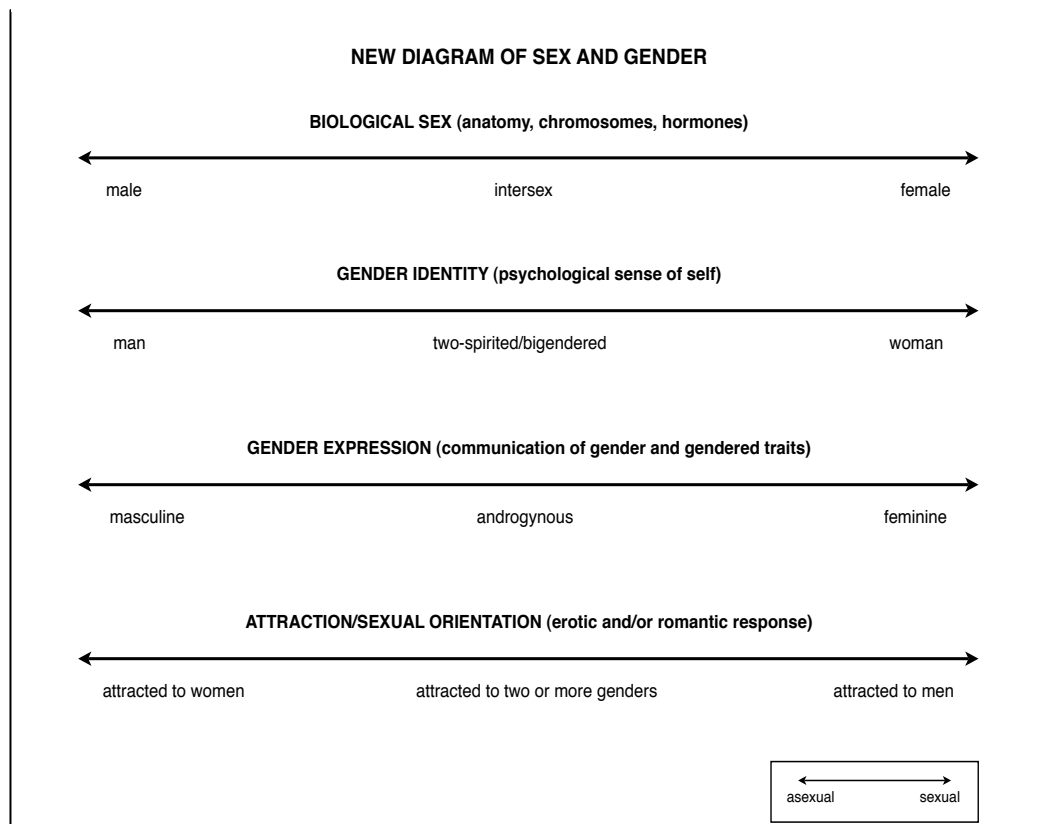
gender “refers to symbolic, social and historical rather than biological differences-and similarities-between men and women” (p. 68). In this sense, and as discussed by Curra and Meyer, the terms ‘gender’ and ‘sex’ have been interchangeable in some social contexts. In contrast, essentialist frameworks have used these biological categorizations to explain “different sexual needs and desires” (Weeks, 2011, p.69). Nonetheless, Weeks (2011) argues that gender theories and studies of sex “deconstruct such assumptions” (p.69) which treat gender and sex as interchangeable. Instead, as Thorne and Luria (2002) suggest these desires are “shaped by and associated with socially learned activities and meanings” (p.127).

Although the ambiguities of the terms ‘gender’ and ‘sex’ are easily separated, a third concept emerges, sexuality which is created from the understanding of the desires and meanings of ‘sex’ and ‘gender’. Here, Weeks (2011) highlights that “sexuality as a concept is uneasily poised between the biological, the social and the psychic” (p.198). For instance, Curra (2013) discusses sexuality as the sexual erotic arousal and genital response experiences of individuals. Jackson and Scott (2010) also discuss how sociological frameworks have been “rethinking sexuality as a social rather than a natural or psychological phenomenon”. These definitions are close to that of Meyer (2010) who argues that the usage of the term ‘sexuality’ refers to internal and external personal experiences/behaviours that are represented as “desire” (sexual orientation), “their (sexual) sense of themselves” (sexual identity) and “how they interact with others” (sexual behaviour) (p. 50).

The previous definitions of sex, gender and sexuality are support by Bryan (2014) in a new diagram that indicates a better understanding of the interaction between gender, sex and sexuality, based on the *Diagram of Sex and Gender* by the Center for Gender Sanity. In this new diagram, Bryan considers (1) biological sex as the individual categorization according biological representations such as chromosomes; (2) gender as a social construct of self identity and expression based on the social and cultural understanding of being a masculine man and a feminine woman; and (3) sexuality based on sexual

orientation (sex attraction), sexual behaviour (sexual activity with others) and sexual identity (sexual identification such as gay or lesbian) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Diagram of sex, gender and sexuality.



From *Diagram of Sex, Gender, and Sexuality* in Bryan and Barr (2014, p.244).

According to Bryan (2014) gender, sex and sexuality are a representation of the ‘sexual’ categorization, experience and performance of our biological, social and cultural identities (Curra, 2013; Meyer, 2010; Ollis, 2010; Thorne & Luria, 2002). These constructs of gender, sex and sexuality are embodied in different debates: *sexuality and gender* (Thorne & Luria, 2002), *gender and sexual diversity* (Bryan, 2014), *sexualities* (Jackson & Scott, 2010) and *sexual diversity* (Curra, 2012; Meyer, 2010). For Bryan (2014), these three concepts (sex, gender and sexuality) are the framework for a new “contemporary construct”, *gender and sexual diversity* (GSD) that “encompasses the variability, fluidity, and complexity that are inherent in these aspects of human identity” (p. 244). According to Ollis (2010), unlike previous categorizations, the educational context uses sex/gender and sexuality as essentialist binary concepts of gender

to categorise ideas of boy-masculine and girl-feminine social and cultural traditional hegemonic heterosexualised notions of gender. For instance, Thorne and Luria (2002) bring together these notions of gender, sex and sexuality in the educational context and highlight how children's sexual, social and cultural experiences are shaped by educational discourses:

Nine to eleven year-old children are beginning the transition from the gender system of childhood to that of adolescence. They are largely defined (and defined themselves) as children, but they are on the verge of sexual maturity, cultural adolescence, and a gender system organized around the institution of heterosexuality (Thorne & Luria, 2002, p.127).

Like Thorne and Luria, Ollis (2010) points out how these traditional heterosexual binary discourses of gender and sexualities-heteronormativity-portray discriminatory and limited experiences of other sexual identities in the educational context. In the same vein, Meyer and Carlson's (2014) account of heteronormativity discourses in the school curriculum evidence essentialist ideas of gender/sex and sexuality in the school curriculum. Thus, Skelton (2006) argues that in elementary school studies gender has been emphasised as a "boys versus girls" approach which has been seen as a "simplistic juxtaposition" of boys and girls' behaviours and performances (p.139). These gendered categorizations are portrayed through social heteronormative discourses in school subjects in the primary school classroom such as sex education or citizenship. For example, Chilisa (2006) highlights how sex education in schools is regulated by these binary categorizations where "sexual activities, behaviours and attitudes to sex are informed by a gender system" (p. 249).

This view of gender and its relation to sexuality is supported by Thorne and Luria (2002) who argue "from an early age 'the sexual' is prescriptively heterosexual and male homophobic. Children draw on sexual meanings to maintain gender segregation" (p.138). In relation to this study, gender, sex and sexuality are closely associated concepts that are defined by the biological,

social and cultural frames of each individual. Throughout this study, these related concepts are framed as 'sexual diversity', which is defined as the representation of gender and sex (stereotype) and sexuality (identity and performance) in educational spaces (see section 1.2). Thus, gender, sex and sexuality are part of the every day school context. Understanding these formulations or predispositions that we assume as a heteronormative society allows us to account for the misunderstandings and inequity that might exist regarding the sex, gender and sexuality of any individual. Similarly, Renold (2006) highlights why is important to talk about sexuality in primary schools:

Children actively negotiate and are coerced by a ubiquitous hegemonic heterosexual matrix as they do and become gender/ed within an institutional (primary school) and generational space (middle childhood), and a local and global culture that presumes, if not expects, gendered performances that are the straightest of straight (Renold, 2006, p. 491).

Renold (2006) argues that it is important to examine the premise of the discourse of sexuality in primary schools and in particular the notion of sexual diversity in the educational context. This argument is supported by Wallis and VanEvery (2000) who question the idea of children's innocence in the primary school settings where they might have been seen as 'asexual' or 'innocent' individuals and outsiders in sexual discourses. Hence, in some studies the exploration of primary school settings allows us to challenge these discourses of innocence in primary schools where it was noticed that school spaces were perceptibly structured on heterosexualized practices (Renold, 2006; Wallis & VanEvery, 2000).

Others authors such as Robinson (2008) portray the moral panic adults - parents, teachers and staff- about the relationship between sexuality and childhood, and examine how these panics are misrepresented: "sexuality is generally represented as beginning at puberty and maturing in adulthood, correlating with developmentalist theories of the human, which reinforce

biologically determined understandings of childhood and sexuality” (p. 116). Thus, primary school children are seen as asexual, non-existent or ignorant of sexual matters (Kelley, Buckingham & Davies, 1999; Wallis & VanEvery, 2000).

In contrast, as Epstein, Kehily, Mac An Ghail and Redman (2001) suggest, “children’s enactments and embodiments of gendered, ethicized, and sexualized subject positions are more fluid than commonly appears” (p.170). These pupils’ ‘enactments and embodiments of femininities and masculinities are performed in different school spaces. For example, these gendered performances are based on the construction of gendered identities and hegemonic relations of power in school spaces such as playgrounds (Epstein et al., 2001). As Renold (2006) emphasises, to question the hegemonic heterosexual matrix in schools may provided multiple discourses on the sexualities of boyhood and girlhood in schools and beyond. Therefore, gender performances are part of the (de)construction of sexual discourses within the primary school setting. Overall, these arguments make sexuality a unique dimension in educational research. As Ollis, Harrison and Maharaj (2013) argue:

Primary school students live in a social context where they are exposed to daily messages about sexuality in the media, through television, music, advertising, and from their peers. They may also be receiving messages about sex through exposure (accidental or intentional) to pornography, which is now easily and anonymously accessible through new information and communication technologies (Ollis et al., 2013, p. 1).

Ollis et al. (2013) introduce a timely and comprehensive argument that highlights the importance of addressing sexualities in primary education nowadays. These new waves of social and cultural factors that surround children such as social media or exposure to technologies are part of the process of knowledge about sexualities. As an example, in Horvath, Alys, Massey, Pina, Scally and Adler’s (2013) report, *Basically...porn is everywhere*, discuss how some of the most common reasons for young people watching pornography include: “curiosity, masturbation, getting ideas or for educational

purposes” (p. 26). While children tend to be exposed to pornography, online or offline, between the ages of 10 and 17 years old, Kubicek (cited by Horvath et al., 2013) ”found that young men who had had sex with men reported finding pornography on the internet between the ages of 12 and 13 but had been exposed to ‘traditional’ media (magazines, cable or videos) much earlier (4 to 10 years old)” (p.24). These arguments force us to consider that some primary school children might develop and construct their own sexual identities as a natural process. In addition some of these young students experience different social and cultural sexual encounters, these new experiences may bring feelings and emotions that could be related to their own sexualities in a positive or negative way.

1.2 Feminist and queer approaches for sexual diversity in education

This section discusses feminist and queer theoretical frameworks, which advocate a better approach and understanding of gender and sexuality discourses in the educational context. Education about gender, sex and sexualities in schools is a special matter that requires particular theoretical frameworks to draw upon research. Within the literature on sexual diversity in the school context, the prominent theoretical works are feminist perspectives, critical education, social justice, diversity and inclusion and queer frameworks (Bryan, 2012; Kissen, 2002; Letts & Sears, 1999; Meyer, 2010; Ollis, 2010; Whitlock, 2014). Within these discourses, heteronormativity in schools is a predominant factor that is discussed as a relation between sex, gender and sexuality in school spaces; it is also seen as a matrix that reinforces gender expectations and which constructs the negative perception of sexual diversity (Boas, 2015; DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Meyer, 2010, 2012).

A critical approach illustrates a different understanding of the traditional relation between heteronormative constructs and power and the perspective of oppression in sexual minorities groups. In other words, schools as a dominant institution of power enforce social and cultural practices and traditional hegemonies around the heteronormative gender and sexualities matrix. Jackson

(2006) elaborates a discourse where gender and sexuality intersect at different points but it is evident that gender is fundamental to define sexuality, heterosexuality or any sexual identity in society.

Thus, the gender and sexualities categories in this study are related theoretically to the intersection between feminist and queer theory. Feminist theory is related to the gender category in a social and political context and Queer theory is framed by sexualities and the political and cultural experiences of the sexual minorities. From social and cultural studies, this critical reconstruction approaches gender and sexualities as performance acts which are produced in reality within a socially and historical context. Richardson, McLaughlin and Casey (2006) argue that the implications of these performances and the deconstruction of gender and sexualities are practised within social change, power and political discourses. Similarly, Kincheloe and McLaren (2000) discuss how critical and feminist perspectives have pursued the empowerment of the “other”, occasionally mentioned by Queer theory as “the outsider”; in their words, “a critical theory reconceptualised by post-structuralism and feminism promotes a politics of difference that refuses to pathologize or exoticize the Other”(p. 314).

Thus, in this study it is important to frame gender as a social construct of power that involves the conceptualization of sexuality, sexualities and sexual identities and therefore the dimensions of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and other sexual minorities. In addition, the understanding of, for instance, homophobia or gender stereotypes or same-sex families is located within the constructions of gender and sexualities in western culture and the UK’s historical context such as Section 28 or same-sex marriage legislation (see Chapter Two). Gender is conceptualized as the binary construction expected in primary schools, and associated within the social and cultural expectations of gender and the children’s biological sex. Therefore, it was noted that a feminist approach was needed in order to create a more inclusive and comprehensive meaning of sexual diversity in the primary school context.

The construction of gender and sexualities in schools is performed in everyday practices by teachers, head teachers and administrators. These practices constrain heteronormative norms in the classrooms and in school spaces and the school environment. The practice and conceptualization of gender and sexualities in schools, that is more than sex education, involves a perfect landscape for the use of theories that challenge boys and girls trends in the classroom which evoke gendered learning identities and deconstruct the relation between hetero-gender discourses and education. Thus, Queer theory acknowledges the relation between feminism and sexual diversity; it brings a theoretical framework that shapes new understandings about identities and individual experiences that change within social and cultural time and space. In this study, then, trainee teachers' experiences are seen through these theoretical frameworks. The study thus considers feminist and queer theory as a framework to analyse and interpret the experiences around the understandings of sexual diversity in the school context, as well as to identify the educational practices in respect of the construction of gender and sexualities.

1.2.1 Feminist approaches in education

'Feminism' is an umbrella term which admittedly incorporates a great many different, often opposing, schools of thought. These are: a concern with gender; a perception of women as generally disadvantaged in gender relations (while often viewing men as requiring liberation too); a perception of this gender inequity is wrong; and consequently an aim to change things for the better (Francis, 2001, p.68).

In her discussion, Francis (2001) argues that feminist (poststructuralist) theories can be seen as a social and cultural agency in the educational context. In this sense, feminist pedagogical theories are "an emancipatory movement" of hegemonic heterosexualised discourses within school narratives. By drawing on the concept of feminist pedagogy, Weiner (2006) has been able to articulate why feminist theories are needed in the educational context: "a growing

discontent with the patriarchy of schooling and the absence of gender as a category of interest” motivate different scholars to develop critical pedagogies for the hegemonic heteronormative discourses of the schools. Other authors (see Blaise, 2005; Meyer, 2010) examine the extent to which feminist theory empowers pedagogical discourses that challenge gender stereotypes and hegemonic heteronormative spaces.

For instance, Blaise (2005) highlights that feminist approaches in education advocate innovative “understandings of gender for rethinking gender equity strategies for early childhood” (p.87). In this sense, Blaise adopts broader perspectives in feminist theories “such as subjectivity, discourse, agency, resistance, power-knowledge regimes, and power to analyse gender relations and social interactions of young children”(p.87) in the school context. Thus, this conceptual framework of feminist pedagogy considers and identifies the challenges of hegemonic heterosexualised discourses in school spaces and challenges them through different theoretical social discourses.

Similarly, Mellor and Epstein (2006) discuss narratives of sex, gender and sexuality in school spaces and how they are concerned with schooling within “(hetero) sexuality” discourses (p.381). For example, a boy who is part of a poetry quest might be perceived as being an effeminate boy. In the same way, a girl who is part of the football team might be perceived as being a tomboy (Gerouki, 2010; Iverson & Murphy, 2006; Reay, 2001). Thus, the discrimination against being tomboy or being effeminate could position children as feeling “shame and fear of femininity” (Reay, 2006, p.125). In the case of boys, as Epstein (1998) argues, “the rejection of the perceived ‘feminine’ of academic work is simultaneously a defence against the ‘charge’ of being gay” (p. 97).

This is a limitation of what femininity and masculinity mean, and of how gender conforming matrixes work in the school spaces. In addition, Jackson (2006) points out that these fears of being “feminine” or not “feminine enough” are portrayed in academic performances: “if boys want to avoid the verbal and physical abuse attached to being labelled as ‘feminine’, they must avoid

academic work, or at least they must appear to avoid academic work” (p.41). As Jackson argues, some boys in primary school might see being a good student as “being less masculine” and might therefore try to belong to the boys’ group by underachieving academically. As Sundaram (2007) highlights, gender has been seen as “a hegemonic construction of ‘man/masculinity’ as defined in opposition to what is constituted as ‘woman/femininity’” (p.27).

In the same vein, Skelton (2006) proposes that when talking about boys and girls in schools, it is necessary to discuss as a unit “boys and girls”, where gender has to be seen “as relational, which incorporate notions of difference and agency” (p. 175). This idea of ending sexual/gender difference is illustrated by Butler (2004) who proposes “I don’t ask the question about the end of sexual difference in order to make a plea for that end... It is more like a necessary background to the possibility of thinking, of language, of being a body in the world” (p.176). Thus, the use of this new idea of gender is related to examining hegemonic heteronormative discourses that undermine new constructs of femininities or masculinities in social spaces. In addition, these approaches create a broader understanding of gender and sexualities in school spaces. Besides, these new feminist approaches help to identify the process of gender as a social construction and the power of the existing stereotype construction and of gender expectations in primary school children’s experiences.

Therefore, using feminist approaches in pedagogy in this study emphasizes gender as not a fixed concept and as a social construction continuum. In this study, and as Paechter (2001) discusses, “we cannot take gender as simply given”; as discussed before, gender stereotypes and gender expectations have to be challenged with non-normative discourses. For instance, non-conforming gender behaviours in children have been associated with homosexuality (Epstein, 1998; Meyer, 2010). In this sense, challenging gender stereotypes and expectations, and to avoid homophobic discourses and discrimination based on gendered binary discourses in the school, “non-sexist pedagogies” have to be put in place (MacNaughton, 2006, p. 134). As MacNaughton (2006) discusses, “gender is a complex and dynamic set of ideas,

actions and feelings about what it means to be a boy or a girl in a specific place, culture and time” (p.134). Overall, this study is designed with a feminist approach that is “concerned with issues of broader social change and social justice” (Doucet & Mauthner, 2008 p. 328). Thus, the study also considers the approach of equity and inclusive perspective in the analysis and interpretation of the data.

1.2.2 Queer approaches in education

Feminist approaches in education highlight the challenge of gender binary expectations and hegemonic heteronormative discourses of power in the educational context. In this sense, queer frameworks in education advocate and challenge the relationships between gender, sex and sexualities and how these concepts are shaped by social and cultural discourses. As Epstein (2002) argues, the challenge of Queer theory is “to identify the precise ways in which sexual meaning, categories, and identities are woven into the fabric of society and help give shape to diverse institution, practices, and beliefs” (p.202). Queer theory emerges from the construction of different stigmatized identities that exercise their right to exist; it reflects what disturbs the ordinary, the transgression of the heterosexual normativity (Fonseca & Quintero, 2009).

Turner (2000) highlights how Queer theory “coalesced out of the growing sense among some feminist and sexual minorities” who challenge and criticise ordinary hegemonic discourses (p.15). In the educational context, Morris (2005) argues that Queer theory is needed since it allows the understanding of the teachers’ or students’ experiences that have been exposed to aggressions or are labelled as being different because of their sexual identities. Queer theory attempts to reconstruct the subject without falling into the trap of “different identity” (Morris, 2005, p.37). Talburt (2000) also defines Queer theory in the construction of identity and understanding:

Queer seeks to disrupt the discrete, fixed locations of identity by understanding sexuality and its meaning not as a priori or given but as

constructed, contingent, fashioned and refashioned, and relational...Queer has been said not be a noun, for nouns stabilize in time and space, but an adjective or a verb that cuts across identities, subjectivities, and communities (Talburtt, 2000, p. 3).

Talburtt (2000) notes that Queer is a not fixed category or dimension, but seeks to understand gender and sexualities within identities that change with time and space. This view is supported by Jagose (1996) who writes that “queer is always an identity under construction, a site of permanent becoming” (p.131); in this sense, queer has to be seen as a term that is constructed by individual experiences and individual constructions of identities. For example, Britzman (cited by Meyer, 2010, p.20) discusses Queer theory from the pedagogical perspective to understand the dynamic of gender, sex and sexualities in the school context, which offers methods of critiques to mark the repetitions of normalcy as a structure and as pedagogy in the educational context.

Similarly, Letts and Sears (1999), Lewis (2012), Meyer (2010) approach this queer pedagogy as a resource for disrupting the concept of gender and sexual identity in the school context. Talburtt (2005) analyses this concept from Butler who retakes the LGBT or queer subject as an agent of historical construction, which has limits and possibilities mediated for its identity. This view is supported by Morris (2005) who argues that queering is needed in educational research since it allows the understanding of the student experiences that have been exposed to aggressions or are labelled as being different for their sexual identities. Thus, Britzman develops the concept of Queer theory from a pedagogical perspective:

Queer Theory offers methods of critiques to mark the repetitions of normalcy as a structure and as pedagogy. Whether defining normalcy as an approximation of limits and mastery, or as renunciations, as the refusal of difference itself, Queer Theory insists on posing the production of normalization as a problem of culture and of thought (Britzman cited by Meyer, 2010, p.20).

Britzman (2000) suggests there is a problem and necessity of power, knowledge and pleasure in respect of the labels that are used for the sexual identities of individuals in the school context. Thus, queering school spaces can challenge the heterosexual matrix and the hetero performative subversion of the educational context. Using pedagogical spaces such as textbooks, story telling books and other school activities that challenge these discourses might mark a discursive presence of social and cultural equity between the pupils (Kjaraan & Jóhannesson, 2015; McCormack & Gleeson, 2010; Renold, 2000). Finally, as Kumashiro (1999) points out, queering “educators can help challenge oppression by helping to change traditional reading practices...and create associations that are less prescriptive and derogatory” (p.69). Overall, these traditional practices such as gender stereotypes or discrimination against sexual minorities have to be challenged through queering school spaces (see Chapter Two, section 2.3).

1.2.3 Queer and feminist approaches: the social construction of sexuality

Robinson (2008), in her discussion of children’s innocence about gender and sexuality issues, portrays an example of the moral panic that Tinky Winky, a children’s TV character (Teletubbies) created in the conservative community in Poland and afterwards in the US. The children’s character is depicted as a purple boy, with a triangle-shaped antenna in the top of his head, who wears a red lady’s purse. The purple colour and triangle might represent the homosexual community and the lady’s purse might challenge heteronormative gender norms (Robinson, 2008). In this sense, as Robinson explains, this non-conforming gender performance caused a controversy. The first concern was the promotion of “homosexual life” in children’s TV programmes through gender non-confirming behaviours, for instance, a boy’s character wearing a purse. There was also a perception that Tinky Winky represented the homosexual community through the purple colour and triangle antenna (symbols that have represented the LGBT community in different social and cultural spaces) (Robinson, 2008).

This provoked homophobic fear in the right wing community. Robinson (2008) argues that it was a gender/sex and sexuality challenge; the idea of a boy with a purse displaying LGBT 'symbols' was a social representation that did not fit the social and cultural preconceptions of society for the conservative wing. It needs to be asked how a boy who wants to use a purse can challenge heterosexualised discourses of gender/sex in social contexts such as schools. Overall, in the educational context these situations of non-conforming behaviour might be more uncomfortable for trainees and teachers when there is a fear about how this norm breaking of gender/sex performances might escalate in primary school spaces. Thus, the controversy with Tinky Winky was in a sense with the purple colour, the triangle (a symbol that represent the LGBT community) and mostly with the lady's purse, because why would a boy want to play with a handbag?

In the previous section, the concept of gender, sex and sexuality was discussed. Here, Jackson illustrates how gender/sex and sexualities performances and expectations are associated in social and cultural spaces:

Sexuality itself is sometimes understood primarily in terms of the hetero-homo binary, or the straight, gay, lesbian or bisexual identities deriving from it, while others take it to encompass a fuller range of desires, practices and identities. Gender can mean the division or distinction between women or men, whether this is seen as primarily a bodily difference or social hierarchy, but also refers to the content of gender categories, conventionally defined as femininity or masculinity (Jackson, 2006, p.41).

As noted by Jackson (2006), gender/sex and sexuality are understood from the binary perspectives: homo/hetero, masculine/feminine and women/men. These discourses are derived from the organization and categorization of an individual's different biological, sociological and psychological elements. Similarly, Francis (2006) highlights the fact that "the education system freely and pervasively categorizes pupils as boys and girls,

making it difficult for pupils to resist such identification” (p.15). Thus, gender and sexualities have been delimited and oppressed in the educational context. As in the example of Tinky Winky, children have been surrounded by fears about the construction of their own gender and sexualities identities and performances. Renold (2007) argues that these fears are based on the “association between ‘normal’ gender development and heterosexuality” (p.277). In this sense, there is a moral attachment to heterosexualised discourses and these fears are higher in respect of primary school children who do not fit these ‘normal’ gender and sexual expectations.

In the same vein, Jackson and Scott (2010) question how modern societies are troubled by issues of sexualities in childhood, for example, by how the boundaries within childhood and adulthood sexualities are seen “and the ways in which the regulation of sexuality and the social distribution of sexual knowledge shape those contours and police the boundaries” (p.164). In addition, as Mellor and Epstein (2006) argue, “social and cultural construction of sexualities takes place through discourse” (p.379); these hegemonic heterosexualised discourses are always present in the educational context such as school spaces. Finally, Weeks (2003) discusses how “sexuality is shaped by social forces” (p.18); in this case, social and cultural changes, such as same-sex families, could challenge these hegemonic discourses about the construction of gender and sexualities identities in social and cultural spaces.

Sexualities in primary schools

As was pointed out in the introduction, sexualities in primary school classrooms have been discussed from different perspectives. For example, Mellor and Epstein (2006) highlight gender stereotypes as one key point where pupils’ sexual identities may conflict with their sex role experiences in the school context. For instance, teachers’ assumptions that all boys are sporty can be a difficult situation for non-sporty boys. Meyer (2010) and DePalma and Atkinson (2009) suggest that sex roles, as in pink for girls and blue for boys, are sexual representations which are strongly constructed since early childhood and which

may promote dominant values of gender and sexualities in the school classroom.

Another example of what is meant by this is the concept of family that is mostly seen as a hegemonic heterosexual (gender) performance, with a mother (femininity) and a father (masculinity). The use of gender stereotypes and language might misrepresent other kinds of families such as same sex families or even single parent families to primary school children. This identity misrepresentation is certainly the case for LGBT children who are often not recognized as LGBT individuals but sometimes as children with an elusive behaviour that emphasises the non-conforming gender/sex behaviours in children (Gerouki, 2010).

Paechter (cited by Allan et al., 2008) argues that although it might appear there is an exclusion of sexualities in primary school classrooms, heterosexuality is present through this absence and represented within gendered stereotypes discourses. Paechter presents an example of this in the fairy tales that children read and that are mostly heterosexualised stories (Allan et al., 2008). For instance, in this current study it was important to illustrate Paechter's argument about the use of heterosexualised narratives in primary schools. Thus, within the interviews, I used different fairy tale and storybooks such as *King and King* by Linda De Haan and Stern Nijland, which represents a story where two princes fall in love and get married. This two princes story ends with a kiss between the two princes. For some of the participants it was the first time of seeing a fairy tale with gay characters (see Chapter Six). I expected that this story would challenge their views on the heterosexualised materials that they use in everyday classrooms activities. In addition, these might challenge other narratives based on pupils' sexualities, as Weeks (2003) discusses:

Instead of seeing sexuality as a unified whole, we have to recognize that there are various forms of sexuality: there are in fact many sexualities. There are class sexualities and gender-specific sexualities, there are

racial sexualities and there are sexualities of struggle and choice (Weeks, 2003, p.40).

Weeks's (2003) awareness of different sexualities challenges the discussions on how physical spaces such as school spaces represent pupils' gender, sex and sexuality. For instance, discussing sexualities social and cultural representations might have a positive impact on challenging gender (sex) stereotypes in primary schools. Butler (2004) discusses the idea of undoing gender through historical, cultural and social normative conceptions of gender and sexualities where trainees and pupils, in this study in particular, could be seen as agents that challenge these gender binaries.

Finally, Letts (1999) considers the question of the gender binary in the primary school context: "how to make girls and boys in the classroom". Letts criticises pedagogical frameworks of heteronormativity in the classroom and he points out the importance of language as words that might enforce negative meanings to students: "language is a powerful tool that can convey both explicit and implicit meanings" (p.105). For instance, the use of words such as 'faggot', 'dyke', 'sissy' or 'tomboy', which are used to a remarkable extent in classrooms and playgrounds in primary schools, might have negative consequences for school spaces (DePalma & Atkinson, 2008; King & Schneider, 1999; Guasp, 2009; Van Dijk & Van Driel, 2007).

1.3 Sexual diversity and primary schools

This last section explores the concept of sexual diversity in the primary school context. In addition, the purpose of this section is to describe some of the key findings on sexual diversity in the educational context and to explore the literature that exists regarding sexual diversity in primary schools spaces. In recent years, sexual minorities such as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals have been challenging the political, social and cultural discourses in order to challenge the misconceptions about the sexual diversity communities. One of the main social and political discourses of the LGBT

community is within the school context where pupils learn about sexual education, gender stereotype, name-calling, homophobia and other issues related to gender and sexuality.

Studies on primary schools and sexual diversity issues have shown that children are aware of homophobic assaults, such as homophobic language, in the playground, the classroom and even in the school corridors (Atkinson, 2002; DePalma and Atkinson, 2009; GLSEN, 2012; Guasp, 2009; HRW, 2001). For instance, pupils who belong to these sexual minorities groups might be subject to harassment or bullying. There is a new social and political status for the sexual minority community in the school context, the same-sex and LGBT families, where parents are from same-sex relationships or include LGBT parents. As Curran et al. (2009) argue, the discourse of sexual diversity in primary schools that questions and discusses LGBT students or same-sex families is not about sex (intercourse) but rather about social and cultural diversity.

Thus, it is necessary to discuss how the concept of sexual diversity is approached in the primary school context and to locate the literature review of this study. In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of literature on sexual diversity and the educational context. The concept of sexual diversity has been discussed in the social sciences in relation to concepts of gender, sex and sexualities with a more social and cultural approach. Similarly, studies on gender and sexualities in the school context have been developed in different dimensions such as gender norm expectations in the classroom, the understanding of sexual minorities and the underestimation of homophobic and transphobic bullying at all stages of school (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Kissen, 2002; Letts & Sears, 1999; Payne & Smith, 2014; Renold, 2007).

As discussed before, primary school children tend to be considered as non-sexual individuals or innocents about sexual knowledge (Curran, Chiarolli and Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2009; Renold, 2006). Nonetheless, as Human Right Watch (HRW) argues in its *Controlling Bodies, Denying Identities* study about

transgender communities, children embody their own gender: “in primary school everyone treated me as a boy, but it became more difficult in secondary school, when my body started changing” (HRW, 2011, p. 68). This example illustrates how primary school children can develop their own sexualities from an early age. DeLamater & Friedrich and Walkerdine (cited by DePalma and Atkinson, 2006) talk about the cultural misconceptions of sexualities in children. They indicate that children may be aware of sexuality behaviours between the ages of six and nine but they learn to hide it from adults for cultural reasons.

Careaga (2004) introduces a contemporary concept of sexual diversity which argues that sexual diversity is a dynamic sexual concept that has to be constructed as an individual matter based on different dimensions such as orientation, identity and expression. Bryan (2014), like Careaga (2004), defines sexual diversity as three sexual dimensions: sexual orientation, sexual identity and sexual expression. Although, Careaga and Bryan’s concept of sexual diversity highlights the importance of different biological, social and cultural dimensions of an individual, in this study this conceptualization does not fit with the research framework. In this study, the sexual identities, orientations and expressions of pupils are not interrogated. Instead, it examines the extent to which trainee teachers are aware of and perceive these performances, experiences and behaviours in the hegemonic heterosexualised school spaces.

For instance, at primary school, the boy or girl who looks different from other students may fail to develop their full educational potential to a certain degree (Meyer, 2010; Kissen, 2002). Dimito and Schneider (2008), for example, claim that pupils from sexual minority groups such as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students are targets of discrimination and bullying that has frequently occurred in educational spaces. Therefore, young LGBT students are most at risk of aggression and most likely to suffer symptoms of discrimination, exclusion and persecution (HRW, 2001; Guasp, 2009). These negative experiences may affect their educational backgrounds and experiences. Furthermore, sexual minority students might belong to another diverse

minority groups too and this might increase the risk of discrimination and social exclusion (Whitlock, 2014). Thus, the research community needs to discuss the inclusion of sexual diversity in the primary school setting. Meyer (2010), DePalma and Atkinson (2009) and Maddux (1988) argue that heterosexist biases, heteronormativity norms, and homophobic attitudes are part of the educational staff and school environment that contribute to discrimination and harassment such as homophobic language and bullying in schools.

Renold (2006) discusses these conceptualizations of gender and the hegemonic heterosexual practices in primary schools. Similarly, Blaise (2005) studied the promotion of gender in the schools and reported how gender is performed and how the dimensions of femininity such as “body movements”, “beauty” and “being feminine” are part of how gender is shaped within school spaces. For example, the construction of masculinity and femininity are important aspects of gender shaping in the school context. Thus, the heterosexual matrix, conceptualized by Butler (2004), of performative gender gives the impression in school spaces of enforcing heterosexuality. And also that the relation of how heterosexualised sex-gender binaries are shaped by cultural and social processes in school spaces. Thus, children who do not conform to these gender binary expectations might experience harassment and discrimination.

Understanding the concept of sexual diversity within the context of gender stereotypes, homophobic bullying or same-sex families in primary school spaces can be complex. For example, Gerouki (2010) indicates that it is not just students who acknowledge their non-heterosexual orientation or who belong to the sexual diversity community who experience discrimination or feel unsafe at school but also primary school children who do not fit some gender (sex) expectations. For instance, at school there are social discourses that are sexualised through activities or educational practices, which promote a specific style of sexualisation like classroom activities that, promote hegemonic heterosexual discourses by showing just heteronormative families (see Chapter Two and Six). Overall many issues related to the concept of sexual diversity in

primary schools are covered in various studies, but in this current study it is discussed in terms of gender stereotyping, homophobic language and bullying and same-sex families.

1.3.1 Gender stereotypes in the primary school context

Regarding gender (sex) stereotypes in primary schools, some studies present differences between boys' and girls' behaviours that are related to their gender performances. As Younger and Warrington (2005) argue, boys' and girls' performances and achievements have to be contextualized as individuals more than based on gender. Similarly, Skelton (2002) emphasises that when doing strategies or projects about gender expectations and expressions, it is necessary for schools not to separate "boys and girls" as a binary conceptualization of gender but embody gender as a performance that could belong to both boys and girls. Another example is Boaler and Sengupta-Irving's (2006) discussion of girls' and boys' performances in mathematics, and Epstein et al.'s (2001) discussion of how boys and girls related to each other in the playground through gender performances and expressions. Thus, being "boy friendly" or "girl friendly" in education to challenge gender expectations does not help to challenge gender stereotype or discrimination based on gender grounds. For instance, Fausto-Sterling (2012) illustrates how school spaces promote gender stereotypical environments:

Everything from the color of the nursery wallpaper, the rods and cones in the retina, color processing in the brain, the behaviors of parents and others, the timing of gender knowledge and identity development, and individual differences in the molecules important in the dopamine systems contribute to a little girl's delight in or a little boy's aversion to the color pink (Fausto-Sterling, 2012, p. 118).

Here, Fausto-Sterling (2012) discusses how in school spaces and social norms gender binary framework may be strongly perpetuated in the educational context. Thus, as Francis (1998) points out, there is a gendered

practice in school spaces where gender hegemonic practices are “ignored or trivialised” (p.81). In this sense, Skelton (2002) explores how children construct and use their perceptions of gender identities, demonstrating that they have a strong sense of what genders are; this discussion examined questions such as “what are the dominant images of masculinity and femininity that the school itself reflects to the children?” and “what kind of role model does the school want and expect of its teachers?”(p.175).

Therefore, according to DePalma and Atkinson (2009) and Skelton (2006), it is necessary to understand and to question what have to be considered as positive and moral socio-cultural images of gender performances. Moreover, Skelton (2006) questions why and how we need to challenge gender stereotypes in school spaces; similarly, DePalma and Atkinson (2009) question teachers’ own identities: “how can teachers’ own sexual identities and gender expression support or constrain sexualities equality work in the classroom?” (p. ix). These studies illustrate that it is possible to change and to challenge gender stereotypical expectations if these challenges are promoted in the school context by instances such as girls playing football or boys writing poetry.

For instance, boys and girls might perform the act of being loud or quiet to fulfil social and cultural gender expectations. For example, Ivinson and Murphy (2006) impressions that “boys don’t write romance” implied that the social representation of what it is to be a male affected the boys’ achievement and performance in the English curriculum. In their example, Ivinson and Murphy argue that these writing activities differ between two different groups, “all boys setting” and “mixed gendered seating”, where the boys enhanced their writing styles when mixed with girls. This was interpreted as the way in which gender is a social pressure, for example exposing the boys’ identities as masculine and related to the idea that ‘boys don’t write romance’. Therefore, boys are described as “self-masking”; however, “it is different for girls...there isn’t the same pressure on them to be kind of hard” (Ivinson & Murphy, 2006, p.172). These examples illustrate how there are normative gendered discourses

that happen in primary school spaces and that might affect children's behaviours.

Focusing on these gendered hegemonic discourses in the primary classroom, Francis (1998) emphasizes how "children's construction of their own gender identities through a dominant discourse of gender dichotomy which positions the genders as relational" (p. 164) might perpetuate gender expectations and stereotypes in the school context. Dealing with gender (sex) stereotypes has also been related to sexual diversity discourses (non-heteronormativity discourses) in the primary school classroom. In her study of primary school teachers' accounts of children's non-conforming behaviours Gerouki (2010) recounts how one of her participants described that "there was this boy in the first grade who loved drawing princesses...this is unusual for a boy" (p. 339).

Similarly, Gerouki points out how when the teacher in question, was narrating, she impersonated the boy's speech in effeminate way to highlight his non-heteronormative behaviour. Thus, primary school children who show non-heteronormative conforming behaviours might be discriminated against or harassed even by their own teachers. In her book, *Raising my rainbow*, about raising a 'gender creative' son (as the author describes her son's gender identity and expression) Duron narrates the journey of a mother who struggles to find a place for a gender non-conforming boy in social spaces such as the school space:

When I started writing, I knew I had an effeminate son who we assumed was gay. I didn't know that I had a gender-creative, gender non-conforming, gender-variant son with gender dysphoria and/or gender identity disorder...our son is gender nonconforming. A weight had been lifted off our shoulders...another weight had been placed on our shoulders: now what? (Duron, 2013, p. 59)

The above extract represents some of these questions and experiences that parents and teachers have about their gender non-conforming children and

primary school students. For instance, existing research has suggested that children with non-conforming behaviours are targets of discrimination, prejudices and oppression (Gerouki, 2010). Duron's experiences of how talking about an "effeminate son" can be a challenge for some parents and teachers have been the subject of interest for researchers, teachers and parents. This is because when gender and sexualities identities are discussed, it is mostly about adults or young adults in the context of higher education.

In addition, in schools gender non-conforming behaviour is often related to homosexuality (DePalma & Jennet, 2010; Meyer, 2010). In her book, Duron (2013) narrates her experience with a pre-kindergarten schoolteacher when she decided to explain to the teacher that her son was a gender non-conforming child. In her narrative, Duron describes the experience as positive thanks to the supportive teacher who was interested in how to help; it is implied that the teacher asked what gender non-conforming meant in order to be prepared in her classroom.

It is important to bear in mind that there is a difference between gender stereotypes and gender non-conforming behaviour. Gender stereotypes are defined as beliefs about norms in respect of gender and refer to expected gender roles of masculinity and femininity in society. Gender non-conforming refers to a person who does not conform to these social and cultural expectations of their gender based on the gender binary. For instance, '*The boy who was drawing princesses*', research carried out by Gerouki (2010) opens an interesting question about primary teachers' accounts of children's gender non-conforming and about children's awareness of their sexuality.

This study shows that teachers' and society's expectations of children around gender and sexualities is moralising and that these expectations are seen as something unspeakable. Gerouki (2010) argues that between 5 and 11 per cent of the young population might identify themselves as non-heterosexual. For parents, gender non-conforming children are not a 'natural' social norm (heteronormativity) and it is not expected in a 'normal child' (see

Chapter 4). In this way it is possible to understand how stereotyped sexualities are a common practice since primary schools. Children's stories about heterosexual families or conventional expectations of gender in sports practices are among other constructions of sexualities and gender in school.

Duron (2013) discusses the understanding of what gender is and how it is constructed to help parents recognise the situation and its implications in school spaces. For example, acknowledging these non-conforming performances to teachers may improve children's experiences at school. According to Duron, the term gender non-conforming helps parents and family members with the process of understanding and acceptance of gender non-conforming children. She also highlights how important it was to explain to her older son about his brother's gender non-conforming behaviour in order to be able to tackle homophobic bullying in his school: "they are boys who like girl stuff and girls who like boy stuff"(Duron, 2013, p.65). These narratives are an example of how parents confront gender non-conforming situations and how teachers and trainees can learn to address non-conforming behaviour.

Another example is the study by Payne and Smith (2014), who explore teachers' experiences with transgender children in primary schools and report that "school professionals expressed high levels of fear anxiety over effectively educating these children (transgender children) and the community's potential response to their providing a supportive environment for these students" (p. 399). Why teachers express feelings of fear or anxiety depends on different factors such as lack of preparation or parents' reactions to sexual diversity issues in the primary classroom. These expressions of fear and lack of preparation were found in the trainee teachers' discourses (see Chapter Seven).

Drawing on this hegemonic discourses of heterosexuality in school spaces and understanding that schools are part of how gender and sexualities are shaped, it is important to emphasise the understanding of what it means to be a girl (femininity) or a boy (masculinity) in the school settings. The

conceptualization of gender throughout the school curricula considers the identities of a girl and a boy from hegemonic biological, cultural and social perspectives with some social limitations in their development of gender and sexual identities (as seen in section 1.1). Within these heteronormative school spaces pupils learn to distinguish directly or indirectly what the expectations of their gender are. It is expected that girls are quiet individuals, well-behaved pupils and who express their feelings. Boy pupils are expected to be more aggressive, to be more playful in class and supposed to be good at maths but not to excel in literature (Craft, 2011; McInnes, 2004; Renold, 2006).

These preconceptions of gender promote social and culture frameworks marked by gender inequity that lead to harassment and intimidation of individuals who do not conform to these norms; and also, they do not allow individuals to create their own expectations according to their individual gender identities, performances and expressions (Ivinson & Murphy, 2006; Younger & Warrington, 2005). Hence, pupils who do not meet these gender expectations in primary schools feel isolated and undervalued by their social environment and school peers, and may experience derogatory language and violence such as homophobic bullying that is perpetuated by their own school community.

1.3.2 Homophobia and homophobic bullying in primary schools

Thus, as discussed by DePalma and Atkinson (2009), Gerouki (2010), Renold (2002) and Skelton (2006), these children who perform non-heteronormative behaviours are the children who mostly experience discrimination and harassment in primary school spaces, for example, boys who act 'like girls' or boys who are not into sports, or girls who act 'like boys' or who are sporty, and pupils who identify themselves as part of the sexual minority community and/or who have friends and family in the LGBT spectrum (Hunt & Jensen, 2007). Similarly, Phillips (2007) argues that homophobic bullying is used by "many boys to affirm masculinity norms of toughness, strength, dominance, and control" (p.158) in the school setting.

For example, Guasp (2012) points out “three in five gay pupils who experience homophobic bullying say that teachers who witness the bullying never intervene. Only ten per cent of gay pupils report that teachers challenge homophobic language every time they hear it” (p. 3). In these cases, Human Rights Watch (2001) highlights the important role of the school as a centre for human rights protection of sexual diversity; the importance of a positive school environment, the support of their teachers, access to information about sexual diversity are all ways to help primary school children tackle homophobic language and bullying in their school spaces.

In this sense, Poteat and Rivers (2010) describe homophobic language as homophobic epithets, which “generally include pejorative words or denigrating phrases in relation to LGBT identities or behaviors” (p. 167). The fact that homophobic language is associated with bullying in schools has already been discussed (Poteat & Rivers, 2010). Homophobic bullying has been described as a practice of physical, verbal, psychological and social harassment of primary students who identify as part of the LGBT community (Smith, 2004; Sanchez, 2009; Poteat & Rivers, 2010).

Homophobia and homophobic bullying are expressions of violence, Figueroa (2010) argues that harassment and intimidation (bullying) in school life occurs in certain sorts of scenarios such as playgrounds, school toilets or places close to the school (HRW, 2001). Currently the exclusion and discrimination against individuals that belong to the sexual minority community through homophobic bullying has become visible and it is a phenomenon that involves and affects society and more significantly affects young people (HRW, 2001; Meyer, 2010; Schneider & Dimito, 2008; Werner, 2008).

Therefore, homophobic language and bullying have to be seen as acts of violence towards sexual minorities. Gerouki (2010) indicates that there is a growing expectation of homophobia and bullying when pupils move to senior schools. This use of homophobic language and violence snowballs during the different stages of schooling. Gerouki identified studies that show how primary

schools are seen as the reproduction sites of sexist discourses and also how teachers' sexist and homophobic performances can influence homophobic and violent discourses within the school environment (Gerouki, 2010). As Halliday also argues (cited by Sauntson, 2012) "most of what we learn, we learn through language"; therefore, learning that homophobic language is not socially acceptable might advocate a positive attitude towards the LGBT community.

Similarly, Mallon (2001) discusses issues such as homophobia in school culture, arguing that it is difficult for teachers, and especially trainees, to challenge them. However, it is expected that teachers recognise schools as social spaces where students can learn that words like 'fag' or 'so gay' are used to discriminate and harass LGBT individuals. These discriminatory experiences, for the community of sexual diversity students, make them feel vulnerable and marginalised. Faced with homophobia, some pupils disengage from education (Ellis, 2008). Regarding homophobic bullying, as illustrated by Kyriacou (2003) and Smith (2004) a pupil is bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students (Olweus, 1994). Bullying acts have been defined as a "systematic abuse of power" (Smith, 2004, p.) and as "persistent aggressive behaviour" (Kyriacou, 2003, p.). Kyriacou (2003) argues that these repeated actions may be physical (pushing), verbal (name calling) or indirect (social exclusion) (p.17).

Although homophobic bullying in primary schools is seen as fairly recent phenomenon, Maddux (1988) notes that social factors such as political considerations, religious beliefs and the cultural-social heritage of parents and family contribute to homophobia in schools: "such variables (social factors) not only influence the atmosphere of the school, but indirectly influence the gay student through decisions made and policies implemented at upper-administrative level" (Maddux, 1988, p.96). An example of homophobic bullying in primary schools is portrayed in Guasp's (2012) report:

- More than half (55 per cent) of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people experience homophobic bullying in Britain's schools.

- More than half (53 per cent) of gay pupils experience verbal homophobic bullying; almost a quarter (23 per cent) experience cyber bullying and one in six (16 per cent) gay pupils experience physical abuse.
- Three in five gay pupils who experience homophobic bullying say that teachers who witness the bullying never intervene.

(Guasp, 2012 p.4)

Observing the figures about pupils who been harassed in the primary schools, Guasp (2015) implies in her report that there is discrimination against those who do not meet the standards of gender, and who do not correspond with expected stereotypes, and this generates uncertain spaces in the socio-cultural school environment. To tackle homophobia in schools, DePalma and Jennet (2007) challenge homophobic attitudes in primary schools by promoting a cultural framework in the educational context by deconstructing the heteronormative school spaces.

The notable absence of discussion about sexualities and gender between teachers and pupils in primary schools is related to the fear of parents and some teachers that these sexual topics are associated with sexual activities (DePalma & Jennet, 2007, p.23). It is important to understand that schools are not only a place for academic learning but also a space where social and cultural knowledge is shared. To ensure a tolerant and responsible environment where violent conflicts and discrimination against the LGBT community are considered unacceptable, schools must promote alternative educational policies and support the different identities of all pupils (Hodkinson, 2005).

Homophobic language and bullying in primary schools have been underestimated occasionally as a minor harassment situation which is not given the attention it is due. DePalma and Jennett (2010) argue that “it is over simplistic to assume that the use of these homophobic taunts, even among

young children, is divorced from the sexual and gender connotations they carry” (p.18). Thus, recognising that harassment and discrimination against gender or sexual identities might produce incidents of violence is an important part of tackling homophobia in the educational context. Also, the moral beliefs of parents and teachers and school practices that seek to promote sexual diversity equalities has to find a way to create new actions and educational policies that contribute to the knowledge of gender and sexualities in schools.

DePalma and Atkinson (2006) review different guidelines from the Department for Education and Employment and the Office for Standards in Education, which expose the absence of concern in respect of sexual diversity. For instance, the issue of same-sex families or primary school children that are related to a gay or lesbian relative or friend has been not included in the educational curriculum. The well-being of primary school children and equality of sexualities are some of the principles of this context. From this perspective, the school as a whole must find a way to create a safe and respectful atmosphere for all pupils. In the same way, teachers can advocate a more diverse and more inclusive environment in schools. Creating safe, positive spaces for pupils leads to the creation of well-being for all students and therefore a better engagement with their learning experience too.

1.3.3 Same-sex families in the primary school context

Preparing teachers to acknowledge same-sex families¹ in primary schools has been studied from different perspectives. Kissen (2002) recognizes the importance of the influence of teachers and school administrators in the creation of safe spaces for same-sex and sexual minorities student; Letts and Sears (1999) discuss some propositions for teaching diversity and inclusion in the classroom with the idea of an LGBT inclusive curricula. More recently, Van Dijk and Van Driel (2007) have examined the cultural approaches to

¹ Perlesz and McNair (2004) mentioned a Lesbian parenting as dual-orientation, planned lesbian mother, lesbian parented and others descriptions. Through this example it can be seen there are different names for the LGBT parenting. In this research, in particular, it will be mentioned as same-sex families following the recent Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 (MSSCA) (see section 2.1.1).

homophobia and the support of sexual minorities families in the primary classroom; Atkinson and DePalma (2008) also address sexual minorities such as same-sex families in the classroom breaking down the boundaries between gender and sexualities from a heteronormative framework.

Most scholarly work on sexual diversity in schools is about the obstacles faced by LGBT students and homophobic bullying; in this sense, it appears that the challenge in primary schools is how teachers address these issues. However, these studies need to consider same-sex families as an essential part of addressing sexualities in primary and early school educational settings. The concept of family is well known in the social and cultural background of pupils and a new definition of it might provoke a new sense of what a family is; including different topics on gay and lesbian issues may improve the inclusivity of LGBT families in the classroom. Families in the LGBT community may be formed in different ways, through adoption, fostering, co-parenting, donor insemination, step parenting, surrogacy, or by having any family member who belongs to the sexual diversity community. According to *A Guide for Gay Dads*, same-sex couples adopted 80 children between 2007-2008, seventy-two percentage of these children were between one and four years old (Stonewall, 2010).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) in the report *Families and Households*, 2012, mentioned that the number of same-sex cohabiting couples has increased from 1.5 million to 2.9 million between 1996 and 2012 (Office for National Statistics, 2012). Likewise, the number of same-sex couples families with dependent children has increased significantly during the same period, from 0.9 million to 1.8 million (Office for National Statistics, 2012, Statistical Bulletin p. 1). Also, the Centre for Family Research at the University of Cambridge, in 2010, commissioned by Stonewall (an LGBT advocacy organization), interviewed children and young people about their experiences with the different shapes and sizes of their families (with lesbian and gay parents). This report is beneficial on the grounds of the implementation of

social and educational policies and gives the teachers a new vision of sexual minorities families.

The centre has made recommendations for schools to ensure a better approach to LGBT families: (1) *don't make assumptions*: as an educator, do not expect all children to celebrate a Mother's or Father's day; (2) *start early*: do not wait until homophobic or discriminatory assault happen; (3) *teach others about different families*: to talk about diverse families is not just to talk about sexual minorities, it includes all, gay and hetero and lesbian and all other kinds of families; (4) *include lesbian and gay people in the curriculum and encourage role models*: go beyond the curriculum, why not talk about LGBT families or individuals?; (5) *respond to homophobic language*: do not ignore homophobic or any derogatory remarks on any grounds; (6) *prevent homophobic bullying*: promoting diversity in the classroom challenges gender stereotyping (that is related to homophobic bullying); (7) *show the consequences of discrimination*: children are sympathetic to sensitive topics such as discrimination on grounds of race, gender or sexualities; and, (8) *promote a positive environment and support all pupils*: pupils should feel safe in their classroom and school (Guasp, 2010, p. 22-23).

One of diverse families' aspirations is that their children grow up in a positive environment where they feel included and where parents can contribute to and be involved in the school culture (Guasp, 2009; Kissen, 2002). In this sense, academics and researches need to ask if it is necessary to talk about sexual diversity in primary schools and if children are ready to talk about different families or to know about the meaning of being lesbian or gay. As Curran et al, (2009) argue, the role of teachers should be to use ordinary practices to introduce same sex parents to the classroom, using 'gendered-inclusive language'.

Talking about same-sex families has two aims when it comes to addressing sexual diversity in primary schools. First, and the most important, to create a safe environment for students whose parents are in the sexual minority

community. As educators, the main objective should be that students feel secure about their family identities and that pupils are able to disclose their social and cultural environment freely without any prejudice. Similarly, pupils have to participate equally in activities where the family is the focus of work in the school, such as Mother or Father's day. Secondly, introducing same-sex families in the classroom is a way to challenge heteronormativity in the school setting; teachers might go beyond the curriculum to work on relevant issues for the sexual minority in their own classroom. For instance, all children need a safe and happy environment. Thus, for example, teachers could explore storybooks about diverse families to introduce these topics to their pupil and give them a positive first impression of gay and lesbian issues. A same-sex family is a concept that could be used as an educational tool to learn from diversity about multiculturalism and represent different aspects of social justice, representation, citizenship, respect and tolerance and human rights.

Summary

It is suggested that heteronormative discourses are shaped in primary school classrooms, portray gender expectations and deploy normative gender identities in school practices (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Gerouki, 2010; Meyer, 2010). Renold (2006, 2007) illustrates these dominant notions of gender and sexuality in primary school children when she identifies how boys and girls construct their identities and feelings and emotions through these heterosexual matrixes in school spaces. It is important to take into account that these heterosexualized positions limit the discourses of individuals' sexualities and personal expression. For instance, primary school pupils who evolve and construct different sexual discourses might feel discriminated against or segregated when they do not fit in with the hetero-narratives of the school environment.

Thus, gender and sexualities in schools are a special matter that requires particular theoretical frameworks. The relationship between sex, gender and sexuality is seen as a matrix that reinforces gender expectations and which

constructs the negative perception of sexual diversity is a predominant factor within these discourses of heteronormativity in schools (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009). Through the literature review on sexual diversity in the school context, the prominent theories considered are feminist perspectives, critical education and queer theory (Gerouki, 2010; Letts & Sears, 1999; Mellor & Epstein, 2006; Meyer, 2010; Morris, 2005). In addition, as discussed by Ollis (2010), “teachers’ ability to deconstruct heterosexualities is partially dependent on their understanding of the link between sexual diversity and gender and how this impacts on what they teach and how they teach it” (p.17).

Chapter 2. Educational policies and pedagogical practices in education towards sexual diversity in primary schools

This chapter discusses educational policies and pedagogical practices in the educational context towards sexual diversity in primary schools. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section, 'Educational policies and development for Sexual Education', discusses the legal frameworks that oversee the inclusion of sexual education in educational frameworks in the UK, particularly those that govern the knowledge of sexual diversity within the curricula. This section also seeks to explore the sex education framework from an international perspective in order to understand the need of fundamental standards in sex education. Lastly, it discusses the implications of sex and relationship education and the sexual diversity acknowledged across the UK curriculum. Thus, the first section aims to examine the impact of these political discourses on the construction of educational guidelines that challenge sexualities in the school context. The second section aims to map educational guidelines by governmental and non-governmental institutions which support schools that seek the well-being of individuals related to sexual diversity issues. This second section introduces school programmes that challenge homophobia in the educational context and that promote the inclusion of same-sex families in the primary schools. Lastly, the purpose of the third section is to introduce pedagogical frameworks that advocate the inclusion of sexual diversity issues in the educational context such as feminist pedagogy or critical pedagogy. In particular, the section describes queer pedagogy and inclusive education and social justice frameworks as pedagogical outlines that challenge the hegemonic heterosexualised discourses of primary school settings, which discriminate and oppress issues of sexual diversity.

2.1 Educational policies and the development of sexual education

This section explores the relationship between the context of law and public policy and the teaching of sexual education in primary schools. The section is divided into three parts. First, legal acts and educational policies towards the

teaching of sexual diversity in schools, particularly homosexuality in the educational context, are discussed. The first part focuses on Section 28 which has shaped the debate between educational settings and sexual education frameworks in the UK for over twenty years. Secondly, following the frameworks of educational policies, some sexual education frameworks are explored from an international perspective in order to have a better understanding of the implications of sexuality education for educational guidelines and policies for primary schools. Lastly, the third part explores the Sex and Relationship Education guidelines as a non-statutory subject that sets out the specific sexual and health issues that might be addressed in the UK school context, particularly in England.

2.1.1 Law and educational policies on sexual education

As discussed by Johnson and Vanderbeck (2014), sex education in the UK has an extensive history; however, “the first direct statutory intervention on sex education”, and more political and educational discourses, appeared in the eighties (p.176). Prior to the Local Government Act 1986, sex education was confined to local education authorities “which had begun to move beyond emphases on the risks and biology of sex towards a model of ‘social education’”, (Johnson & Vanderbeck, 2014, p.176). The Education (No.2) Act 1986 shifted the power from local education authorities to school governors’ bodies, (Johnson & Vanderbeck, 2014; Monk, 2001). These discourses of the Education (No.2) Act 1986 on Sex Education then moved “to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life” (Education Act 1986, S.46). Later, an amendment to the Local Government Act 1986 introduced the Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988, which prohibited local authorities from promoting homosexuality “by teaching or by publishing material”:

- (1) A local authority shall not—
 - (a) intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of promoting homosexuality;

(b) promote the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship.

(Section 28, Local Government Act 1988)

Thus, much of the literature of sexual education in UK reviews in particular the controversial public policy Section 28 of the Local Government (Amendment) Act 1988, which has been described as a polemical law that prohibited ‘the promotion of homosexuality in schools’ (Burrige, 2004; Johnson & Vanderbeck, 2014; Monk, 2001; Moran, 2001). Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988 shaped general concerns about the idea of childhood innocence and the moral perception of homosexuality as a family relationship (Epstein, 2000; DePalma & Atkinson, 2006; Moran, 2001). Therefore, Section 28 has been an argument that, as discussed by Monk (2001), “highly politicized struggles between central and local government and between moral traditionalists and health campaigners” (p.271).

Section 28 became a persistent and pervasive discourse on the grounds of protecting young people from the promotion of homosexuality and with the agenda of developing moral values in British society around sexual education. Epstein (2000) also argues that the so-called ‘Section 28’, in the educational framework, “was extremely badly drafted and is probably unenforceable” (p. 387). For example, it was difficult for teachers and school staff to provide evidence for the ‘promotion of homosexuality’ in schools. Likewise, previous studies have highlighted the extensive parliamentary debates during the enactment of Section 28:

The parliamentary debates, public campaigns and media coverage of the Section 28 debate often focused on the ‘gay lobby’s crusade’ to make children ‘read textbooks promoting homosexuality’. If Section 28 was repealed, it was alleged, children would be ‘force-fed gay sex education’ through the use of ‘gay sex packs’ and ‘homosexual role playing’ (Moran, 2001, p. 74).

Thus, the role of Section 28 in the educational context was an ongoing political discourse and framework for sex education and the following national curriculum (Monk, 2001). In contrast, Waites (2001) maintains that these discourses were a focus only for local authorities: “in 1994, under John Major’s government, the Department for Education and Employment issued guidelines stating that the section did not apply directly to schools, only to local authorities - a stance maintained by the Labour government since 1997” (p.497). Although in the nineties the Labour government emphasised that Section 28 did not apply directly to schools, discourses of childhood innocence in schools and by teachers have been influenced by these political discourses. Allan et al., (2008) suggest that “many teachers continue to struggle with these ideas, especially given the confusion that Section 28 still holds for many” (p. 320). As Monk (2001) and Johnson and Vanderbeck (2014) point out, at the time of proposal of Section 28, conservative parties emphasized in the parliamentary discussions the prohibition of the promotion of homosexuality in the educational context. Johnson and Vanderbeck (2014) discuss some of these parliamentary arguments that highlighted and were based on religious faith and conventional religious discourses:

In addition to familiar, rhetorically self-sufficient claims about the need to protect children and young people from the risk of homosexuality, Section 28 was presented by some proponents as a straightforward reflection of the ‘Judaic-Christian principles which underlie our society’ (p.179).

Moran (2001) argues that Section 28 was passed “in the aftermath of the new public awareness of AIDS, a homophobic climate in which gay people were linked explicitly with amorality and disease” (p.76). The effects that Section 28 had in the school context were very significant. For example, teachers were confused and concerned about addressing topics related to homosexuality in schools. For instance, Moran (2001) discusses that “while the Section should not affect the teaching of sex education, there is evidence that it does make teachers wary of dealing with the issue of homosexuality, partly because of the ambiguity

of its central term, 'promotion'" (p.87). Although, Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988 was repealed in the Scotland Act 2000 and the Local Government Act 2003 in England and Wales. Johnson and Vanderbeck (2014) suggest that, "the legacy of Section 28 persists in the form of the framework for sex education negotiated by the Labour Government with religious leaders in an attempt to assuage opponents of its repeal" (p.185).

Also, Vanderbeck and Johnson (2015) discuss that "the eventual repeal of Section 28 gave increased impetus to efforts to reform how schools teach about homosexuality and same-sex relationships" (see section 2.1.3). For example, the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 (MSSCA), in England and Wales, which present same-sex attracted individuals to the institution of 'marriage' introduces a political debate about the nature of marriage and family relationships such as the bringing up of children. Also, a study by DePalma and Atkinson (2006) demonstrates how the legacy of Section 28 has had an influence on the attitudes and perceptions of teachers and schools around sexual minorities and their family relationships. An example of this persistent debate can be extended to the discourse of same-sex relationships:

The discussion of same-sex relationships within the curriculum, initially generated by the infamous Section 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act, which prohibited 'the promotion of homosexuality as a "pretended" family relationship', has scarcely been disturbed either by the repeal of Section 28 in England in 2003 or the Civil Partnerships Act that came into effect in December 2005 (DePalma & Atkinson, 2006, p. 333).

Vanderbeck and Johnson (2015) critically discuss the implications of this legal framework and the political discourses towards the teaching of same-sex marriage: "the MSSCA 2013 has been interpreted by many to indirectly require schools to address same-sex marriage" (p. 9). Nonetheless, as Sundaram and Sauntson (2015) discuss, the review of the sex and relationship education guidance for England by the Department of Education completely avoids same-sex marriage or relationships in the updated guidance. The issue of how

discourses of same-sex marriage and homosexuality have to be addressed in school spaces has been a point of discussion between political parties, faith groups and educators. As Vanderbeck and Johnson (2015) highlight, same-sex families are seen in schools as issues that can be addressed in statutory subjects such as citizenship:

The status of teaching about marriage remains the subject of contestation, with uncertainty partially hinging on the extent to which discussion of marriage by same-sex couples should be seen to constitute 'sex education' even when schools seek to incorporate it within statutory subjects (e.g. citizenship) (Vanderbeck & Johnson, 2015 p.10).

Thus, topics on sexual diversity have been discussed with regard to the content and the way they have to be delivered to students. Overall, these legal frameworks have had and have the power to build new ideas of social and cultural perceptions of marginalised groups. Therefore, it seems that Section 28 continues to have social repercussions in the way schools portray sexual diversity. Recently, the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013, have been promoting to some extent the debate about sexual diversity in the educational context in a more positive way. In this sense, in order to embody this positive new legal portrayal of sexual diversity in the school context, it is necessary to build fundamental standards on sexuality education in the educational national context.

2.1.2 Sexuality educational framework: an international perspective

The need for modernised fundamentals and standards of sexual education prompted an initiative of different international organizations to underline the principles of a holistic curriculum in sexuality and health education. In 2008, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and the World Association for Sexual Health (WAS) adopted sexuality education as a human right that promoted the sexual health and sexual development of the individual. The IPPF defined Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CES) as a rights-based approach

that aims to see sexuality as a holistic concept “within the context of emotional and social development” (IPPF, 2008). Following other United Nations (UN) and non-governmental organizations, in 2009 the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) developed the International Guidance on Sexuality Education suggesting that comprehensive sex education in schools has to start with the task of teaching children about sex and relationships in order “to enable young people to exercise their sexual and reproductive rights and to make decisions about their health and sexuality” (UNESCO, 2009).

Jones (2001) highlights these instances where sexual health and sexuality policies are changing at local and global levels “with greater recognition of different rights and relationships, constructions of diverse sexualities within sexuality education policy are being debated around the globe” (p. 369). The international UNESCO guidance on sexuality education recognized that there are different assumptions in respect of sexualities in society:

Sexuality is a fundamental aspect of human life: it has physical, psychological, spiritual, social, economic, political and cultural dimensions...The rules that govern sexual behaviour differ widely across and within cultures. Certain behaviours are seen as acceptable and desirable while others are considered unacceptable. This does not mean that these behaviours do not occur, or that they should be excluded from discussion within the context of sexuality education (UNESCO, 2009, p. 2).

According to UNESCO and the World Health Organization (WHO), sexuality has to be seen as a core topic in the development of sex education and sexual health. Also, this updated concept of sexuality education implies that social and cultural contexts have to be recognised in order to build a political discourse that embraces sexual health, sexualities and sexual rights in any educational national curriculum. Similarly in 2010, the educational guidelines of

standards for sexuality education in Europe by the Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA) created a framework that described the importance of the historical and political context of sexuality education in schools across European countries. For instance, the variety of sexual education programmes in Europe presented different pedagogical approaches used in each social and cultural context. In the same way, UNESCO presented a global perspective of three types of programmes that involved the teaching of sexuality education:

Type 1. “Abstinence programme” which focuses (primarily) on abstaining from sexual intercourse before marriage.

Type 2. “Comprehensive sexuality education” which focuses on safe sex practices, abstinence as an option and contraception.

Type 3. “Holistic sexuality education” which focuses on sexuality as a personal development and growth, includes the Type 2.

(Winkelmann, BZgA/WHO, 2010 p.15)

The third type of programme is the most predominant in Western Europe. In contrast, according with Winkelmann, et al. (2010) developing and Eastern European countries follow the first and second type (p. 15). With particular regard to sexual diversity western European countries education programmes are related to LGBT alliances and combating discrimination and homophobia in schools (Dankmeijer, 2007). According to Winkelmann, et al. (2010) and Wellings, Parker and Knerr (2006) the development and the variety of sexual education in Europe has been different in some countries depending on the concept of ‘sexuality education’ and the implications for the historical, social, cultural and political contexts in each country.

Historically, sexuality education emerged from the ‘sexual revolution’ in the seventies and was related to the emancipation of women and marriage and the family formation. The feminist movements between 1960 and 1970 and the public discourses of women rights prompted the rationale of sexual education such as the methods of contraception that was promoted around the western

world (Lesko, 2010). Later, the HIV/AIDS epidemic that began in 1980 changed the conceptualization of sexual behaviours in the society. Therefore, sexual education in the eighties focused on sexual health and risks of sexually transmitted infections. Likewise, in the nineties different sexual concerns such as sexual abuse, adolescent sexuality and sexual violence gradually became part of the sexual education curriculum in schools (Winkelmann, et al., 2010).

Hence, as discussed by Hirst (2008) “in order to clarify how notions of sexual health articulate with sexual competence it is useful to look at how policy-makers define sexual health” (p. 401). The WHO defines sexual health as “a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships” (WHO, 2006, p.5). In defining sexual health, WHO argues, “sexual health cannot be defined, understood or made operational without a broad consideration of sexuality, which underlies important behaviours and outcomes related to sexual health” (WHO, 2015, para. 6). Therefore, laws frameworks and educational policies that articulate discourses on sexual health consider the importance of sexuality as a concept which underlies “biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors” (WHO, 2006, p.5).

Overall, the international guidelines on sexuality education are based on social and cultural dimensions and refer to the importance of gender and diversity as a characteristic of sexuality. This international concept of sexuality education, CSE, goes beyond sexually transmitted infections (STI), contraception, and reproduction and HIV/AIDS prevention. Hence, UNESCO and the BZgA emphasise that sex education is beyond abstinence programmes or sexually transmitted infections, the aim of sex education is to empower young people to understand and exercise their sexual and reproductive rights in a conscientious habits and behaviours. Critically, these educational practices provided by the UNESCO are defined under the political, social and cultural rights of the various countries that comprise it.

2.1.3 Sex and Relationship Education

Although, PSHE is a non-statutory subject, the Department for Education (DfE) consider that PSHE education is a significant subject for all students. The PSHE educational framework of the national curriculum in UK (DfE, 2013) sets out the specific sexual and health issues that might be addressed in schools and the stages that this teaching should be done. Some topics are taught in science classes and others as part of the PSHE program. The PSHE educational guidance (2013), recommends that schools use PSHE education to build on the topic of sex and relationship education (SRE). This SRE framework has to be taught when it is appropriate and outlined according to the statutory guidance shaped by the DfEE (now DfE) in 2000. The new guidance on SRE (DfEE, 2000), as discussed by Monk (2001), was issued in an attempt to develop pedagogical practices in schools towards sex education. In 2010, the DfE published '*The Importance of Teaching: Schools White Paper*' which stated the need for an improvement in SRE. This educational guidance up-dated was defined within the Education Act (1996) and the Learning Skills Act (2000) which established different elements and key points to consider in sex education through the national curriculum. School governors required by law to give 'due regard' to this guidance (Rodrigues, 2011). The concept of SRE education is defined as:

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching (SRE Guidance, DfEE 0116/2000, p.5).

The SRE guidance discusses how sex and relationship education has to be addressed and remarks on the importance of sex and relationship taught in schools. The following statements are requirements for primary schools teaching SRE (SRE Guidance, DfEE 0116/2000):

- 1.12 The Department recommends that all primary schools should have a sex and relationship education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the children.
- 1.13 All children, including those who develop earlier than the average, need to know about puberty before they experience the onset of physical changes. In the early primary school years, education about relationships needs to focus on friendship, bullying and the building of self-esteem.
- 1.14 Meeting these objectives will require a graduated, age-appropriate programme of sex and relationship education. Schools should set a framework for establishing what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting. Teachers may require support and training in answering questions that are better not dealt with in front of a whole class.
- 1.15 It is important that the transition year before moving to secondary schools supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively.

(SRE Guidance, DfEE 0116/2000, p.9)

As Sundaram and Sauntson (2015) point out, this SRE guidance, SRE Guidance, DfEE 0116/2000, “was reviewed in January 2014 and re-published with no revisions or amendments to the original document” (p.2). Critically, and as pointed out by Sundaram and Sauntson (2015) “there are still considerable problems with the content of SRE, especially in terms of what is missed out” (p.13). Therefore, the problem with this statutory guidance to the sexual diversity discourses in education is that it has not considered talking about sexual diversity discourses such as same-sex marriage. And it could allow seeing marriage as a solo heterosexual act that might promote heteronormative discourses in the school spaces (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Sundaram &

Sauntson, 2015). Also, it was stated that parents had the right to withdraw children and young people from SRE classes in accordance with personal, social and/or cultural preferences. Similarly, the Education Act (1996) emphasises that pupils “are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate having regard to the age and the religious and cultural background of the pupils concerned” (Education Act 1996, Part V, Chapter IV, Sex Education 1A.b).

While, the government supports the non-stigmatisation of relationships outside marriage and promotes support for these families or pupils with different home conditions, it has not been clear how different family forms and LGBT families have to be portrayed in the school classrooms. In 2013, the report *‘Not yet good enough: personal, social, health and economic education in schools’* by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) evaluated the PSHE programme of education in primary and secondary schools and the findings showed a need for improvement about sexual diversity in the SRE programme. Although, the SRE guideline (2000) asks that pupils learn about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, from childhood to adolescence and adulthood. Also, the guideline emphasises that young people need to learn the significance and importance of marriage and bringing up children. It has to be asked is whether same-sex marriage would be considered as an essential emotional and social development aspect for young pupils. Also, as mentioned before, there is an absence of sexual diversity discourses and explicit discussion about different kinds of families and diverse sexual identities.

In response to these critiques, the PSHE Association, the Sex Education Forum and Brook² developed *‘Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) for the 21st Century’*, published as supplementary (but not official) advice for SRE guidance (DfEE 0116/2000), although it is not advocated or promoted as ‘supplementary’ by the government. According to this guidance, SRE promotes the sexual health and well-being of children and young people and does not promote early sexual

² The PSHE Association (www.pshe-association.org.uk), the Sex Education Forum (www.sexeducationforum.org.uk) and Brook (www.brook.org.uk) are not-for-profit organisations that work on sexual health and education issues.

behaviour; this guideline has been well received by the DfE. This, not official, supportive guideline emphasises that “a comprehensive programme of SRE provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline” (The Sex Education Forum, PSHE Association & Brook, 2014, p.3). In principle, this definition opens up new opportunities for teaching SRE in primary schools. However, this guidance is not official and it is not clear to what extent the guidance is disseminated within schools. Although this updated and alternative educational guideline answers key questions and provides new principles of high quality and effective SRE teaching and learning environments, it is important to explore its impact on teaching about sexuality and diversity. Thus, there is still a need for pedagogical frameworks that allow teachers to advocate for sexual diversity in the schools.

2.2 Exploring primary school practices towards sexual diversity

This section explores educational programmes by governmental and non-governmental institutions that challenge homophobia in schools and that promote the inclusion of same-sex families in the educational context. This section is divided into two parts. First, the educational frameworks and guidelines that have been developed by educational institutions in order to challenge homophobia in schools and that advocate the well-being of primary school students are discussed. Secondly, it considers how school-based guidelines suggest addressing same-sex families in the primary school classroom.

2.2.1 Challenging homophobia in primary schools

In 2004, the *‘Every child matters’* document by DfES and the *‘Stand up for us: Challenging homophobia in schools’* by DfES/DOH, introduced guidelines to support schools in response to the increasing concern with the safety, health

and well-being of children around UK. Also, this guideline was introduced in order to reduce homophobic bullying and discrimination of LGBT families or children who identify themselves as LGBT or feel 'different'. DePalma and Atkinson (2008) discuss how these provisions that support schools are sometimes ambiguous and really depend on how teachers lead with these sexual diversity issues in different social and cultural discourses. For instance, in 2006, the Equality Act (provision of goods and services) and the Schools Admissions Code banned discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Schools could not refuse admission to students based on personal factors such as belonging to LGBT families or on the grounds of their sexual orientation.

Similarly, the Education and Inspections guidance by Ofsted incorporated the duty of schools to prevent homophobia and to promote inclusivity for the LGBT community in schools. Following the Equality Act, the Gender Equality Act (2007) required schools to support gender equality; this includes non-traditional gender stereotypes in schools. In addition, the Department for Children, Schools and Families in 2007 published '*Safe to learn*' an anti-bullying guidance which considered bullying when related to sexual orientation. Overall, these different regulations and guidelines promoted the inclusion of sexual diversity in the educational context. Nonetheless, educational frameworks that approach sexual diversity issues in schools have to be addressed according to the social and cultural criteria of teachers, administrators and parents. In her study of teachers, Taylor (cited by Curran et al., 2009) argues that educators 'accepted' and 'tolerate' the sexual diversity community; however, she notes that this acknowledgement and tolerance are not endorsed in the school setting in general.

In 2001, Human Rights Watch (HRW) investigated violence and discriminative practices against young people from sexual minorities in schools in the US. The response illustrated how LGBT students experience the educational context: "in schools, intended to nurture the development of children, violence may be a regular part of a child's experience...students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender have been beaten, kicked, spit on, cut

with knives, strangled, thrown against lockers, and dragged down flights of stairs” (HRW, 2001, p.3). International human rights groups reaffirmed that the education, culture and respect (or tolerance) are important means to eradicate discrimination and intolerant behaviours to the sexual minority community. They recognize the need for educational approaches that seek to prevent discrimination, especially homophobia and bullying, particularly of the LGBT community. Letts and Sears (1999) argue that schooling about the sexual diversity community is necessary to “create classrooms that challenge categorical thinking, promote interpersonal intelligence and foster critical consciousness” (p.1). Also, Bickmore (1999) and Letts and Sears (1999) consider that it is necessary to discuss sexualities in primary schools from different perspectives such as citizenship, social justice, human rights and cultural backgrounds.

In the last decade, non-governmental organizations have introduced different guidance and projects that promote the inclusion of sexual diversity in schools and aim to eradicate homophobia in the school context. In 2005, educational programmes were launched by these non-governmental organizations: the *‘LGBT History Month’* by Schools Out and *‘Education for All’* by Stonewall (in coalition with Ofsted and the DfES). Stonewall introduced their campaign *‘Education for All’* in secondary schools to tackle homophobia and homophobic bullying. Later, the campaigns included primary schools through different reports such as *‘Different Families’* (Guasp, 2010) and *‘The Teachers’ Report’* (Guasp, 2012). Practical guides and teaching resources have also been available for teachers. For instance, Stonewall’s programme *‘Primary School Champions’* has been successful in asking primary schools to celebrate diverse families and tackle homophobia.

For instance, Ofsted up-dated the criteria for school inspections using the figures from Stonewall’s reports from teachers and students about their experiences of homophobia and discrimination and the 2012 Ofsted survey, *‘No place for bullying’*. Accordingly, Ofsted (2013), in a new guidance, up-date the criteria for school inspections which include that that primary schools are now

expected to tackle all forms of bullying, including homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, eliminate discrimination and foster good relations and advance equality between pupils from sexual minorities and their peers. According to this criteria, primary school inspectors might explore whether:

- pupils ever hear anyone use the word 'gay' when describing something, or whether they have been told by teachers that using the word 'gay', to mean something is rubbish, is wrong, scary or unpleasant and why it is wrong
- pupils ever get picked on by other children for not behaving like a 'typical girl' or a 'typical boy'
- pupils have had any lessons about different types of families (single parent, living with grandparents, having step-parents, having two mums or two dads)
- pupils think if there is someone born a girl who would rather be a boy, or born a boy who would like to be a girl, they would feel safe at school and be included.

(Ofsted, 2013)

Thus, this Ofsted guidance for inspections in primary schools shows how the government has challenged sexual diversity in the school context, by promoting a safe and positive culture and by the prevention and tackling of homophobic bullying in schools. Likewise, in November 2013, the Equalities Minister Jo Swinson announced a new project to tackle homophobic bullying at schools; in her statement she mentioned that:

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying has serious consequences - it can affect children's well-being, lead to poor educational performance and prevent them getting ahead in life. It's completely unacceptable that young people are experiencing this type of derogatory treatment (Government Equalities Office 2013, Jo Swinson MP).

This intervention of the Equalities Office in the school setting illustrates the importance and the 'serious consequences' that homophobia has for pupils. The empirical research work on sexual diversity education done by non-governmental organizations in recent years has created a number of school-based policies regarding sexual minorities (Atkinson, 2002; DePalma & Jennett, 2010). Challenging homophobia in primary schools is an on-going task that has just started; government legislation and the work of non-governmental organizations have facilitated the approach of promoting equality and inclusion in primary school settings with respect to sexual diversity communities. Nonetheless, studies done by non-governmental organizations, such as Stonewall, have to be carefully analysed on the way sexual diversity discourses in the school context are (re) presented. There are still pedagogical questions about how to deliver lessons that advocate sexuality education and inclusiveness of sexual minorities. For instance, making pupils and teachers feel included is crucial in their personal and social development; any prejudice and discrimination that obstruct the social and learning environment of the classrooms and any school setting have to be eradicated (Allan et al., 2008; Curran et al., 2009).

2.2.2 Celebrating same-sex families in the primary school classroom

The *Sex and Relationships Education Guidance* by the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE, 2000) included 'diverse families' for first time at a national level. Although, this was an advance for the equality of different forms of families in the context of this guidance, it refers only to families with relationships outside marriage; therefore, it does not consider same-sex families. However, the Civil Partnership Act (2005), which recognises same-sex relationships on legal grounds, enabled schools to address LGBT relationships at the same level as their counterpart heterosexual couples. These additions to the regulations on equality and discrimination for the LGBT community have been advancement for the community in the educational context. Nonetheless, the implementation of these policies might cause different reactions. For example, although same-sex families have the same rights as their counterparts

and this provision makes it possible for a teacher to address diverse families, cultural and religious concerns might reverse these guidelines by teachers, school staff and parents from different social and cultural backgrounds.

In this decade, the Equality Act (2010) and the MSSCA (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 are legal government frameworks that promote equality and inclusion in England. These governmental acts encourage educational institutions and schools to participate in preventing and reducing discrimination through the promotion of equality. For instance, the Government Equalities Office (2014) based on the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 suggests that:

- As on any other issue, teachers have the clear right to express their own beliefs, or those of their faith, about marriage of same sex couples as long as it is done in an appropriate and balanced way.
- Teachers are expected to teach the factual and legal position that marriage in England and Wales can be between opposite sex couples and same sex couples – but they are not expected to promote or endorse views which go against their beliefs.
- Teachers in faith schools are entitled to express their own beliefs in a balanced way. They are also expected to act according to the tenets of the religion of the school and, as for all teachers, to teach lessons within the context of a school's overall plans, curriculum and schemes of work.

(Government Equalities Office, Marriage -Same Sex Couples-Act: A factsheet, April 2014, p.3-4)

Therefore, these guidelines represent new approaches to same-sex families discourses in the educational context. It also makes it possible for teachers and schools to address same-sex parenting and family relationships

within a legal framework. Nonetheless, there is a sense that some effects of Section 28 (repealed in 2003) within the educational context still remain (see section 2.1.1), and that some teachers adhere to this legislation and therefore have not changed their attitudes towards other legislation which supports same-sex relationships (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Johnson & Vanderbeck, 2014). Thus, non-governmental organizations have been advocating the creation of positive and friendly educational environments for the LGBT community in schools in recent years. For instance, Stonewall's *'Primary School Champions'* programme is designed to provide teacher training to create safe spaces for LGBT families in primary school settings.

The Stonewall report, *'Different families'* in 2010, also portrayed children's experiences with their LGBT families, where some children indicated that when they "experience bullying to do with having gay parents, schools aren't always very good at doing anything about it"; that "they are worried about what may happen if other children know they have gay parents"; and that these experiences are "stressful and they wish they could tell other people about their families" (Guasp, 2010, p.3). In the *'The Teachers' Report'* (2014) by Stonewall, a more positive perception of same-sex families was portrayed by primary school teachers:

- Nearly nine in ten primary school teachers (86 per cent) say different types of families should be addressed in schools in a way that includes same-sex parents.
- Almost all teachers (91 per cent) who have addressed such issues would do so again.
- Nine in ten primary school teachers (91 per cent) who addressed different types of families in the classroom received no complaints from parents for doing so.

(Guasp, Ellison & Satara, 2014, p. 12)

Overall, these published reports introduce a new perspective for educational purposes where teachers are able to challenge sexual diversity issues in primary schools. Nonetheless, some teachers' lack of preparation about LGBT issues, or their social and cultural background limited their ability to create safe and positive spaces for LGBT individuals (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Kissen, 2002; Payne & Smith, 2014). In this sense, DePalma and Atkinson's (2009) expose teachers' perceptions of the LGBT community and schools praxis: "how can sexual orientation be addressed for children in ways that are relevant to their experience and growing understanding of personal identity, love and family diversity" (p. ix). Thus, this question critiques the lack of pedagogical frameworks for teaching and dealing with a minority community such as the LGBT. Within these legal frameworks on same-sex marriage and the educational programmes provided by non-governmental, organizations have been promoting the celebration of LGBT families in the educational context through the introduction of training programmes to advocate more inclusive teaching through primary schools.

2.3 Pedagogies and sexual diversity in schools

This section discusses pedagogical frameworks that challenge sexual diversity discourses in educational settings. Using new pedagogical frameworks to challenge homophobia and to inform about sexual diversity in the school context not only depends on public policies that promote inclusion and diversity in schools but also requires the understanding and support of teachers and school staff. Previous studies concerning issues of sexual minorities pupils such as homophobia or non-conforming gender behaviours in the classroom emphasize the importance of teaching about sexual diversity and the search for new pedagogical approaches that could tackle assaults and violent incidents in school spaces (Allan et al., 2008; Gerouki, 2010; McCormack & Gleeson, 2010). This section is divided into three parts. The first part seeks to explore prevailing pedagogical frameworks that challenge oppressive and hegemonic normative discourses in society and per se in the school settings. The second part discusses inclusive education and social justice education as educational

frameworks that advocate inclusiveness, equity and diversity in the educational context. The last part focuses on queer pedagogy as a pedagogical framework that challenges hegemonic heterosexual discourses in educational settings and that advocates the inclusion of sexual diversity issues in teaching practices.

2.3.1 Pedagogical frameworks and sexual diversity

Previous studies on sexual diversity and education have explored different pedagogical theories that challenge the heteronormative frameworks of the school settings. These studies have discussed the use of different educational theories that allow and promote a debate between educational practices and the relationship between teaching and learning about sexual diversity (Dijk & Driel, 2007; Kissen, 2002; Letts & Sears 1999; Meyer, 2010; Whitlock, 2014). For instance, Meyer (2010) discusses the philosophical and pedagogical theories of frameworks that allow teachers to ground their teaching experiences in the diverse identities of their pupils and their social and cultural spaces. Thus, the relationship between educational theories and sexual diversity is considered from different epistemological and ontological perspectives. The importance of the use of these theories lies in the relationship of teaching and learning and how they are linked to individual social and cultural factors. For example, children as pupils learn their own identity and the identity of others in school spaces.

These pedagogical frameworks are displayed as part of a social universe, equity and equality within the human diversity. In this sense, schools are seen as microcosms where schools shape and create gender roles and sexual stereotypes (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Kissen, 2002; Sears, 1999; Maddox, 1988). For instance, a teacher's inclusive practices must be developed individually and in these cases a single paradigm to address sexualities in primary schools would not be sufficient. In addition, the inclusive practices of individual teachers might develop from their own emotions about teaching sexual diversity in primary schools. As Francis (2012) argues, "teachers must

also understand their own background and its implications for identity and practice as a teacher in the classroom” (p.608).

For example, Maddox (1988) offers the example of how some teachers approve of boys being competitive and aggressive. In this case, teachers might create certain patterns in the classroom where gender stereotypes are hyped in the social cosmos that is the classroom. Then primary school children who do not conform to these ideas are discriminated against by the teachers themselves and prejudice might spread to their peers. DePalma and Atkinson (2009) discuss how pupils suffering from discriminatory acts such as homophobia become alienated. Similarly, Cullen (2009) explores ways to challenge these practices in the classroom and as part of the curricula for schools to find a pedagogic praxis:

Homophobia and heterosexism via discrete curriculum and policy interventions such as homophobic bullying policies, support groups for gay teachers and parents, the use of books with non-heterosexual characters, diverse families and storylines and the inclusion of same sex relationships in Sex and Relationships education (Cullen, 2009, p.21).

Thus, heteronormativity and sexism frameworks in primary school settings may generate school practices in regard to gender and stereotypes that promote harassment, bullying, homophobia or disrespect and non-inclusion for students who are LGBT or who have a sense of alienation in the schools (Payne & Smith, 2014; DePalma & Atkinson, 2009). To achieve this, educational work on equality, inclusion and anti-discrimination teaching on grounds of sexual diversity is needed to explore the concepts of gender, sex and sexuality and how they relate to the emotional, social and academic development of pupils. Needless to say, these paradigms are complex and in a constant struggle with the social and cultural backgrounds of teachers, pupils and staff.

From an educational perspective, pedagogical paradigms approach sexual diversity on different grounds by focusing on creating safe spaces and an

understanding of the need for inclusion between peers. Therefore, sexual minorities are not questioned about their behaviour or exposed to discrimination; schooling about sexual diversity in primary schools is related to identity, equality and social inclusion. Challenging homophobia is about social justice. There is no simple way to address sexualities in primary schools, yet new approaches have been proposed to challenge homophobia, gender stereotypes and heteronormativity in education.

Studies concerning issues sexual minorities pupils face, such as homophobia or non-conforming gender behaviours in the school classroom, emphasize the importance of teaching about sexual diversity from a young age. These studies also highlight the necessity of new approaches to tackle assaults and violent incidents in the school setting creating an inclusive atmosphere of social justice for pupils (Gerouki, 2010; McCormack & Gleeson, 2010; Allan, et al., 2008). A positive and inclusive educational environment for children from sexual minorities and teachers is distinct from the social participation of the school community and the intervention of private and public sectors such as the non-governmental organizations. Nonetheless, teaching about sexuality and sexual diversity is not just a pedagogical challenge but is also an individual matter for some teachers or school staff.

Teachers and school staff must confront their own social and cultural identities and beliefs, the identity of the institution in which they work, the cultural and social identities of the parents and the identity of each of their pupils (Allan et al., 2008; Francis, 2012). Therefore, the process of acceptance and inclusion operates at different levels in the social space of the school and the social spaces outside the school. Similarly, as mentioned by Allan et al., (2008), the school is a space that is created between a teacher and a pupil, where one or both of them may be an agent of change. In this sense, new pedagogical frameworks that challenge homophobia and inform about sexual diversity and deal with diverse identities are needed in schools.

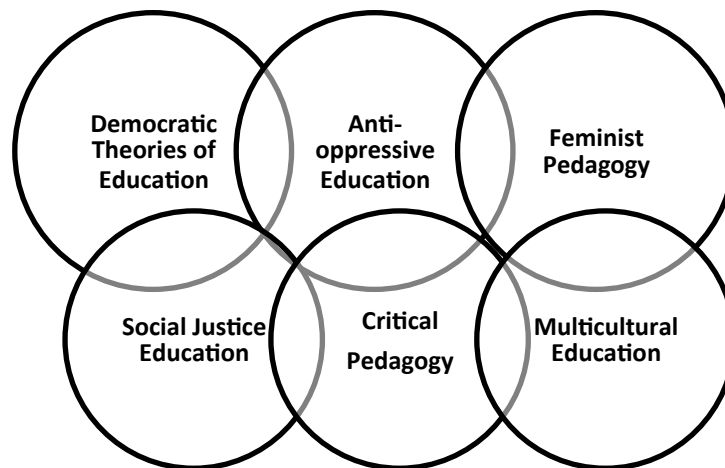
Based on Meyer's (2010) argument about how schools should challenge and address sexual diversity issues in the classroom (see Figure 2), this section explores the different theoretical frameworks portrayed by Meyer that can lead to new pedagogical perspectives on gender and sexual diversity in the educational context. Firstly, Meyer discusses democratic philosophies of education, which recognize the importance of citizens and their responsibilities and obligations. Thus, society's participation in education policy is seen as a principle of democracy that leads to the pursuit of non-discrimination and a society with respect and values for all citizens. For instance, Freire (cited by Meyer, 2010) offers the example of how critical pedagogy, pursuit of a tolerant and equitable society through educational practices, seeks critical awareness of cultural and social oppressive situations.

For example, in the school classroom pupils' critical questioning about society's oppressive situations may create a more inclusive and respectful citizens. Schooling against oppressive situations has been explored for anti-oppressive educational frameworks where the dynamics of oppression and the power relations between the privileged and the marginalized need to be challenged (Kumashiro, 2000). A tolerant and respectful standpoint has to be taken from a pedagogical perspective which seeks to understand diverse identities of individuals who struggle against oppression or radical societies. Anti-racist or anti-oppression policies are examples of educational approaches to address different types of oppression: sexism, classism, racism.

Thus, the dynamics of oppression such as sexism and heterosexism are related to the feminist pedagogies that challenge the ideological domination of the exploitation and oppression of women (Meyer, 2010). Weiner (2006) discusses the existence of this framework and how it deconstructs the practices and social forces that empower the heteronormative relations in the social phenomenon of the school settings. Weiner also argues that feminist pedagogy focuses on the practical interests of teachers and school administrations and their conceptions of gender and equality in their classrooms and school spaces.

In this sense, the feminist pedagogy is a framework for democratic teaching and learning that seeks to understand the needs of different social groups.

Figure 2. Pedagogical frameworks and sexual diversity.



Adapted from Meyer (2010, p. 9-22).

Meyer (2010) argues that multicultural education seeks to diversify the curriculum and include different cultural and social groups contributions to society. For instance, multicultural teaching practices approach issues of race, ethnicity, language and religion as conceptualizations that emerge in the classroom and school activities. Multicultural education places an emphasis on the diversity of social and cultural groups and has been used successfully in the educational context. Nonetheless, Letts (2002) criticises the characterization of culture and diverse cultures in multicultural discourses where sexual diversity discourses are not considered. Letts suggests that multiculturalism has to be considered with queer frameworks in order to represent sex, sexualities and gender as well as the multicultural approaches in the school context.

Although Meyer (2010) does not mention the concept of inclusive education as theoretical pedagogy, the pedagogical notions discussed support inclusive practices that advocate sexual diversity in school. Meyer, too, discusses the interaction between school culture and sexual minorities students and how these factors contribute to reducing processes of social exclusion, to

pursuing the rights of minority students. Meyer also discusses how these factors affect the quality of education, as in the case of pedagogies with inclusive educational practices (Laorden et al., 2006). Social justice education has to be seen as a way to recognise and respect diversity.

Here, finally, social justice promotes a dialogue on different narratives in philosophical pedagogies such as oppression, multicultural and feminist approaches which centre on the person as a human being. These identities occur in different forms and stages of life: citizenship, religion, ethnicity, race and sexual identity. Thus, social justice is seen as a step to change, a change, which looks for an imaginative equal normativity. In conclusion, it is necessary to challenge the existing hegemonic social and cultural discourse through these pedagogical discourses; pedagogical dynamics to approach sexual diversity in schools are related to sexualised spaces, the use of power through the oppressed and cultural and social diversity perspectives in the schools context.

2.3.2 Inclusive education and social justice in education

In 1990, the *World Declaration on Education for All* committed to the promotion of education as a human and universal right. The concept of inclusive education has developed from different educational conferences on how to achieve a better quality and equity of education for all. *The World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality* in Salamanca (1994); *World Summit for Social Development* in Copenhagen (1995); and *The World Education Forum* in Dakar (2000). *The Salamanca Statement* proclaimed inclusive education as a tool to pursue the right of education, *Education for All*, and to recognise the diverse characteristics of every child. In the first instance governments and advocacy communities were involved to include children with special education needs (SEN) in the educational context. Nonetheless, educational programmes with inclusive pedagogical frameworks also addressed those related to oppression, discrimination or exclusion backgrounds. Although SEN was addressed in particular in the Salamanca statements for those who are most vulnerable, and those with more needs, these discussions stimulated a global

boost to social inclusion and to promoting education as a human rights issue (Evans & Lunt, 2002).

Scholars emphasize that schools promote values of justice and equity if the educational settings are based on inclusive programmes (Flores-Crespo, 2007; García-Huidobro, 2008; Meyer, 2010); the response to inclusive practices in the educational programs is shown by cultural changes and educational policies and practices in schools and the community (Stubbs, 2008). Likewise, Flores-Crespo (2007) argues that schools might have high social and cultural values but they can also demonstrate social prejudices. Therefore, schools have to create respectful and equal spaces for all pupils.

Thus, Inclusive Education has to be seen, as a pedagogical practice in schools that may be significant for pupils who feel outsiders in the educational context such as the LGBT pupils in the primary schools. These inclusive teaching practices are essential learning frameworks that intersect with their individual diverse identities, such as religion, ethnicity, gender and sexuality in everyday activities in the classroom. In Inclusive Education there is a significant relationship between the school environment and the school culture, teaching and administrative proceedings that gives a starting point to end discrimination and harassment. This starting point to advocate inclusiveness in schools might be discussed from the social justice perspective in the classrooms, too.

For instance, teachers' preconceptions about social justice have an influence on their teaching of diversity, equity and justice, and the impact of these might interfere with students' concepts of gender, social class, ethnicity, sexual identity and others. The characteristic of inclusive education is to meet basic learning needs and enrich the lives of pupils. The aim of inclusive education is also that these learning opportunities acknowledge any exclusion or discrimination on the grounds of social and economic condition, ability, gender, ethnic religion and any individual circumstances that could exclude individuals to access education (UNESCO, 2003).

Accordingly, inclusive education in the UK has been primarily related to SEN through the Education Act 1996 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, which prohibits discrimination in education and promotes inclusive education in schools. Some guidelines were developed to promote and support inclusive teaching *Excellence for All Children: Meeting Special Educational Needs* by DfEE in 1997 and *Inclusive Schooling: Children with Special Educational Needs* by DfES in 2001; and *Removing the Barriers to Achievement* by DfES in 2004. The implication is that UK education policies protect pupils of any discrimination on grounds of race, religion, sex, gender, disability, and sexual orientation. However, the educational and pedagogical frameworks that are needed to teach all these identities are uncommon in the educational guidelines. For instance, the guidelines above represent how inclusive education is perceived in educational programmes.

Overall, these guidelines aim to encourage the inclusion of SEN children within mainstream primary schools. For instance, the individual needs of SEN pupils are met by a specialist provision that provides particular training needed of what to do and how to address SEN pupils' needs. The benefit of the inclusive guidelines is that it places the onus on an inclusive ethos that schools engender in order to reduce discrimination and to promote flexible and personalised curriculums to include all children. Therefore, schooling in inclusive environments should not then be just for a particular need, but rather a form of education in which all participants feel safe to be themselves. These inclusive practices are where learning spaces actively produce discourses of social justice, equity and inclusion. As discussed in previous studies, educators and school staff should focus on creating inclusive spaces, inclusive pedagogies and inclusive performances in education. This inclusive ethos in schools has to promote pedagogical norm-breakers that allow to explore diversity in pupils and to adopt discourses that shape societies to a new way to see these diverse identities (Gill & Chalmers, 2007; Ollis, Harrison & Richardson, 2012; RFSL Ungdom, 2009).

These inclusive frameworks are considered a natural way to promote citizenship and social participation between communities (Corbett, 1999). In this sense, Corbett implies that inclusive school practices allow ideas of social inclusion and tolerance and social justice to permeate society in general. These inclusive arguments for individual rights, citizenship and social justice in schools advocate for positive experiences to pupils who do not endorse these rights. However, sexual minority groups have not been recognized in these educational frameworks of inclusiveness (Galán, Puras & Riley, 2009).

Hence, at a scholarly level, incorporating sexual diversity in the frameworks of inclusive education should be a significant process that promotes positive sexual minorities discourses and seek spaces of respect and the understanding of the LGBT community. García-Huidobro (2008) suggests also that the importance of inclusive practices in education was to encourage social and cultural integration at an individual level. Arguments for inclusion and acceptance are also clouded by various cultural and social circumstances such as some religious backgrounds or leaders and school organisations that wish to be inclusive but only for the morals or values that they find significant. For instance, inclusive education raises questions and discussions between scholars on what inclusivity means in the educational context and the limits of these practices as social movements for social integration or social inclusion.

Gill and Chalmers (2007) discuss how teachers' perceptions of diversity and social justice highlighted the definition of inclusiveness in the classroom. Some topics included in their inclusive practices were to do with "meaningful learning, importance of context, student-centred" (p.554) and other actions. These actions of inclusiveness in the classroom are underpinned by building practices that acknowledge a critical acceptance and identification of diverse identities in pupils and consequently in society. Thus, teachers might be those who can extend or moderate the aspects of inclusion that are required to be included in the school context. For instance, some teachers might find it challenging to cope with situations of discrimination or homophobic bullying at school. In a fictional scenario Benjamin (2012) represents a situation within the

classroom where the teacher and the pupils experience moments of homophobia:

“You are sorting your class into groups for an activity. You allocate a gentle, studious boy called Callum to a group, and the boys already in that group wrinkle their noses in a display of disgust. Boys in other group laugh loudly and say ‘you’ve got the gay boy, losers’” (Benjamin, 2012, p.83).

This fictional situation raises a number of different issues for teachers: should teachers have to enter into a discussion about being gay? Should teachers use anti-bullying policies to address the problem? Should teachers address the situation with a PSHE special class on sexualities? Should teachers talk to students about homophobia? It is understood that there is a problem of harassment and possible discrimination in the classroom. Therefore, one of the questions is how to be an inclusive school. Scholars stress the importance of the curriculum, the way in which teachers prepare their lessons, what pupils should learn, and how pupils should learn it (Benjamin, 2012; Kelly and Brooks, 2009; Mitchell, 2012; Straut & Sapon-Shevin, 2002). For example, in order to challenge homophobic assaults or discrimination, teachers might choose a social justice framework to challenge these situations and here there is an opportunity for ‘doing it’ in a thoughtful, sensitive and responsive way.

As Meyer (2010) argues, teachers have to be effective, transformative and reflexive educators, and that if school is a space “where traditional ideas about gender are challenged, and children are not boxed into hegemonic masculinities and emphasised femininities, homophobia becomes impossible” (Benjamin, 2012 p.95). Therefore, inclusiveness and social justice in the classroom prepares teachers with the understanding and knowledge to address individual and social differences within the curricula and the pedagogies (Kelly & Brooks, 2009; Kluth & Colleary, 2002).

Finally, Arshad, Wrigley and Pratt (2012) consider how teachers can go beyond regular practices in order to create positive and all-inclusive learning environments where personal identities, principles and experiences are valued and respected. This discussion has been around the social justice framework; thinking about sexual diversity as an aspect of social justice ought to be seen as a cultural representation rather than a contentious concept of sexual diversity or a way to categorize and define sexualities of sexualities and diversities. In the context of school culture, social justice should consider sexual diversity as an essential part of an emotional and personal identity.

Overall, there has to be a connection between “education policies, learning resources and the curriculum” (Mitchell, 2012 p.19) to make social justice an inclusive practice in schools. Arshad et al., (2012) discuss the dilemmas that represent the use of social justice within the classroom; for the authors, a teacher’s values and morals are essential to perform in their classroom as these have a great influence in educating about diversity, equity and justice. Therefore one of the questions is how to be an “effective, transformative and reflexive teacher” (Menter, 2012, p.vii). The impact of these teachers’ preconceptions about social justice might make a difference in students’ understanding of concepts such as gender, social class, religion, race and others.

2.3.3 Queer pedagogy

As discussed above, within educational institutions incidents such as homophobia, discrimination and prejudice may affect pupils’ self-esteem and their academic and social performance at school (Kissen, 2002; Letts & Sears 1999; Meyer, 2010; Whitlock, 2014). Thus, it is essential to consider pedagogies that may build pupils’ empowerment of their own identities. Critical and feminist pedagogies and multiculturalism or democratic educational frameworks are some of the philosophical and pedagogical theories used to pursue social inclusion, anti-oppression and anti-discrimination among pupils in the school context and ultimately in all society. These pedagogies enact

political discourses of power and resistance used to reject inappropriate values and principles in education. Nonetheless, overcoming the concept and the understanding of gender stereotypes, homophobic bullying or homoparental families in the elementary classrooms can be complex and it has been challenged in these pedagogical discourses.

Teaching about sexualities in schools is therefore a special matter that requires particular theoretical frameworks that draw upon research. Through the literature review on sexual diversities in the school context, the prominent theoretical works discussed in this thesis are feminist perspectives, critical education, social justice, diversity and inclusion and queer frameworks (Goldstein, Collins & Halder, 2008; Meyer, 2010; Robinson & Ferfolja, 2007; Szalacha, 2004). Within these pedagogical discourses, heteronormativity in schools appears as a predominant factor that is discussed as a relation between sex, gender and sexuality; this heteronormativity framework is considered a matrix that reinforces gender expectations and which constructs the negative perception of sexual diversity in a school setting (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009). Thus, some studies introduce queer pedagogy as a pedagogical framework that challenges the understanding of the dynamic of sexualities and as a pedagogical resource for disrupting the concept of gender and sexual identity in the school setting (Letts & Sears, 1999; Lewis, 2012; Meyer, 2010).

For instance, queer scholars view different identities as intersections of different cultural and social backgrounds in students (Whitlock, 2014). Lewis (2012) discusses how pupils may confront different kinds of discrimination and challenges in schools based on their intersecting identities; for example, pupils who recognize themselves as black, lesbian and a Christian person. This queer framework questions how the educational context can perform pedagogical practices that allow multiple categories of identities to intersect with the teaching experience. Most importantly, these pedagogical practices ought to be equally taught to all children and school spaces ought to be used as a framework of social and cultural interaction to learn about others. Sears (1999) discusses the concept of queer teaching as a pedagogical tool that allows teachers to teach

abilities of “honesty, civility, authenticity, integrity, fairness, and respect” (p.4) to others:

Queer teachers are those who develop curricula and pedagogy that afford every child dignity rooted in self-worth and esteem for others...Teaching queerly demands we explore taken-for-granted assumptions about diversity, identities, childhood and prejudice (Sears, 1999 p.5).

Here, Sears (1999) discusses queer teaching as a framework that offers teachers the opportunity to develop abilities and understanding of pupils' differences in school spaces and allows them to critique normative heterosexualized school practices and spaces. For example, Kumashiro (2003) discusses how queer discourses challenge these standards and heteronormative norms that are portrayed in the educational setting and how teachers can develop new ways of teaching and learning. For Kumashiro, queer discourses in education challenge “what is normal (everyday) and normative (required)” (p.367) in school spaces, seeing these normal and normative spaces as forms of oppression to marginalized groups. In this sense, Meyer (2010) and Whitlock (2010) also argue that queer pedagogies are a particular way to challenge dominant discourses by empowering marginalized groups. For instance, Sears (1999) presents a framework to understand queer teaching as a pedagogical tool to challenge gender, sexual and sexualities discourses in schools.

Sears (1999) uses the following five propositions to represent how queer teachings should consider sexual identities in the school context: (1) diversity as a human concept where individuals have their own ‘human hallmark’; (2) sexualities as constructed essences; (3) homophobia and heterosexism as an acquired discriminatory and oppressive idea about marginalised groups; (4) a proposition that debates childhood ‘innocence’; and (5) ‘family first’, a new conception of families where sexualities are beyond social and cultural backgrounds. Similarly, Britzman (cited by Meyer 2010) discusses three forms of resistance to dominant and oppressive sexualities discourses in school

settings based on queer theoretical framework approaches: (1) structural resistance where the way education is constructed has to be challenged, for example, in curriculum design; (2) pedagogical resistance where sexuality has to be understood as an individual nature and force that needs to be explored, challenged and recognized; and (3) physical resistance where teachers have to understand and explore their own perceptions and experiences of sexualities and gender.

Queer pedagogies refer to the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other sexualities in society, which is culturally grounded in the construction of sexual identity as a social performance that unmask the hegemonic heterosexual society, in this case heteronormative school spaces. Youdell (2010) considers these democratic pedagogical practices with queering education, in the way that power and resistance is used as praxis to constitute discourses on sexualities in the educational setting. Queer pedagogy also builds critical categories in the sexual minority communities and beyond to create and build a positive culture for the LGBT community. Up to now, studies have considered queer teaching as a dialogue between sexual diversity and schooling where queering is not designed to impose LGBT issues but to help teachers discover a new way to embrace sexual diversity clichés such as gender stereotypes or homophobic bullying (Cullen, 2009; Letts & Sears, 1999; Kjaran & Jóhannesson, 2015). Lastly, queering education has been related to spaces and the inclusion of norm-critical pedagogies; for instance, these spaces recapture where identity formation occurs through social and psychological interaction between individuals in a school setting (Vavrus, 2009).

Summary

This chapter has outlined three main themes that contextualise the framework of sexual diversity and the educational setting. It has examined the political discourses that involve sexual education discourses in UK, focusing on so-called Section 28 that prohibited local authorities from the promotion of homosexuality in schools. Although Section 28 was repealed in 2003, it

continues to shape discourses on sexual education and schools. In the recent decade, several changes to legal frameworks, such as Same-Sex Marriage, have improved sexual diversity discourses in the educational setting. This improvement has been achieved through governmental and non-governmental educational policies that challenge homophobia within school programmes and celebrate same-sex families in the school classroom. The literature on pedagogical frameworks that challenge hegemonic heterosexual discourses in the school settings embodies the new paradigms that have to be observed and explored in order to tackle homophobia or discrimination in schools. For instance, pedagogical frameworks such as queer pedagogy make it possible to develop new curriculum designs and inclusive teaching practices that allow education about sexual diversity and other marginalized identities in schools. Similarly, philosophical frameworks such as inclusive education and social justice as pedagogical tools that challenge oppressive and discriminatory discourses of sexual diversity in the educational context have to be considered in policy development and educational curriculums with ideas of inclusion, diversity, equity and citizenship.

Chapter 3. Research design and methodology: exploring trainee teachers and sexual diversity

The aim of this study is to explore the awareness and perceptions of trainee teachers towards sexual diversity in primary schools in the United Kingdom. As mentioned in the previous chapters, sexual diversity in primary schools covers many issues such as gender stereotyping, homophobic bullying and same-sex families in the school context. Also, some studies have depicted primary schools as heteronormative social spaces, where heterosexuality is recognised as the 'normal sexuality' which perpetuates sex roles and gender stereotypes. For instance, these situations where sex roles are perpetuated influence inequalities such as homophobia and bullying in schools (Meyer, 2010; Nixon & Givens, 2004; Mellor & Epstein, 2006). Therefore, in order to explore sexual diversity in the primary school, this study is based on the social construction of gender, sex and sexuality in the school context (see Chapter One).

Although, there have been some studies that had shown that primary school children are aware of and exposed to sexual diversity discourses in schools, this study is framed as exploratory. Previous studies on sexual diversity in primary school focus on the nature of gender and heteronormative discourses. To explore the awareness and perceptions of addressing and/or teaching sexual diversity in primary schools, I decided to use interpretative phenomenological and thematic analyses framed in feminist and queer perspectives. These feminist and queer perspectives are framed as theoretical and pedagogical discourses that allow exploring the awareness and perception of sexual diversity in the primary school context. This choice was prompted by the different factors involved in a study where multiple perspectives are needed to understand both the trends and the context of the overarching questions of sexual diversity in the school context. Therefore, this study has to be seen as an exploratory research that open new questions and ways to understand the discourses of sexual diversity in primary schools.

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section describes the main methodological approaches: interpretative phenomenological analysis and thematic analysis. These two different methodological approaches to the collection and analysis of the data are framed by feminist and queer epistemological and ontological perspectives. In the second section, the research design adopts a mixed methods approach, starting with an overview of previous research on sexual diversity in the educational context, and followed by the design of the online questionnaire and the interviews. The third section presents the research sample and ethical considerations. The pilot study is also presented. The final section discusses the research design involved in working with trainee teachers, an introduction to the trainee teachers who took part in the study and the limitations of the study.

3.1 Interpretative phenomenological analysis and thematic analysis

As indicated in Chapter Two, the issue of sexualities and primary school children is a sensitive and controversial one. The teaching of sexual diversity is associated with homosexuality and sexual behaviours; the emphasis of educating children about sexualities, for example, might be associated with sexual behaviours such as paedophilia or sexual deviations (Curran et al, 2009; Robinson, 2008). Generally, the discourse of sexual diversity in primary schools has been concerned with gender stereotypes, with homophobic language, bullying and violence in the school context and primarily, with heteronormative preconceptions in the educational context. In this sense, the frameworks of a social and cultural context for gender, sex and sexualities in this study were important in order to explore the trainee teachers' experiences with sexual minorities in school. For this reason, the framework of the study considers social and cultural discourses such as the social construction of gender and sexualities in the design and development of the research.

In order to provide a context for the issues discussed and for the rationale of the research design, this section discusses the methodology derived from the epistemological and ontological feminist and queer perspectives on which this study is based. It was important to understand concepts such as sex,

gender and sexuality (see Chapter One) in order to connect these ideas to the research design. Having discussed these concepts in the previous chapter, this section relates these theoretical concepts within the framework of feminist and queer perspectives. As Braun and Clarke (2006) argue “theoretical framework and methods match what the researcher wants to know” (p. 80); in this sense, the focus of the research design is to explore these experiences of the participants for a better understanding of the problem and to give a framework for the interpretation and analysis of the data. The phenomenological approach involves not only the exploration of trainee experiences but also the researcher’s role as a dynamic process within the study, while thematic analysis considers the different dimensions of the trainees’ experiences that allow an exploration of their construction and understanding of gender and sexuality in the school context. The methodological approaches -interpretative phenomenological analysis and thematic analysis - were therefore the most appropriate methods for exploring trainee teacher perceptions and the awareness of sexual diversity in primary schools.

3.1.1 Interpretative phenomenological analysis

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is a process of analysis for qualitative data that use the experience and perceptions of the participants to explore and understand their personal and social context. Braun and Clarke (2006) define IPA as the “phenomenological epistemology which gives experience primacy, and is about understanding people’s everyday experience of reality, in great detail, in order to gain an understanding of the phenomenon in question” (p. 80). Similarly, Smith and Osborne define IPA as follows:

The approach is phenomenological in that it involves detailed examination of the participant’s life-world; it attempts to explore personal experience and is concerned with an individual’s personal perception or account of an object or event, as opposed to an attempt to produce an objective statement of the object or event itself. At the same time, IPA also emphasizes that the research exercise is a dynamic process

with an active role for the researcher in that process (Smith & Osborn, 2007, p. 53).

IPA is concerned with exploring the participants' experiences in a dynamic process, where hermeneutics and interpretation theory are significant in the understanding of the participants' experiences of the phenomenon, events or objects, and how they construct the meanings of these experiences. IPA emphasizes the context and the form that experiences are unfold through critical questions and interpretations of a participant's experiences, the researcher giving meaning and tries to make sense of the thoughtful and emotional experience of the participant (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Smith & Osborn, 2007).

As discussed in Chapter One, the conceptualization and understanding of gender and sexualities in the school context may be studied from different perspectives such as their biological, social or cultural dimensions. In this study, IPA methodology was not aimed at questioning a particular principle, from a queer or gender perspective, but rather to explore in a flexible and detailed way how trainees gave meaning to the sexually diverse circumstances they face in their training and experience as a teacher. Generally, IPA studies are conducted on small samples in order to understand and perceive the experiences of a particular group without pursuing generalizations of the phenomenon (Smith & Osborn, 2007, p.55). Epistemologically, the IPA interprets a participant's experiences in two processes: the first in which participants give shape and meaning to their perception of the phenomenon; and the second, where the researcher brings to the interpretation and analysis the meaning and form of these experiences.

For instance, the participants' cognitive, social and cultural awareness and perceptions of sexualities and gender issues are influenced by the discourse and narrative of their own experience. Thus, through semi-structured interviews I was able to identify and understand these experiences by a process of interpretation and hermeneutics. Using a queer framework I was also able to

deconstruct and transform the experiences of the participants and give them a meaning and form. For example, trainee teachers' ideas about sexualities, sexual identity and gender play an important role in the storytelling of experiences around sexual diversity in schools and therefore in the cultural and social frameworks of the educational context. An IPA analysis enables the trainees' experiences to be deconstructed and to build narratives from a compelling feminist and queer perspective.

Significantly, Plummer (2005) argues that queer perspectives ought to be seen, too, as a research methodology that is capable of shaping and revisiting the social and cultural knowledge of sexual diversity through the deconstruction of meaning and understandings related to gender, sex and sexualities. Similarly, Derrida (cited by Moran, 2000) defines this deconstruction as a process of "unravelling of meaning" (p.450) where this deconstruction is seen as the disruptive actions of different subjects to an event or object. IPA emphasizes this "double hermeneutic" (Smith & Eatough, 2007, p.36) approach relating to the significance and meaning the participants give to their experiences. These experiences describe concepts such as sexualities in schools according to their individual social, cultural and linguistic contexts. Whereas the researcher aims to obtain a mindful sense of these subjects' experiences of their world and diverse contexts, in order to construct two accounts of the phenomena.

Moustakas (1994) discusses the conceptual framework of the phenomenology from an epistemological and philosophical perspective. In his discussion on the epistemology of phenomenological approaches and his critiques to Husserl on "what appears in consciousness is an absolute reality while what appears in the world is a product of learning" (p.27), Moustakas (1994) considers this discovery of meanings and insights into events or objects that exist in a participant's experiences and how that it is extended by the researcher:

The challenge facing the human science researcher is to describe things in themselves, to permit what is before one to enter consciousness and be understood in its meanings and essences in the light of intuition and self-reflection. The process involves a blending of what is really present with what is imagined as present from the vantage point of possible meanings; thus a unity of the real and the ideal (Moustakas, 1994, p. 27).

Therefore, the researcher must understand and engage the subject experience, and at the same time be capable of interpreting and analysing this experience. Thus, the "reality" of these insights may be formed by the participants' learning, social and cultural context (Moustakas, 1994, p. 27). In this sense, some social preconceptions such as the fact that discrimination is not allowed in the classroom should be anticipated. For the researcher, these insights are actually based on the performance disclosures and the mindfulness of the participants' experiences. Therefore, using IPA makes it possible "to learn something about both the important generic themes in the analysis but also still about the narrative life world of the particular participants who have told the stories" (Smith & Eatough, 2007 p. 37-8).

Table 1. Interpretative phenomenological analysis.	
Stage 1. Initial analysis	Transcribe interview and identification of central themes in the data.
Stage 2. Labelling themes	Identifying themes; use of theoretical concepts. Production and labelling of themes; second analysis of themes.
Stage 3. Thematic clusters	Connecting and linking themes. Final analysis of themes and clusters.
Stage 4. Analytic Narrative	Summary of themes. Use of quotations; and, final analysis in narrative form.

Adapted from Storey (2007, p. 51-64).

Although IPA is an adaptable and flexible methodology, it was important to follow guidelines to analyse and to interpret the data. The guidelines for IPA

interpretation and analysis in this study followed Storey's (2007) discussion of the practicalities of applying IPA, and Smith and Eatough's (2007) work on the construction and the continuum of semi-structured interviews using IPA methodology (see Table 1). In stage 1, the interview transcripts were read and re-read several times in order to understand the interview better. At this stage, it was the initial exploration of the themes within the text: "this process of reflecting upon and acknowledging the interpretative framework that the analyst applies to the data is important as it helps to increase the transparency of the analysis" (Storey, 2007 p. 54). The second stage involved identifying and creating themes that were found in the first analysis; at this stage, it was possible to use the theoretical framework to facilitate the production of labelling themes and to ensure a clear connection and linkage within the data collected. Using a theoretical reference as strategy to analysis the data could lead to a misreading of the participant's experiences, this was prevented by avoiding the misinterpretation of the data. The participant's experience was always the main source of data in the analysis and interpretation; the theoretical approach was used only to construct a better sense and understanding of the information. In the last two stages, thematic clusters and linked themes within the data were identified and finally, the analysis of the experiences in a narrative form using the participants' quotations to illustrate their meanings of their experiences was carried out.

3.1.2 Thematic analysis in education

Some researchers use thematic analyses only as a research technique and not as a specific method of data collection, analysis and interpretation; nonetheless, thematic analysis can be applied as a "flexible, rigorous and practical methodology within any qualitative research design" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 77-78). Thematic analysis is concerned with finding thematic relationships between different ontological and epistemological perspectives within the research, which allowed this study not only to cover the framework of gender and sexuality in the school context but also any other dimension that appeared in the process of collection, interpretation and analysis of data. Consequently, thematic analysis is one of the methods used to analyse and interpret this

study's data. As mentioned by Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a "method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data...and frequently goes further than this" (p. 79). Thematic analysis was therefore used to provide the coding description and further to construct and identify emerging themes in the organization of the study, and moreover, constructed and identified emerging codes and dimensions that might vary but could also be included in the study framework.

Thematic analysis was implemented in this study into two ways: for the semi-structured interview's analysis and interpretation in conjunction with the IPA, and in the analysis and interpretation of documents and text related to the review of literature and the construction of the questionnaire. These documents are evolving continuously and it was vital to understand the vision and scope of them in the transformative process of the LGBT community within society, particularly in the educational context. Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis:

Thematic analysis can be an essentialist or realist method, which reports experiences, meaning and the reality of participants, or it can be a constructionist method, which examines the ways in which events, realities, meanings, experiences and so on are the effects of a range of discourses operating within society (Braun and Clarke, 2008, p.81).

The authors mention a third possibility for thematic analysis, the "contextualized" approach where these essentialist or realist and constructionist currents come together to interpret the reality of the participants bounding different experiences and contextual limits, such as a participant's meaning of "reality". The emphasis on using current methods allowed a transparent and effective methodological process to be followed in the study. Having discussed thematic analysis as a methodological approach and based on the two different implementations. This study used thematic analysis in order to "reflect reality and to unravel the surface of *reality*" (Braun & Clarke, 2008, p.81). Consequently, a standardized outline using Braun and

Clarke’s (2006) approach was created to follow the methodology design. In this respect, to refer to the data collected, the first designations named were *data corpus* for all documents collected for the study; *data set*, for the documents employed for a specific analysis; and *data extract*, to refer to specific pieces of information by codes or items. The interview data was part of the inductive analysis which operated “a process of coding the data without trying to fit into a pre-existing coding frame, or the research’s analytical preconceptions” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.79-83).

Table 2. Thematic analysis.	
Phase 1. First Coding	Generating and searching codes
Phase 2. Collating Codes	Re-reading of data and codes. Generating and searching themes.
Phase 3. Defining Themes	Defining themes paths and coding. First analysis and review.
Phase 4. Final Analysis	Thematic interpretation and analysis.

Adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006, p.287-93).

In the process of the creation of themes or codes in thematic coding, the proposed approach in the analysis was not to measure the amount of themes denoted in the documents but to identify the relationship between them and the research questions. The topics were identified and coded within a constructionist thematic analysis framework representation of the data collected. For this study, the constructionist thematic analysis framework was implicit in how and what to deduce from the data (see Table 2). The thematic analysis used in this study was designed by following the guidelines proposed by Saldaña (2013), Braun and Clarke (2006) and Flick (2007) (see Table 2). (1) The first phase was to engage with the data and select the appropriate coding criteria. This was the first cycle of generating codes, the process from codes to categories to themes. (2) Phase two was the second cycle of codifying and categorizing the relation between codes and preliminary themes and the analytic reflection of coding and categorization. This was the outcome “theme”.

(3) The third stage was the phase of “define and refine”, or the definition and conceptualization of the themes. (4) The last phase was to produce the analysis and to combine with the theory in the case of the documentary analysis. Following these stages allowed flexibility and a rigorous process, which in turn enabled a “thick description and interpretation” of the data and the generation of emerging concepts (Braun& Clarke, 2006, p.287-93). The outcomes of these encoding process were also related to the epistemological framework of gender and sexualities as social construction and performance identities.

3.2 Research design and methods

As Page and Liston (2002) discuss several studies on sexual diversity in schools focus on and emphasize the measurement of the attitudes of trainee teachers and teachers’ attitudes towards homosexuality Baker (1980), Fishes (1982) Sears (1989 & 1992); homophobia by Butter and Byrne (1992); and lesbian and gay parenting by Maney and Cain (1997) (p. 72-74). Other studies have considered a qualitative approach. DePalma and Atkinson (2009) and Ollis (2010), for example, discuss homophobia and heteronormative discourses in schools through different techniques such as teacher and researcher interviews, class observations and interventions, online blogs and group discussions. These different techniques provide different standpoints such as pedagogic or cultural perspectives in their research. Furthermore, non-governmental organizations such as Stonewall’s *‘The School Report’* (2012) and *‘The Teachers’ Report’* (2012) use surveys to obtain data about homophobic assaults and interviews to obtain experiences of teachers and students about sexual diversity in British schools.

In this respect, researchers have shown an increased interest in the relation between gender and sexualities in the school context. Atkinson et al (2009) cite studies done in the UK, Canada and Spain that were focused on the perpetuation of heteronormativity in the daily school context and also on the performances of gender stereotypes and sexuality constructions in primary schools. Through these research designs, it is possible to observe different trends in educational research methodologies on sexual diversity in schools.

These recent findings are related to ideas of gender, diversity, inclusion, citizenship and human rights. It appears, then, that there has been an evolution within research on sexual diversity in the school context. Thus, the design of this study is aimed at enhancing our understanding of sexual diversity from the perspectives of gender, identity and diversity in the primary schools. These different outcomes in research on the LGBT community in schools show the importance of the qualitative and quantitative methodologies for research into sexual diversity, homosexuality and sexualities. It therefore seemed to me that using mixed methods was the most appropriate approach for this study, as it allows a better understanding of how the sexual minority phenomenon is perceived and constructed from the trainee teachers' perspectives.

3.2.1 Mixed methods approach

The definition of mixed methods research as a research approach has been discussed and developed over the last few years (Tashakkori & Teddie, 2010; Creswell, 2003; Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989). These discussions have varied from strategies of inquiry and to the leading methods that are used in the research design process. Others, however, disagree that mixed methods have to be seen as a third research approach. Bryman (2008) refers to the "paradigm wars" to characterize the differences between the quantitative and qualitative positions and argues that these paradigm differences do not allow a connection between them. Nonetheless, Bryman points out that it is possible to use a qualitative and quantitative approach in research but this strategy of mixing is "within" them (p.15). The differences between quantitative or qualitative research are recognized; however, critics have also argued that mixed-methods involve a more pragmatic position in the interest of exploring and approaching research questions with a variety of tools as necessary (Bryman, 2008; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Tashakkori and Teddie (2010) discuss these pragmatic grounds in order to break down the paradigm war and underline the philosophy for using mixed methods which creates a new paradigm that promotes the development of

mixed methods in social research, the Mixed Methods Research (MMR). It is noteworthy that MMR is in a new phase of definition of terminology and usage. This represents an opportunity in the current social research where different problems emerge and different perspectives on data and analysis and integration are needed. Similarly, Creswell (2003) describes the mixed methods research approach as:

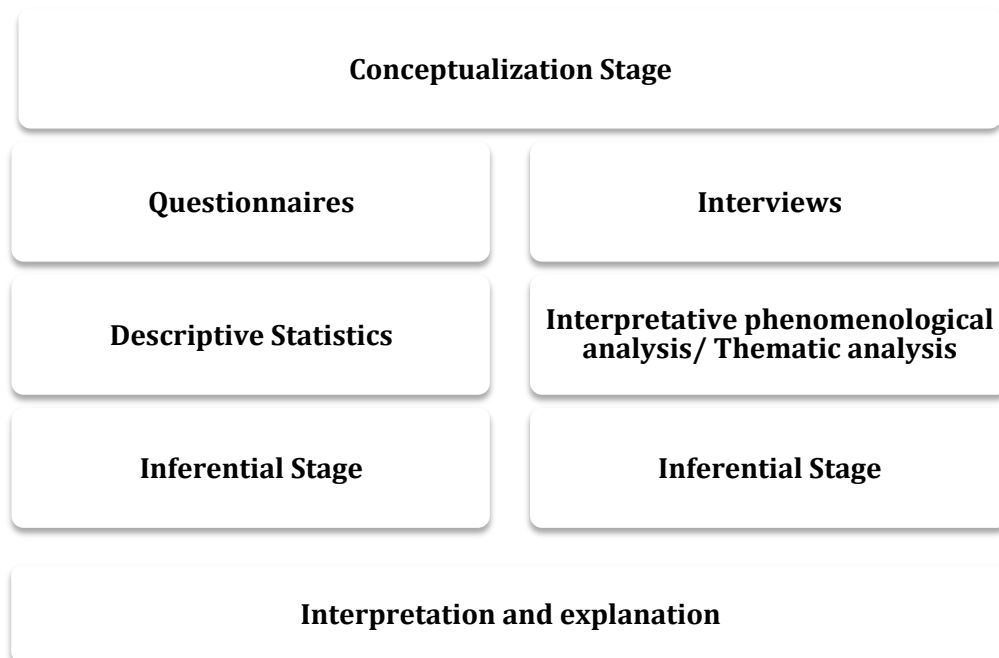
One in which the researcher tends to base knowledge claims on pragmatic grounds... it employs strategies of inquiry that involve collecting data either simultaneously or sequentially to best understand research problems. The data collection also involves gathering both numeric information as well as text information so that the final base represents both quantitative and qualitative information (Creswell, 2003, p. 20).

These pragmatic grounds of MMR are defined as an underlying philosophy that focuses attention on the research problem; there is a free choice of methods, techniques and procedures to collect and to analyse data. Indeed, the study covers different cultural, social and political backgrounds and it is therefore necessary to use different methods of data collection and analysis. And as discussed by Creswell (2003), in this study there is a rational purpose for the use of mixed methods and the intended consequences of the “what” and the “how” of the study (p.12). The integration of qualitative and quantitative data, originating in mainstream psychology, was primarily related to the triangulation of data. Triangulation is conceived of as a form of validation of the results from the different methods and as a convergent validation of the biases of each method (Fielding & Fielding, 2008). This perspective contrasts with that of other authors who consider mixed methods as an extensive opportunity that enables a deep understanding of the research and not only as a form of validation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Ivankova, Creswell & Stick, 2006).

Several authors have demonstrated the importance of using MMR to address complex problems in the social research context (Denzin & Lincoln,

2000; Tashakkori & Teddie, 2010). In the same vein, Greene et al. (1989) classify five methodological purposes of MMR: (1) triangulation, correspondence and validation of the different results of each method; (2) complementarity, elaboration or clarification within the results from one method to another; (3) development, one method can be used to develop or inform the other; (4) initiation, discovery of paradox by analysing the methods' results from different perspectives; and, (5) expansion, increase or expansion of the study area of inquiry by using different tools (p.259). Broadly, in this study it is important that the qualitative and quantitative methodologies increase the interpretability, meaningfulness and validity of the results - that is, the complementarity purpose of MMR in this research design. In order to answer the overarching question that underlines the study, the research design uses the two approaches in order to construct and enhance the results in the study (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Mixed-method research design.



Adapted from Teddie and Tashakkori (2006, p.24).

This research design considers what several authors have mentioned in connection with the use of MMR: the use of an appropriate typology, the graphic

representation of the MMR and the application of a select criteria to develop the study (Creswell, 2003; Teddie & Tashakkori, 2006). Similarly to Greene et al. (1989) and Teddie and Tashakkori (2006) highlight the three stages of the MMR diagrams: the first stage, the conceptualization, that is, in the construct of concepts, questions and purposes of the research. The second stage is the experiential stage where the methodological (data collection, e.g. interviews) and analytical (data interpretation and analysis) occur; and finally, the inferential stage that includes the inferences and results (p.16). The graphic representation explains more adequately the processes involved in the study. The following criteria are considered: the quantitative phase, QUAN, a core questionnaire developed for this study reflecting four dimensions of sexual diversity in primary classrooms to explore the awareness of trainee teachers on sexual diversity. The descriptive analysis was used for the experiential stage. In the second, qualitative phase, QUAL, interviews were performed using the IPA and thematic coding framework. It was considered that quantitative and qualitative measures would usefully supplement and extend each other's results and analysis. After considering mixed methods as research design, it was important that the two methodologies interacted at some stage, and for this study this was at the integration stage: the interpretation and explanation phase (Teddie & Tashakkori, 2006).

Thus, this research does not attempt generalisation but an exploration of such a complex topic. This section reviews the qualitative and quantitative methodology stages (conceptualization and experiential), as well as the instruments developed and the procedures and framework used to design them. Each methodological approach had its benefits and limitations; these are discussed throughout the section. The outline for the design of exploring the awareness and perception of trainee teachers about sexual diversity was based on the literature review (see Chapter Two). Some dimensions included in this research were the sexuality and gender norms implicit in the primary educational context; their relevance to schools and practices; and principles related to policies of equality in the educational context.

3.2.2 The questionnaire design

A questionnaire was designed in the study to quantify the awareness and perceptions of teachers' experiences of sexual diversity in primary schools. Previous research used questionnaires as a method to measure homophobia or teachers' attitudes towards gay or lesbian individuals. However, there has been a change in today's society regarding the LGBT community within different social, cultural and political contexts. For instance, a survey that measure trainee teachers' homophobia in the school context could be biased, as discrimination towards sexual orientation is not legal in the UK today. In addition, new trends have occurred in the last decade to the sexual minorities community, such as equity policies, equal marriage law and the elimination of Section 28, among others. These changes have led to an apparent change in the attitudes and perceptions of LGBT people within the wider community (see Chapter One).

It was therefore necessary to create a questionnaire that contextualized current trends and that considered their influences on perceptions of discrimination in today's society to inform the data collection. The questions were not intended to relate to some measurement of homophobia or discrimination, but rather to a descriptive exploration of awareness and perception of sexual diversity in schools. By reviewing the literature, four dimensions of sexual diversity in the school context were constructed: gender stereotype, homophobia in schools, same-sex families and sexual diversity teaching. The frameworks of feminist and queer theory on sexuality and gender in society were significant in this process. Since the theory constructs sexual minorities as a cultural and social phenomenon of diversity in society, differences in sexual diversity are questioned from different perspectives such as deconstructing the hetero binary norms in society. Other aspects considered in the construction of the questionnaire were the logistics and measurement of the survey. On the logistics, the self-administered questionnaires were the right option for this study. It was necessary to reach trainee teachers located in

different geographical parts of UK and had to take into account that many of them were on internships in primary schools.

Development of the questionnaire

For the initial research, it was essential to review previous studies of sexual diversity in the educational context (Baker, 1980; Fishes, 1982; Sears, 1989 & 1992 cited by Page and Liston, 2002). Generally, these studies used questionnaires in order to measure attitudes towards homosexuality or homophobia in the school context. Secondly, how experiences of the LGBT community in the school context were collected; these measurements considered the cognitive, affective, and behavioural components of attitudes towards the LGBT community and homophobia developed in a specific social or cultural context.

To date, various questionnaires have been developed and introduced to measure attitudes towards lesbian and gay men or homophobia: *the Attitudes Towards Lesbian and Gay Men Scale* (ATLG-S) developed by Herek (1984; 1988); *the Knowledge about Homosexuality Questionnaire* developed by Harris, Nightengale and Owen (1995); *the Homophobia Scale* (HS) by Wright, Adams and Bernat (1999). For instance, the ATLG-S scale consists of twenty items, ten about gay men and ten about lesbian women. The responders indicate on the Likert scale if they agree or disagree with the different statements; some studies use a short version of the scale and these shorter versions have been found to be highly correlated with the original (Herek, 1994). Overall, ATLG-S or HS questionnaires have explored discrimination and homophobia created by AIDS, HIV or sexual transmitted infections (STIs) and the relationship with the LGBT community in the school context.

In the construction of the questionnaire, I was interested in exploring how the theory-building frameworks for queer pedagogy, inclusive education and social justice could be used to understand or acknowledge sexual diversity in primary schools (see Chapter Two). Thus, the questionnaire design and development was based on sets of criteria: the first criteria, the assessment

instruments for pre-conceptualization mentioned earlier, written criteria and orientation, *the Attitudes Towards Lesbian and Gay Men Scale* (ATLG-S) developed by Herek (1984) and *the Homophobia Scale* (HS) by Wright, Adams and Bernat, (1999). The second criteria was the exploration of the awareness and perceptions of trainee teacher on sexual diversity created in this study was by adapting educational dimensions from previous studies on queer pedagogy practices at schools (Gerouki, 2010; Atkinson & DePalma, 2008; Atkinson, 2002; Sears, 1999; Mathison, 1998) (see Chapter Two); and from Sears's (1999) queerly elementary propositions: (1) diversity as human identity, (2) sexualities as essential constructions, (3) heteronormativity, (4) childhood and innocence and (5) diverse families (1995, p. 5-12). The following illustrate the sections of the questionnaire:

- i. **Information sheet and consent form.** This section informs trainee teachers about the aim of the research. Also, it informs them that the research project has received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Procedures of the Department of Education at the University of York.
- ii. **Background information.** For the background information, three general questions were asked: year of study, gender and religious affiliation. Although more questions were considered for background information during the research design, ethical issues such as confidentiality, anonymity and particularly the sensitivity and receptivity of the topic also needed to be taken into account.
- iii. **Awareness and Perceptions of Sexual Diversity in Primary Trainees.** The questionnaire contained 22 items in total and was developed to explore the awareness and perceptions of trainee teachers on sexual diversity in primary schools. The questionnaire is divided into four sections: (1) gender stereotypes; (2) homophobic bullying and language; (3) same-sex families; and (4) teaching about sexual diversity. The participants indicated on the Likert scale five

rating scale the extent of their agreement with the different statements: strongly agree, agree, unsure, disagree and strongly disagree (see Appendix 1).

iv. **Additional information.** I included a final question about participating in the second stage of the study; trainee teachers were asked to give their personal email if they would like to participate in the interview process. General information about the study was also included here.

Questions were grounded on heteronormativity and queer theory approaches. One example of this questionnaire design is the following discussed by Sears: “as cultural cops of the ancient regime, elementary teachers unthinkingly enforce ‘compulsory heterosexuality’ through stories of nuclear family and questions about mommies or daddies” (1999, p. 11). This statement implied the dimension of same-sex family and the inclusion of same-sex families in the classroom activities. For instance, in the questionnaire the trainee teacher is asked to agree or disagree with the following statement: *I think teachers should consider gay or lesbian families when they celebrate Mother's Day or Father's Day* (see Appendix 1). Finally, after the pilot study and review by other researchers the questionnaire remained the same for the main study. The questionnaire was used to describe and explore the awareness and perceptions of trainee teachers towards sexual diversity in primary schools. The data collected by the questionnaire was analysed solely for descriptive statistics; the data was analysed on SPSS-21 (IBM Corporation). Some questions were reversed negatively to prevent bias (Field, 2013; Pallant, 2010). To illustrate the categories of agreement the Likert-type scale criterion was used: strongly agree/agree, unsure, disagree/strongly disagree (see Appendix 1).

3.2.3 The interview design

The interviews significantly increase the possibility of obtaining deep information about the trainee teachers' awareness and perceptions of sexual

diversity. Thus, interventions in the interviews were used in order to obtain a “deep interpretation” of the data (Johnson & Turner, 2003, p.309). The interviews enable participants to interact and discuss specific topics and encourage them to talk more about their experiences and narratives (Wilkinson, 2011, p.169). Furthermore, recent studies in sexual diversity have focused on qualitative approaches such as ethnography, narratives, document analysis and focus groups (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009, 2008; Kissen, 2002; Letts & Sears, 1999). These studies have shown the need to perceive the narratives and experiences of teachers regarding their ideas about the diversity of pupils or their own perceptions of the inclusion of sexual diversity in the school context.

Thus, the interview encourages the flow of trainee teacher experiences and brings further information about their understanding of and familiarity with sexual minorities in the educational context. In addition, the semi-structured interviews preferred for this study allowed inferences and conjectures to be made while the interview was proceeding. This made it possible to interpret and construct new questions and to have a more trustworthy data collection (Bernard & Ryan, 2010; Bertely, 2004; Woods, 1987). In order to obtain similar information and to make comparisons between their perceptions of sexual diversity in primary schools, the semi-structured interviews are based on an interview guide (Bernard & Ryan, 2010, p.29) which focuses on different areas: the experience of sexual minorities in schools, homophobia and bullying, diverse families, trainee teachers’ knowledge and training needs on sexual diversity. This semi-structured interview guide is adapted from studies by DePalma and Atkinson (2009), Guasp (2012) and Kissen (2002). The interviews were reviewed by a group of researchers and used in a pilot study with experts on sexual diversity in the school and with trainee teachers.

In conclusion, the semi-structured interviews were the best way for this study to collect data on perceptions of sexual diversity in primary schools because they allowed trainee teachers to talk about their own experiences and the slight or significant information they recognise about the topic. A study like

this one, which seeks to explore these perceptions, was appropriate for trainees' narratives that allowed a deep understanding of the phenomenon of sexual minorities in the educational context of primary schools. This deep approach was considered by Wengraf (2001), who argued that realities could be misleading in "surface appearances" and even if some information provides a very straight forward answer, its meaning truly is really more complex (p. 6). As Fontana and Frey (2005) argue "interviewing is inextricably and unavoidably historically, politically, and contextually bound" (p.695). Thus, a semi-structured interview has to be specifically designed and needs as much preparation before, during and after the session. When conducting semi-structured interviews I had a number of pre-set questions as necessary; nonetheless, these questions were intended to be fairly open to allow me to develop particular questions associated with answers during the interviews and with the aim of the study. Usually, I used a percentage of prepared questions and I carefully constructed the new questions in the interview process, considering the theoretical framework, literature review and the aim of the study. As Wengraf (2001) argues, the more creative the researcher and the participant were in the semi-structured interviews, the greater the improvement of final conditions of the analysis and the interpretation of data (p.5). Two types of semi-structured interviews were conducted in this study: face-to-face and online.

Development of the interview

Face-to-face interviews ensured an optimal verbal and nonverbal communication with the participant, and also allowed the use of pauses and created spaces that encouraged interviewees to provide more evidence or to experience the entire process more thoroughly (De Leeuw, 2008, p.317-18). For online interviews, as discussed by De Leeuw (2008), other benefits were enhanced such as the increase in the number of participants or the different geographical location of the participants. Although, certain characteristics obtained in face-to-face interviews are lost, such as the interpretation of non-

verbal communication or semantic differences in a trainee's responses, online interviews were an excellent opportunity to contact trainee teachers.

The construction of the semi-structured interview followed Maxwell's model building criteria (cited by Wengraf, 2001) of questions designed for the semi-structured depth interviewing method. In this model, the interviewer is seen as a "realist" and the information obtained is used as evidence or narrative of a particular phenomenon, in which the researcher must go "in depth" in the understanding of a trainee's feelings or beliefs about sexual diversity in schools. The interview guidelines should indicate the concepts or give empirical indicators for the analysis and interpretation (Wengraf, 2001,p.57-59). As explained earlier, four dimensions were considered in the interviews: homophobia and bullying, diverse families, gender stereotypes and teaching about sexual diversity (see Appendix 2).

The interview session was the questionnaire follow-up; upon completion of the questionnaire the students were asked about their interest on participating in the second phase of the study. In the interview process, ethical procedures were followed. The confidentiality and anonymity of the participant was assured on the information sheet. The interviews were recorded to ensure an accurate recording of trainee's responses and transcribed. In preparation for the interview, it was checked that the interviewees felt comfortable in expressing their perceptions on the subject, taking in account the language for proper handling and to prevent some bias caused by the influence of research in the interview (see section 3.5.2).

During the session, alternate questions and vignette scenarios were prepared in order to facilitate or encourage the trainee teachers to be more fluent or truthful in their responses. Similarly, the use of other tools such as a children's storybook helped analyse the perceptions of trainee teachers regarding the use of sexual diversity literature for children and perceived how they could challenge these kind of story books in their classroom (see Appendix 3). Interviews were conducted in different locations convenient to participants.

For the transcribing process of the interview, the procedure observed by Wengraf (2001) "transcribing to stimulate memories and produce memos" allowed the creation of new notes prompted by the memories of the interview. In addition, these memories provoked thoughts of different experiences and allowed the construction of memos on specific themes initiated within the conversation (p. 208-30). The analysis and interpretation of the data was based partially on the theoretical framework, taking into account the structure of the interview (sexual diversity dimensions in the primary school context), the narrative episodes and descriptions and/or arguments of the trainee teachers about sexual minorities and the educational context.

3.3 Research considerations

Trainee teachers' awareness of equality rights, the multicultural context and social diversity promotes positive attitudes and perceptions towards homophobia or other discriminative practice in schools (Gerouki, 2010; Curran, Chiarolli & Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2009; Milton, 2003; Kissen, 2002). Similarly, Allan, Atkinson, Brace, DePalma and Hemingway (2008) argue that teachers, in this case future teachers, should take responsibility to help students recognise different sexualities and therefore portray them in positive ways through discussions of social justice, diversity and understanding. Villegas and Lucas (2002) refer to these frameworks when a teacher is considered to be responsive, that is, a teacher who addresses social diversity in their classroom in order to promote a diverse and inclusive curriculum. As noted above, teachers' positive attitudes towards issues of sexual diversity may be significant in stimulating a sexual diversity discourse in schools.

For instance, one of the key issues to consider in connection with sexual diversity in schools is homophobia, which García (2007) describes as a negative attitude towards the sexual diversity community, and which is evidenced by insults or attacks on members of that community (see Chapter One). Unfortunately, these are often related to incidences of bullying at school, where the attacks or aggressions are subjective ways of demonstrating power and abuse towards the one who is 'different' (Smith, 2004). DePalma and Atkinson

(2008) note that their celebrated project *No Outsiders*, on primary schools and sexual diversity, was named after Archbishop Desmond Tutu's statement that "everyone is an insider, there are no outsiders, whatever their beliefs, whatever their colour, gender or sexuality" (DePalma & Atkinson, 2008, p. vii). In this sense, DePalma and Atkinson (2008) argue that whatever the difference, everybody is part of society; thus, everyone has to be included and for that there should not exist no outsiders in primary schools.

Sears (1992, 1989), Fisher (1982) and Baker (1980), cited by Page and Liston (2002), argue that trainee teachers were more likely to be classified as homophobic than their peers at university. Although these studies were done two decades ago, it reflects the ways the trainee teacher' population holds more negative attitudes towards homosexuality. This could be understood by how traditional education systems have seen sexualities in childhood as offensive or related to sexual intercourse (Curran et al., 2009). In the last decade, new educational guidelines towards bullying and homophobia have allowed teachers and educators to play a significant role in the sexual diversity community (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009).

Therefore, these responses on addressing sexual diversity in the curricula create a "positive seating" for sexual minority youth in the school context (Mudrey & Adams, 2006, p.65). DePalma and Atkinson's (2009) exploration of teachers' perceptions of the LGBT community and schools' praxis creates new questions. For example, "how can sexual orientation be addressed for children in ways that are relevant to their experience and growing understanding of personal identity, love and family diversity?" (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009, p. ix). In this sense, the questionnaire and the interviews were constructed to explore these overarching questions.

As discussed in the literature review, a minor amount of literature has been published on sexual diversity in primary schools from the perspective of inclusion in education and diversity such as multiculturalism, citizenship or democratic education (Meyer, 2010). Also, Mellor and Epstein (2006) argue that

it is possible to change the discourse about sexualities in primary schools to something more broad such as gender in education, where children with different sexual identities struggle with their sexual role experiences. The final data collection design, as discussed above, allowed the study to identify the awareness and perceptions of trainee teachers of sexual diversity in the school context. The different forms of data collection that were employed to consider the research questions were:

- i. A questionnaire conducted primarily to explore the awareness and perceptions of trainee teachers of sexual diversity;
- ii. Semi-structured interviews with trainee teachers that were recorded and transcribed;
- iii. Semi-structured interviews with non-governmental educational officers and council advisers.

The questionnaire responses were collected online. The interviews were done via online and face-to-face interviews and then transcribed. On average, the interviews took between 20 to 40 minutes. During the face-to-face interviews some informal conversations happened, generally after the interviews; these informal interviews enriched the data collected. In this sense, some trainee teachers feel more comfortable sharing experiences that were not recorded and transcribed. I have followed the ethics procedures of confidentiality and anonymity; the section where these conversations are discussed is titled informal conversations.

After collection, the data was analysed and interpreted using the interpretative phenomenological and thematic methodological analyses based on the feminist and the queer theoretical frameworks. As a consequence of the mixed methods design, different phases formed part of the analysis. This part of the design was called the experiential stage where the methodological and analytical data interpretation and analysis occurred. In this final stage the questionnaire, QUAN data, was the first phase and in the second phase, QUAL data, interviews were collected and analysed. Although the process could be

described as sequential, the data collection and analysis were done at different times during the research. This final process enriched the data collection and analysis.

3.3.1 Ethical considerations

Ethical procedures were considered throughout the whole process of the study. In accordance with the Education Ethics Committee of the Department of Education at the University of York, the study followed the Ethical Approval of Student Research Studies: Procedures 2013; these entailed the British Educational Research Association ethical guidelines. As the research was considered to involve sensitive topics, the Chair of the Education Ethics Committee approved the Research Ethical Issues Audit Form. A consent form was given to the participants. This form informed participants in advance about what their involvement in the research study will entail, the purpose of the research and what would happen to the data they provided. It is noteworthy that, before the committee approval process, the questionnaire was reviewed by three different researchers for appropriate use of language as well as the use of concepts that could cause problems of interpretation. Similarly, general background questions were subjected to scrutiny in order to ask only what was relevant to the study.

According to the Education Ethics Committee's Guidance on Data Storage and Protection, the information collected about individuals in the course of this study was anonymised so that participants could not be identified. Research records were kept on a password-protected computer and only the research team had access to the records. The records of the study were kept private. No identifiers linking to the study were included in any sort of report. Participation in the second stage was entirely voluntary. Participants could choose to take part in the first stage but decide not to take part in the second stage of the interview. It was stressed that all data were confidential and the reporting was anonymous, so they could be as honest as possible. The subject matter of the interview concerned their own views and not those of their institutions or

others, and no quotations were attributed directly to their source so that individuals could be identified. The data will be destroyed securely after five years, once the findings of the study are written up.

3.3.2 Trustworthiness and authenticity

Following ethical frameworks, studies traditionally deal with the production of validity and reliability for research design and results (Merriam, 1998; Bryman, 2008). Although my research is mixed-methods, I argue that the main part of my data analysis and discussion is done using qualitative methods. As Merriam (1998) argues, “what makes experimental studies scientific or rigorous or trustworthy is the researcher’s careful design of context of production for phenomenon (experiments)” (p. 200). Similarly, as Bryman (2012) discusses, “a second position in relation to reliability and validity in qualitative research can be discerned” (p. 390); this second position to assess the quality of qualitative research is the trustworthiness and authenticity criteria.

In this sense, Creswell (2013) argues, “terms abound in the qualitative literature that address validity such as trustworthiness and authenticity” (p.201) and are strategies to determine the validation of the findings and interpretation of the data. Lincoln and Guba (cited by Bryman, 2012) use trustworthiness as an “umbrella term” for “evaluating and enhancing the quality of inferences in qualitative research” (p.109). Bryman (2012) suggests the following criteria to advocate the trustworthiness of the data and analysis in qualitative research: (1) *credibility*, in this case the technique used is triangulation of the data and the understanding of different findings in the trainees’ experiences; (2) *transferability*, characteristic which Lincoln and Guba argue is developed in the narratives of the analysis, where the experiences and accounts of the participants are described in a transferable form to other possible studies; (3) *dependability*, the use of different techniques to obtain data and the use of all the data possible to interpret and analyse the same data; and (4) *confirmability*, this final criteria refers to ensuring that the data and the

research influence in the data and analysis and discussion has been done in a ethical way (p. 390-393).

In order to ensure authenticity, Lincoln and Guba (cited by Bryman, 2012) highlight points for these criteria. The (1) *fairness* of the research in which the different points of view of the participants are expressed; (2) the *ontological authenticity* that raise the concerns of better understandings of the social complexity around sexual diversity in primary schools; (3) the *authenticity* of the primary schools experiences on gender and sexualities brought to it by the trainee teachers; and (4) the *catalytic and tactical authenticity* that implies the study's recommendations and the implications of the research (p. 393).

Table 3. Inferences in qualitative research.	
Foundation	Epistemology and theory: this provides the philosophical stance and gives context to and informs the study.
Methodology	Specific grounding of the study's logic and criteria.
Method	Explicitness about data collection and management.
Representation of voice	Researcher and participant as multicultural subjects; researchers reflect on their relationship with participants and the phenomena under exploration.
Interpretation and presentation	The process of presenting new insights through the data and chosen methodology.
Recommendations	Implication for professional practice

From Tobin and Begley (cited by Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2008, p. 108)

Lastly, this discussion on producing ethical research has been highlighted by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008) who discuss the inferences in qualitative research framed by Guba and Lincoln and Bryman. Thus, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2008) highlight Tobin and Begley's characteristics of trustworthiness

and authenticity of the research by recommended indicators of inferences in the process of qualitative research (see Table 3). Overall, characteristics such as foundation (epistemology and ontology) and the approach (methodology and methods) are related to the authenticity of the research. The use of queer and feminist theory and phenomenological analysis illustrates the characteristics of this study that were considered and advocate transparency as an “indicator of quality” (Bryman cited by Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008, p. 108). These inferences are represented as quality criteria that allow me to advocate a better strategy of mixed methods and being consistent to generate integrative and trustworthy data (see Table 3).

Interviews and interactions with trainee teachers

As a gay and MBE researcher involved in a study on sexual minorities in the school context, my research role might concern the trustworthiness and authenticity of the data collection and analysis. Thus, I argue that my background and personal situation may influence my data collection or analysis but it gives a positive involvement in the research process. Creswell (2013) argues that “qualitative research is interpretative research: the inquirer is typically involved in a sustained and intensive experience with participants”(p.187). In my dealings with trainee teachers, it was clear that some of my characteristics might influence the interviewing process. My aim was to create spaces for the trainee teachers where their own identities were the ones that influenced the environment spaces of the interview. In this sense, it was crucial that they feel comfortable sharing their experiences without feeling compromised by my minority identity status. In this case, different approaches were taken; in the research design it was explicit that my position as a researcher might influence the interview process; I followed the Ethics procedures to ensure trustworthiness and authenticity in the data procedures; and finally, as a study of sensitive ethical issues I tried to create a sympathetic relationship with the trainee teachers and the universities involved in the study.

As Braun and Clarke (2006) argue, “even ‘a giving voice’ approach involves carving out unacknowledged pieces of narrative evidence that we select, edit and deploy to border our arguments” (p. 80). Furthermore, as Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argue, in qualitative research with feminist and queer frames it has to be considered that “experience, discourse, and self-understandings collide with large cultural assumptions concerning race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, class, and age” (p. xvi). In this sense, my experience as a member of a minority group allows me to criticise in a reflexive way the issues that concern today’s society and to understand that different identities collapse in everyday life.

3.3.3 Pilot Study

The population for this study involves trainee teachers on BA and PGCE primary education programmes across the UK. The selection of this population was considered in the research response to the literature review on the exploration of trainee teachers’ awareness of sexualities and gender norms in schools (Atkinson et al, 2009; Kissen, 2002; Leets & Sears, 1999). Through the database of the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) in UK, the universities that offered a programme of Bachelor Degree in Primary Education with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or a PGCE in Primary Education were chosen to participate in the research. Trainee teachers were then contacted via email, through the university department director or the BA or PGCE programme coordinator, to invite them to participate in the study. They were able to withdraw their consent at any time without penalty by advising the researcher. If they did so any information that they had provided, as part of the study would be destroyed.

A second stage of the research involved an interview and it was entirely up to them to whether participate in this second stage. For the sample size, a pragmatic review of the literature was used to compare the sample sizes (McCready, 2006). The aim of the pilot study was to test the research methodology and the design proposed for the study. It was also tested to ensure

that the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview were understood and adequate for the trainee teachers, and finally, to ensure the research questions were covered. The pilot study took place between January and July 2013. Thirty-three universities were contacted via email for this pilot study. Six universities agreed to participate, representing a response rate of 18% of the sample. For the data collection, each university was provided with an online questionnaire. The universities were coded for anonymity in order to conform with the ethical procedures.

Trainee teachers were contacted via email, by their programme coordinators or equivalent, and invited to participate in the study. The online questionnaire contained 22 items in total; the respondents indicated their awareness about sexual diversity in primary schools (see Appendix 1). A second stage of the pilot study involved an interview. In the last stage of the questionnaire, trainee teachers were asked to volunteer for an online interview. If they decided to participate, an interview was scheduled in an online platform such as Skype or +Hangout. For the data collection, codes were employed to ensure that the universities and the trainee teachers were not identifiable. Some individuals were excluded from the study on the basis of unfinished or repeated questionnaires; this avoided duplication or unreliable answers. Regarding the pilot study, no changes were made to the data collection instruments. The pilot study met the objective of identifying opportunities and limitations in the research design, methodologies and instruments for data collection.

3.4 Doing research with trainee teachers

While a primary aim of the present study is to explore the awareness and perceptions of trainee teachers on sexual diversity in primary schools, during the research design process I faced a number of different challenges, two of which were critical. The first challenge in the research design was how to carry out educational research on sexual diversity with trainee primary teachers; from how to contact educational settings to how to interview trainee teachers when using sensitive topics. Although there has been some research done on

these and related issues, DePalma and Atkinson (2008) argue that research on sexualities in primary schools is not always straightforward. As a result, the use of mixed methodologies and different approaches is common in sexual diversity research (Allan, et al., 2009; Ollis, 2010).

Out of the 88 universities contacted, less than 20% agreed to participate in the study. Although this low response was expected, the concerns universities had about the study were thought-provoking with regard to how I would deal with this challenging topic and how I would protect those trainee teachers and universities that wanted to participate. Overall, the questions were related to ethics and the safety of the students. Hence, the emphasis and attitude of these universities was that even though this study might be an important issue in today's society, they wanted to be sure that their students were not compromised in connection with such sensitive topics. After an exchange of correspondence with ethics forms, model-questionnaires and evidence of my position as a doctoral student with an ethical framework, I was able to proceed with the data collection.

The second challenge was the theoretical framework for the analysis and collection of the data used in order to acquire information about the perceptions and awareness of the trainee teachers. Some research like that of Kissen (2002), Letts and Sears (1999) and Meyer (2012) has challenged these concerns from a queer perspective and the concept of heteronormativity. The question was how to understand trainee teachers' experiences from practical, social or cultural theoretical perspective, which are able to advocate and have a better understanding of sexual diversity in the primary school context. Another issue faced was how to develop a research design that framed queer and feminist perspective of the trainee teachers. Thus, the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview were constructed according to these two concerns. The instruments were developed to comply with the safety of the trainee teachers and to bring a queering-feminist framework to the study (as mentioned in Chapter One).

The questionnaire was developed with the aim of a broad exploration of the awareness and perceptions of sexual diversity. Three trainee teacher's background questions and twenty-two questions on the awareness and perspectives of trainee teachers of sexual diversity in primary schools were selected from a long list of possibilities provided by the literature review and the study of other questionnaires related to homophobia or sexual education. However, I was careful not to push boundaries and the background questions were carefully selected to just give the most important issues such as gender or religious background. Lugg (2012), for example, discusses the implication of the political forces of religious rights to banned educational policies on sexual education. UK legislation, as seen previously, has been moderate in the compulsory teaching of sexual education (and the teaching of sexual diversity) on the grounds of cultural or religious rights. In such cases, the characteristic of a trainee teacher's religious beliefs was a key point in the discussion of teaching sexual diversity.

Throughout the semi-structured interviews, trainees discussed the implications of religious schools and their fears about teaching sexual diversity. Some of the trainees mentioned that some religious schools are really supportive about the tackling of homophobia and homophobic bullying in the schools. This case suggested that religious schools may contradict themselves in the dichotomy of practices and school ethos. This contradiction was somewhat personal too; trainees were worried about what I could do and what the school ethos allowed me to do. The implication was that schools have a very strong position about what sexual education should consist of, and that makes trainees feel vulnerable. My aim in the interview, then, was allowed trainees to express themselves in a safe way.

At the same time, as Bertely (2004) and Woods (1997) suggest, the semi-structured interview stimulates this flow of data and brings deep information about the experiences of the subjects. Semi-structured interviews allow me to make inferences from their experiences and to draw conclusions about the conceptualization of sexualities and gender in the primary schools while the

interview was proceeding. They also allowed the interpretation and construction of new questions (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). Thus doing research with trainee teachers on sexual diversity was a challenge in a number of different ways in the theoretical framework, where fitting gender and sexualities in primary school was accomplished using a queer-feminist perspective, and in the research design, that was sensitively constructed to comply with universities' requirements, the safety of trainees and the research aim. I did everything I could to understand the current situation and the thoughts of our future primary school teachers.

3.4.1 Sample composition

One hundred ninety-eight trainee teachers responded to the questionnaire (N_Q=198) from twenty-one different universities across the United Kingdom (Table 4). The universities were selected via Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and UCAS Teacher Training. Universities provided different courses for initial teacher education around UK and each one has its own different programme paths. There are also different routes to becoming a primary education teacher such as School Direct or Teach First programmes. Likewise, teacher training regulations and procedures are different in England, Scotland and Wales (where participant universities were located).

Table 4. Sample composition		
UK Region	Institution Participants	Questionnaire Participants
England	19	179
Scotland	1	7
Wales	1	12
Total	21	198

Trainee teachers who responded to this questionnaire and the semi-structured interview were from the following programmes: Bachelor of Education (BEd), BA/BSc with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) and Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE). Overall, ninety per cent of the participants were English students taking a BA or PGCE in Primary Education. The total of the trainee teachers corresponds to the sum of the pilot study students and the main study participants; this was done because of the constructive participation in the pilot study. The purpose of this study is exploratory and so, a convenient sample was employed. As McCready (2006) argues, the convenience or purposive samples “may or not may not be representative of any large population” (p.149) but in this case, the purpose of the research design was to ensure the representativeness of the population.

Similar to the pilot study, some issues were addressed during the sampling procedures. The subjects volunteered to participate in the questionnaire and the interview process. For instance, as the research question deal with topics of sexuality and sexual diversity it was expected that trainee teacher who are interested on these topic volunteer for this research. Of the many issues arising in relation to the design of this research, the trainees' background information was discussed several times. There are a number of key reasons for this, most notably information is essential to give a framework of the population being studied. For example, having a relative or friend who is part of the LGBT community may have different than for those who don't (i.e. have such a friend). Other background information such as class, sexuality and ethnicity was difficult to explore in this analysis. Although I argue that these and other kinds of background information are important in developing narratives and ethnographies, this study was looking to explore the phenomenon throughout a broader trainee teacher experience. Similarly, as has been noted, the study was a complex topic and many of the students might feel uncomfortable about sharing personal information. Therefore, it was decided to ask only the necessary background information to create a context for the study

of trainee teachers in the UK while still giving them a safe space to express themselves without any distress.

Table 5. Background information of trainee teachers			
Variable	Category	Number	Percentage %
Sex	Male	30	15.2
	Female	168	84.8
Year of Study	First Year	49	24.7
	Second Year	47	23.7
	Third Year	46	23.2
	Further	56	28.3
Religion	Christian	80	40.4
	Muslims	9	4.5
	Jewish	2	1.0
	Other	6	3.0
	No religious affiliation	101	51.0

The questionnaire was administrated online and the completion time for the questionnaire averaged fifteen-twenty minutes. Subjects were recruited through their departmental coordination programme. In order to increase the respondent participation, social media was used as a way of contact, too; nonetheless, less than six per cent responded this way. In one case, I had the opportunity to speak with a PGCE group and to invite them to participate; this was a remarkable experience for the study. The majority of the questionnaire participants (84.8%) were female - the typical percentage on primary education trainee teacher programmes (Skeleton, 2003; Carrington, 2002) - and 15.2 % were male. Specific ages were not requested from the trainee teachers, but the year of study was requested. The first year rate was 24.7 %, the second year rate was 23.7%, the third year 23.4 % and the further programmes 28.3%. In

terms of religious faith, half of the respondents (51.0 %) indicated that they do not have any religious affiliation and 40.4 % of the trainee teachers identified themselves as Christians (44.2 %). There were small numbers professing other religious affiliation: 4.5 % defined themselves as Muslims and 1% Jews and a few defined as others (see Table 5).

The 2013/14 censuses presented by the Department for Education and the National College for Teaching and Leadership respecting gender is comparable with the numbers in the study. The 2009/10 censuses reported 16% male and 84 % female entrance in that period; the 2013/14 censuses showed an increase in the male population of 21% male and 79 % female trainee teachers. In addition, the census collected information about ethnicity and age where the proportion was 12% Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and 88 % Non-BME; this proportion has been maintained from 2009/10 until last year. On the age profile, more than half (54%), were under 25; and 33 % were aged between 25-34. These data include undergraduate and postgraduate providers and School Direct Training programmes. Overall the data are in line with the programmes; however, on the School Direct Training programmes the majority of entrants are aged over 25 and this is expected since this is a salaried programme.

3.4.2 The trainee teachers

As I walked into a PGCE classroom in a UK university in the north west, I encountered a group of trainee teachers that typified a PGCE group in UK. More than two-thirds of the group was female and it was a Non-BEM majority group. Nonetheless, the most important factor was that all of them were possible future teachers and all of them were expecting a person to talk about sexual diversity in primary schools. At the same time as I was describing the study, I was observing the reactions of the students. Through different presentations about my research, I have realised that many people struggle to understand sexual diversity in the primary school context. And a greater struggle is obvious if I reference the experience of a transgender or gay child in the primary school classroom. I do not think that this in any way means they are not aware of these

sexual issues but as one trainee teacher told me in the interview, is a “very subtle, very invisible” sense around gender and sexualities in school spaces and sometimes we do not know what is happening around it. After the presentation, some trainee teachers introduced themselves to me to volunteer for the task. Like others in my study, they were questioning the teaching of sexual diversity in schools and they were looking for an opportunity to express their experiences and concerns.

One of the first questions that I was asked about my research is why it is important to talk about sexual diversity in primary schools and why I was interested in studying the experiences of trainee teachers. As the educational officers interviewed, explained there are different reasons to acknowledge sexual diversity in primary schools. For instance, the visibility of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in our society today, the new family relationships that might we encounter in our everyday lives and all the other possibilities of diversity that are part of us as a society. Thus, my specific interest in doing interviews with educational officers was to represent those who are working with trainee teachers and have a practical experience of what is happening in training scenarios, and to have a contrast with the trainees’ experiences. The officers put emphasis on the importance of legislative frameworks for teachers and schools, in order to achieve better ways to tackle homophobia and bullying. Asked why teachers do not address these sexual diversity in school classrooms topics, they gave different responses: because they need training, they need to understand why it is important and to know how to deliver this information. As James, an educational officer, said:

Some trainee teachers don't understand why it's relevant to them, they don't understand why they should be talking to children of five or six about gay issues, and they don't know how to, and they don't always realize that actually when you're talking about different families, and all primary schools talk about different families, they don't and I've had trainee teachers telling me: 'Of course I didn't think about including children who grow up with two daddies or two mummies'. James/EO.

How then to deal with sexual diversity in primary schools is an issue that might be interpreted in different ways. For James, as for the other officers, it is simplest. Talking about sexual diversity is talking about families, about love, about accepting others. In primary schools the first aim is to understand that being gay is fine, being gay is something positive. But why it is important and how to deliver this information is something that might be granted with comprehensive training or preparation in the trainees' courses.

Table 6. The trainee teachers		
Participant	Position	Gender
Maya	<i>BA Primary Education, Third Year</i>	<i>Female</i>
Hannah	<i>BA Primary Education, Second Year</i>	<i>Female</i>
Ellie	<i>BA Primary Education, Third Year</i>	<i>Female</i>
Rosie	<i>PGCE Primary Student</i>	<i>Female</i>
Eva	<i>PGCE Primary Student</i>	<i>Female</i>
Alice	<i>PGCE Primary Student</i>	<i>Female</i>
Lucy	<i>PGCE Primary Student</i>	<i>Female</i>
Kate	<i>PGCE Primary Student</i>	<i>Female</i>
Laura	<i>PGCE Primary Student</i>	<i>Female</i>
Joshua	<i>PGCE Primary Student</i>	<i>Male</i>
Brooke	<i>PGCE Primary Student</i>	<i>Female</i>
James	<i>Senior Education Officer Non-profit organization</i>	<i>Male</i>
Amelia	<i>School Improvement City Council Services</i>	<i>Female</i>
Peter	<i>Education Officer Non-profit organization</i>	<i>Male</i>

Still, as Allan A. et al (2008) and DePalma and Atkinson (2006) suggest, teachers in primary schools are afraid of talking about sexuality in schools. And this is a significant factor in the development of inclusion of sexual diversity in the educational context. Some trainees are afraid of being accused of being LGBT, or of being allied to, even if they are only trying to create an inclusive environment in the classroom; as Curran et al (2009) have highlighted, some discourses such as paedophilia or child sexual abuse have stigmatized teaching about sexualities. This explains why teachers and trainees are afraid to express themselves and to look for a different ways to teach not just about sexual diversity but about sex education in general. It can be argued that trainees should learn how to address these issues; nonetheless, training institutions seem to be troubled, too. During the data collection it seemed that some universities were really cautious about considering participation in the research. Universities that decided to participate requested various official documents, such as my doctoral authentication letter, ethical permissions and details about the data management. However, I was pleased that some universities wanted to follow the research and to have a feedback from it.

Finally, the encounter that I had in my meeting with this PGCE group at the university was an important one. It helped me to have a picture of what a trainee teachers group looked like and gave me the opportunity to sense how they perceive the issue of sexual diversity in schools. It might seem trivial to talk about this encounter but some of my interviews were carried online. As a result, to have an idea of what the trainee teacher environment is like was important in creating their narratives about the phenomenon. Some students were happy to show themselves on video calls but I gave them the opportunity to choose to not use their webcam too. To be able to talk with them, I used different strategies, some of which are rarely used. One of my interviewees, for example, choose to use a chat window in order to be interviewed. I followed the same semi-structured interview steps, while using strategies to create a dialogue. The following analysis and discussion chapters are written as a phenomenological narrative using the thematic coding as the outline of the exploration. Quantitative data is also used to shape the narrative. I decided to use fictional

names to represent the trainee teachers, because using a name gives the narrative greater impact (see Table 6). As discussed before, these trainee teachers are not meant to be representative of the trainee teacher population in the UK as a whole. They should be read and represented as trainees who are concerned about sexual diversity in education. Giving them a name allowed the study to represent themselves as a reflexive group of trainee teachers who challenge the misrepresentation of minor communities in the educational context.

Chapter 4. Trainee teachers and the awareness and perceptions of gender stereotypes in primary schools

This chapter explores the extent to which trainee teachers are aware of and perceive gender stereotypes in primary schools. This discussion is based on the online questionnaire and interviews with the trainee teachers and education officers (see Chapter Three, section 3.4). As mentioned in the theoretical framework, in this chapter the concept of gender stereotype is used to talk about biological, social and cultural heteronormative expectations outlined by theories of gender construction (Blaise, 2005; DePalma & Jennett, 2010; Renold, 2006). Thus in the analysis, gender stereotypes or gender expectations are based on the premise that sex and gender are generally conflated with biological sex and gender identities or expressions. Ollis (2009) discusses the use of these conflated terms, where sex-role conceptualization is used to describe the social roles expected and constructed according to biological sex. This conceptualization of gender (sex) stereotype allows us to interpret how we as society, and in particular trainee teachers, perceive and construct hegemonic sexual norms in primary school children based on their biological sex, and in this way embody their gender construction and gender socialisation in the primary schools settings (Blaise, 2005; Renold, 2006).

The chapter is divided in three sections. The first section explores trainee teachers' awareness of gender (sex) stereotypes in primary school settings. In this section, trainee teachers' discourses on the relation between gender and sexual diversity in primary school settings such as gender (sex) stereotype and its association with homosexuality in the educational context are highlighted. Also in this section, trainee teachers point out their awareness of how 'gender non-conforming' children challenge gender and sexualities in the school context and in their social and cultural spaces. For instance, they discuss how 'a boy dressing up as a princess' might challenge heterosexualized expectations on the gender social dichotomy discourses. The second section explores the ways heteronormative practices in schools are related to the trainee teachers' perceptions of gender and gender expectations. In this sense, how social and

cultural expectations of trainee teachers influence the way they perceived primary school children's' gender and sexualities in the school classrooms are discussed. These dynamics related to gender (sex) stereotypes and heteronormativity in the primary school are illustrated through the analyses.

The trainee teachers' interviews illustrate how gender (sex) stereotypes in primary schools are perceived and constructed by and within the school social environment. The third and final section discusses how trainees perceive pupils' gender non-conforming performances in the classroom and how school practices might reinforce stereotypes in the schools. It explores how trainees perceive challenging practices of gender (sex) stereotype and expectations through arguments about non-gendered practices in the school, later seen as 'queering the primary school classroom', (see Chapter 7, section 7.3). Thus, these hegemonic binary gender expectations and behaviours, dichotomy of masculinity and femininity as performed in the primary classroom have to be seen as gender performances that interact with social class, sexuality, race and other identities such as religion (Reay, 2006). Nonetheless, this study is limited to exploring gender as a solo identity and expression that is overall perceived by the trainee teachers (see Chapter Three, section 3.4).

4.1 "Very subtle, very invisible": trainee teachers and the awareness of gender (sex) stereotypes

As one of the trainees stated during the interview about gender and sexualities in the primary school setting, there are some aspects in the school environment that are 'very subtle, very invisible'. I choose to use this quote as a sub-title for this chapter because of the significance it holds in relation to trainees' understanding of gender issues in the schools. Therefore, 'very subtle, very invisible' is an expression that represents the heteronormative school practices in schools and the educational context. Hegemonic heterosexualized acts are everyday performed in school practices and they are indeed subtle and almost invisible (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; DePalma & Jennett, 2010). This section explores trainee teachers' awareness of gender (sex) stereotypes that are

recognised in the day-by-day activities in the primary school setting. These gender stereotypes and/or expectations are seen as a construction of femininities or masculinities that might be performed in silence in the primary school classroom.

As mentioned before, although gender stereotypes may be invisible, these gender dichotomies are represented in different social and cultural discourses. For example, as a parent or any other consumer, when walking through the children's toys aisle at a shop, two sides can be seen: the 'blue' and the 'pink' side. This seems to have a social and cultural impact on children's choice and later on gender stereotypes, behaviours and enforcement of gender (sex) expectations, (Pomerleau, Bolduc, Malcuit, & Cossette, 1990). Thus, trainee teachers might not recognise these gender representations in the classroom since gender performances are seen as an unspoken norms. For instance, more than half of the trainee teachers, surveyed (52.6 %) consider that using 'pink' for girls or 'blue' for boys in classroom activities creates gender stereotypes. In spite of the fact that half of the trainees agree or strongly agree that these 'pink and blue' representations create gender/sex stereotypes, almost a third of the trainees were equally likely to disagree/strongly disagree (32.8 %) or not be sure (14.6 %) about the implications (see Table 4.1).

In contrast to, to the 'very subtle, very invisible' argument, the question (Q8) on awareness of gender stereotypes shows that at least half of the trainees are aware that using this explicit means of stereotyping according to gender, via a colour binary, does perpetuate gender stereotypes in children, and it also implies that there is an awareness of school practices that embody these gender stereotypes. Nonetheless, one-third of students do not agree with this colour binary statement. In this sense, it seems that some trainees perceive this colour binary as a natural social and cultural norm. Lastly, it seems, too, that there is a lack of trainees' awareness of primary school children performing gender.

Table 7. Trainee teachers and the awareness of gender stereotypes.

Category Questions	Strongly agree/agree	Unsure	Strongly disagree/Disagree
8. I do not think that using 'pink' for girls or 'blue' for boys in classroom activities creates gender stereotypes.	32.8	14.6	52.6

Likewise, toys for boys may represent an aggressive image such as war figures and girls' toys may represent a more nurturing image such as baby dolls. These gender (sex) stereotypes are part of early socialization and gender enhancement in childhood (Cherney & London, 2006; Pomerleau et al., 1990). For example, some dolls have hyper-sexualized bodies that intensify female gender-sexual expectations (Renold, 2002; Renold & Ringrose, 2008). And boys' dolls, which are rarely referred to as such, but instead as 'action figures', are hyper-masculinized. As documented by Pope, Olivardia, Gruber & Borowiecki (1999), children's, "action toys would illustrate evolving ideals of male body image" (p. 70) and develop cultural expectations of masculinity through these boys' toys.

This example could be similar to school activities and practices where gender discourses are perpetuated within a school's social and cultural spaces. From the trainee teachers' interviews, it seems that these gender expectations are based on the gender/sex trainees' own social and cultural assumptions and it could be inferred that children's gender performances might be constructed in hegemonic sexual norms. For instance, how primary school children construct their gender and sexuality identities have to be discussed throughout their social and cultural spaces (see Chapter One). As a result, it can be challenging for trainees to perceive these identities as being constructed through performances. As mentioned before, gender performances are 'very subtle, very invisible'.

Peter, an educational officer, elaborates that primary school children are subjected to gender stereotypes and pressures from social and cultural ideals that are around them in different social and cultural spaces such as primary schools. And those children that might or who do perform non-gender conforming performances, are isolated in school spaces where pressure is 'invisible to us' as an educators. This isolation is attributed to the lack of acknowledgment of gender and sexual diversity in educational institutions (Curran, 2002). Also some trainee teachers perceive children as innocent and non-sexual individuals and this perception can undermine gender stereotyping in the school context. Nonetheless, previous studies have considered that children may be gendered and sexualized in their social and cultural context (Curran, 2002; DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Renold, 2002).

Therefore, this 'pink and blue' statement reflects, and might have an impact on, how trainees may perceive gender stereotypes in primary school children. For example, a toy that might be symbolically masculine could change its gendered position to regulate a new conception of what is masculine. In this sense, from a pedagogical perspective Piaget (1999) highlights how children imitate and acquire symbolic interactionism through their social spaces: "imitation becomes the instrument for the acquisition of an indefinite number of collective signifiers which in their turn give rise to a whole series of socialised representations" (p.280). Following this description by Piaget where there is a connection between 'signifiers' and 'signified', Maya, a trainee teacher, points out her awareness of 'gender expectations' in the school context:

I'm with very small children at the moment, never ceases to amaze me, you know this sort of migration that there is at such a young child towards a particular kind of toy. I find it extraordinary, perhaps to boys and that draws towards things that have wheels. Maya/BA Primary Education

In this quote Maya illustrates how there is an innate feeling, or social norm, of what we expect from a boy. She argues that it "never ceases to amaze me" how boys are drawn to for wheels and symmetrical figures and that it is

something that is considered as a cultural 'norm' (Cherney & London, 2006). Likewise, she implies how children are into "this sort of migration". Maya's narrative suggests that some boys move from non-gender toys to wheels and cars without any external pressures or influences. As discussed in Chapter One, Butler (2004) suggests that gender is not what it 'is' or what it 'has'; "gender has to be seen as part of this normative matrix where the notion of masculinities and femininities coexist along the deconstruction of themselves" (p.44). Butler suggests the importance of the binary of gender and its normalization not as a form of power but as a way to 'regulate' and give a new shape to a reconstituted norm.

4.1.1 "The boy who once dressed up as a princess"

In the interviews, James, an educational officer, explained that he had been a boy who liked to play with cars and boyish toys. He implied that he was perceived as a 'gender conforming' boy in his primary school. Nonetheless, nowadays he identifies as a gay man and he mentioned, too, that he realised he was gay in his early twenties. It can be inferred that James was being reflective about the concept of gender and sexuality in his childhood. James's thoughts imply that gender and sexuality identities and expressions are not temporary, are not binary, and are not limited to social and cultural expectations. James also notes, in his narrative, that there are different non-gender conforming children and young stories that can be different to his story. It also seems that children (pupils) and adults (trainee teachers) may perceive gender identities and expression in completely different ways. In the following quotation, James explains that the assumptions made by trainee teachers about gender and sexuality may be based on social and cultural gender expectations:

There is a danger that we make assumptions about the boy who once dressed up as a princess growing up to be gay. I was a boy who liked cars, and He-Man and G.I. Joe. James/EO

In his quotation, “the boy who once dressed up as a princess” represents a child who feels and expresses his/her gender and sexuality identity in hegemonic heteronormative spaces, primary schools, where dressing as the opposite sex might be not perceived in a positive way. In James’ extract, to be aware that “there is a danger that we make assumptions about the boy who once dressed up as a princess” may be illustrative of how trainee teachers may perceive gender norms. As pointed out by James, this quote refers to the fact that gender is mostly conceived as a binary relation. As mentioned in the literature review, and as James points out, trainee teachers’ personal experiences influence the way they perceive these gendered and sexualized performances in the school context (Gerouki, 2010). Thus, it seems schools that promote a more open understanding of non-conforming children’s gender behaviour have to consider the social and cultural background and/or the training of the trainee teachers in gender and sexuality. Similarly, Alice, a trainee teacher, discusses the labels used when it is recognised that some acts do not conform to the social and cultural norms for gender behaviours:

Taking into account that five or six-year-olds might want to be things that aren't particularly stereotypical for that gender...And how do we describe that? I don't know, I don't know whether that is something sexual... I don't really think we have to kind of put any kind of label on it. Alice/PGCE

Alice’s extract “taking in account” implies that trainee teachers may consider young primary school children as a non-sexual individuals; and this may make trainee teachers perceive pupils to be ‘innocent’ about gender and sexuality performances and of the endurance of these non-conforming performances that challenge their gender identity. Thus, trainee teachers may be aware of gender identities and expressions in their social spaces but it is not clear how much trainees are aware of and recognise pupils’ exploration of their identities that maybe do not ‘belong’ to their biological sex in primary school spaces. These perceptions reinforce the concept of ‘childhood innocence’ with a moral preconception of heterosexual hegemonic practices in schools (Robinson, 2008). In the interviews with trainee teachers, it is clear that there is a

discussion about the relation between these moral preconceptions of childhood innocence, as social and cultural norms, and the debate of gender and sexualities in the educational context (Robinson, 2008) which create moral panic discourses within schools and the society. For instance, Cohen (2011) argues that societies are subject to moral panic when a situation “emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interest” (p.46).

In this sense, this awareness of moral panic in the school context is a representation of the misconception of non-conforming gender and the association with homosexuality and the hegemonic representations of gender and sexualities in the society. In primary schools, there is a sex stereotype expectation where the female and male biological body have to embody the masculine and the feminine social and cultural performances promoted by society. During the interviews, it seemed that trainees were aware of these ‘gender and sex expectations’ in the school context and that these expectations were not intentional by teachers or the pupils. Nonetheless, these social and cultural expectations are present in the primary school social spaces. And, when social conditions or circumstances do not fulfil these expectations it causes a ‘moral panic’ in trainees, teachers and parents. As Cohen (2011) discusses, moral panic is related to political morality in society; thus, there is a relation between social norms, moral panic and these gender expectations in school spaces, that may be perpetuated by cultural, philosophical or religious ideas by trainees, school staff, parents and the school communities. Here, as Ringrose and Renold (2012) highlight, sexualities, “sexual health and pressure” (p.336), have to be separated from the hypersexualisation of the childhood body, particularly a girl’s body, and its moral panic discourse (Egan & Hawkes, 2012).

Lastly, as the quotes by James and Alice illustrate, trainees and educators are aware of gender performances by pupils and of the heteronormative boundaries that the primary schools represent as a social space. These gender performances as pointed out by the trainees are ‘very subtle and almost invisible’. And, as DePalma and Atkinson (2009) discuss in the literature review, this heteronormative matrix can be seen as an invisible boundary in the

primary school context. For some trainees, these pupils' non-conforming behaviours might be seen as amusing and charming performances; but for some other trainees, it could be primary school children's expression of their gender and sexual identity. Thus, understanding gender as a binary concept limits trainees' and teachers' understanding of the spectrum of pupils' creativity and emotions in the school spaces. As discussed in the literature review, gender expression has different and infinite representations. In the interviews, trainee teachers were open to understanding that gender is far from the gender binary, but at the same time for them there is a boundary that is limited by their own cultural and social background. For trainees, understanding gender expression and how primary school children perform their own identity is a complex situation and it is a recurring challenging aspect that is discussed in the present study.

In this sense, in the interview analysis I refer to Butler (2004) on the 'normalization' and 'regulation' of gender and the contradictions that might have on the undoing and reconstruction of gender. James's reference to dressing as a princess might represent this boy as a 'queer' boy or a 'gay' boy or a 'feminine' boy; then, it is essential to question what is a non-conforming behaviour or/and a gender identity and expression, and, at what point trainee teachers have to interact with this performance. As Alice suggests, these children's non-conforming performances might not need a label to be represented in the gender/sex matrix. Nonetheless, in Chapter One, it was discussed that the heterosexual matrix shapes gender/sex norms and makes these behaviours 'compulsory heterosexual' or 'normative' (Renold, 2006). These misconceptions and misinterpretations of gender lead teachers and trainees to categorize and in some ways oppress pupils that perform differently from their gender/sex expectations.

Likewise, Alice's quote illustrates these trainees' questions: "how we describe that? I don't really think we have to kind of put any kind of label on it". Epstein and Johnson (2008) challenge these performances where children make their own identities: "when young people give meaning to their lives, they use

narratives and images that have already been produced elsewhere” (p.42). Thus, trainee teachers ought to be prepared to work with different pupils’ identities such as religion, ethnicity and social class. Trainees’ awareness of these pupils’ behaviours, as the identification of gender as a performance (self-production), could be seen as a social agency in the classroom. Nonetheless, it seems from the interviews that children’s gender performances are expected to be sex/gender conforming. This means that primary school children performances are being gendered and sexualized in the hegemonic heteronormativity matrix of the school spaces.

In the interviews, it seems that trainees are aware of these non-conforming behaviours because of their discourses based on the premise of ‘childhood innocence’ (Robinson, 2008) that are commonly represented in the western society. This means that for some trainee teachers are difficult to associate gender identity and expression in such early age. It can also be inferred that trainees and teachers may understand these situations where pupils do not want to conform in their gender social and cultural roles; and some of the difficulties that trainees have to meet are how to deal with these pupils non-conforming behaviours and how schools might deal with these situations.

Thus, dealing with pupils’ gender non-conforming behaviours can be very challenging for trainees and teachers in primary schools. For example, Payne and Smith (2014) argue that teachers felt a lack of preparation when working with situations such as “gender binary, gender enculturation, gender identity, gender fluidity” (p. 405) because of the inadequacy of their teaching programmes about these topics. This might not mean educators do not care about gender non-conforming pupils but that these pupils’ behaviours are mostly related to homosexuality (Meyer, 2010) and this could lead to a moral panic about the sexualisation of the primary school classroom. This association between being aware of gender stereotype and homosexuality can create trouble in the primary school context (DePalma & Jennet, 2010). In the following quotation Alice, a trainee teacher, points out the result of this

association. For example, gender non-conforming children in schools are part of a homophobic bullying issue that deal with a variety of pupils' gender and sexualities narratives:

Often homophobic bullying in primary schools particularly won't be because of someone's sexual orientation, or even if we see sexual orientation, it'd be because they are just acting differently in some way...some of the classical examples would be, you know, a boy who doesn't want to play sport and he's seen as a bit of a sissy, like. Alice/PGCE

As this quotation suggests, gender non-conforming behaviours might be interpreted in different ways; as the literature review established, gender is a complex concept. In particular, how trainee teachers understand and construct a concept varies according their knowledge, their cultural and social experiences, and their possible relation with the LGBT community. Thus, trainee teachers' awareness of gender identity and gender expressions is essential. Alice's awareness of how gender identity and performance is conflated with sexuality shows that there is a discourse of gender stereotypes and sexuality in the primary school context, particularly in relation to how trainees and teachers experience gender issues in primary schools. It is also interesting to note that Alice perceives that gender non-conforming behaviours are not related to sexual orientation. And it seems that this "classical examples" quote means that these situations are commonly seen in the primary school context.

As quoted by Alice, in school activities trainee teachers might encounter boys who are not sporty and that they are seen as 'sissies'. Reflecting on the trainees perceptions, it is useful to consider Butler's (2004) discussion on the use of the concept of gender and sexual difference "concerning the theoretical priority of sexual difference to gender, of gender to sexuality, of sexuality to gender, are all crosscut by another kind of problem, a problem that sexual differences poses, namely, the permanent difficulty of determining where the biological, the psychic, the discursive, the social being and end" (p.185). Butler discusses the use of the term gender and how it has been allowed too many

diverse definitions and understandings; nonetheless, there is “no simple definition of gender” (p.184). The relation between male/female and femininity/masculinity in the school context perpetuates the construction of gender from the binary framework. Thus, the theoretical perspectives that endorse these frameworks have to be reconsidered. In the interviews, these non-conforming behaviours and how teachers perceive themselves with a lack of preparation and fears in respect of children’s non-conforming gender (see Chapter Seven) are discussed. As discussed by DePalma and Atkinson (2006), primary school children “experience sexual response in infancy, and engage in sexual play in early childhood” (p. 340).

Hence, trainee teachers are aware of children’s non-conforming behaviours between them and their classmates. As Gottschalk (2003) remarks, gender non-conformity is mostly associated with same-sex sexuality; then, it is spoken about in connection with identity formation of homosexuality (often identity narratives of gay men). Trainee teachers mostly see this understanding of non-conforming from the boy’s perspective; girls in some ways are invisible in this non-conformity behaviour. For example, being a tomboy could just be seen as a way to escape the heterosexualised matrix in primary schools (i.e. playing football) (Renold, 2006; Renold, 2007). In this this sense, girls are able to bend gender expectations even when they resist gender binary expectations. As Reay (2001) argues, “performing gender is not straightforward; rather, it is confusing”; paradoxically, “there is evidence of hegemonic masculinity” (p.163) in the school spaces. As seen in this section, the trainees’ arguments on gender stereotypes are based on boys’ gender non-conforming experiences leading to moral panic and homophobia in schools (see Chapter Five).

4.2 “Girls’ football teams and boys’ poetry quests”: trainee teachers and the perceptions of gender stereotypes

As discussed above, trainee teachers’ awareness of gender non-conforming behaviour was illustrated with examples such as primary school boys being feminine or boys dressing like princesses and boys preferring ‘wheels’ or ‘dolls’.

This section discusses how trainees perceive these gender stereotypes in the primary school context. In the interviews, trainees' described examples of diverse perceptions on gender/sex stereotypes expectations and also some gender challenges such as primary school girls performing 'boy' gender expected practices such as football or being louder in the classroom. In the following quotation, Hannah, a trainee teacher, describes how a school integrated boys and girls in different stereotypes activities and Eva, a trainee teacher, implies her perception of girls playing football as a positive example of tackling gender expectation:

They have like the girl's football team and they've poetry quests where it's open to everybody and they really encourage the boys and girls to do it, but I mean you get trends, like looking at sort of results, say Maths, boys were doing better than girls in Maths, but the school's talked about it now and they are about even, so I just think it's about, I don't, I think people bought the gender perspectives on the children, you know, buy blue for boys and pink for girls, where's a thing about that I don't think there'd be much difference possibly. Hannah/BA Primary Education

It's nice the school am in, I'm in a [...] school and it's [...] but it's big on sports and that comes across really well with the girls. You know, they are all out playing football with the boys. Eva /PGCE

Here, as mentioned by Hannah and Eva, girls playing in football teams and boys doing poetry quest are activities that teachers would expected to belong to the opposite sex (Gerouki, 2010). Eva, for example, illustrates how girls and boys that participate in these practices together represent what schools do to integrate boys and girls and to challenge gender stereotypes. In this sense, there is a validation of the awareness of gender expectation in the primary schools space. This example highlights the discussion above about gender non-conforming behaviours in boys and girls and the masculine and feminine performances expectations. This is similar to the argument by Reay (2001) where hegemonic masculine representations remain in school spaces.

In a sense, Hannah makes reference to this hegemonic representation when she exemplifies how girls achieve the same academic performances as boys in maths and so on. These examples are some ways to challenge gender expectations in schools. It is not clear here if it is enough to place some girls in a football team or boys in poetry quest in order to challenge these gender expectations but it seems that trainees perceive these challenged situations as an approach to tackle gender stereotypes. This seems to be what Ivinson and Murphy (2006) discuss in their essay “boys don’t write romance”, where social and cultural practices of gender as hegemonic representation of norms and ideas are seen in primary school spaces. For instance, boys and girls are settled in how they have to perform according their gender based on their sociocultural background. Similarly, Hannah says, “people brought the gender perspectives on the children”, in her perception of gender binary, gender stereotypes have been constructed based on social expectations of gender. Nonetheless, Hannah offers a contradictory argument: “I don’t think there’d be much difference possibly”. For instance, although Hannah argues that there are no differences between a boy and girl in the primary school context, the idea of ‘blue and pink’ and ‘maths for boys and arts for girls’, which have developed these gender discursive gaps in education, remains.

Hannah also argues that the school settings changes the trend for boys being better in maths to girls being equal, and then teachers are able to reconstruct gender expectations. What it is to be a boy and girl in the primary classroom, and how boys and girls should perform are complex questions. Thus, these gender-learning expectations - as suggested by Hannah’s quotation “people brought the gender perspectives on the children” -, are seen as social and cultural roles perpetuated by heteronormative matrixes. As was mentioned in Chapter One, Butler (2004) theorised these gender regulations and how the seeking of the norm is regulate by the social and cultural constructs of power. Thus, gender norms suggest that masculinity and femininity have to be embodied for a particular boy or girl actor. It is argued then that trainee teachers have been troubled by the concept of gender when promoting gender performativity acts of boys and girls that perpetuated gender stereotypes in the

primary school. Therefore, non-conforming gender behaviour performances are seen as moral panic situations and perceived as problematic by teachers in the way gender performances have been practiced in schools.

In the online questionnaire, a second enquiry (Q.9) on the binary female and male sex and gender expectations asked trainee teachers if they thought that girls were more academic than boys and if boys were sportier than girls. Research in primary schools about gender expectations and learning performance, boys vs. girls' achievements, points out that boys typically under-achieve in relation to girls (Skelton, 2006). As discussed in Chapter One, Skelton (2006) implies that "what is implicit in sex-difference approaches is that there are fundamental biological and/or cognitive and/or emotional differences between boys and girls" (p. 140). In the questionnaire, around eighty per cent (82.9%) disagreed with the statement that girls are more academic than boys and boys are sportier than girls; less than ten percentage agreed that girls are more academic and boys sportier (see Table 8).

Table 8. Trainee teachers and the perceptions of gender stereotypes.			
Category Questions	Strongly agree/agree	Unsure	Strongly disagree/ Disagree
9. Girls are more academic than boys and boys are sportier than girls.	8.0	9.1	82.9

Behind this question, there is a contrast between how trainees perceive girls and boys in the educational setting. The question described 'girls as academic' and 'boys as sporty'. It seems that trainees observe that boys and girls perform equally in the academic and the sporty context. There is a contrast with the Hannah quote, above, where it appears that primary schools practices challenge gender stereotypes in the day to day activities such as girls' football teams. In this context, trainees might be conceiving of this question as 'equity' in

the classroom where educators try to balance these gender learning and performance differences. In this sense, trainee teachers perceive they can challenge pupils' school performance based on gender. Nonetheless, they are aware of pupils' gender differences such as what it means to be a boy or a girl (see section 4.1). In contrast to these discourses of equity in the learning performances and gender acts, some trainee teachers in the interviews showed their concern about these gender differences. As showed before, in the questionnaire almost ten percentages of trainees were unsure (9.1%) or agreed (8%) that girls are more academic than boys and boys are sportier. There is an argument among trainees about how girls and boys learn and behave in the classroom and in the playground. In this sense, Lucy, a trainee teacher, makes reference to these boy and girl behaviours:

Boys are often more rambunctious and loud, and girls more often are quieter and want to please. However, these are not necessarily true in all cases and probably have a lot to do with social conditioning. Lucy/PGCE

According to Lucy, there are differences that define boys' and girls' performances in the school context. This quote illustrates how some trainees perceive that there is an intersectionality that has to be considered, as suggested by Skelton, (2006) when gender-learning performances are discussed. Similarly, Reay (2001) exemplifies that gender discourses, such as masculinities in the classroom, differ according to social and cultural backgrounds. Skeleton also (cited by Reay, 2001) highlights, for example, that "there is a close association between football and hegemonic masculinities" (p. 162). Lucy also notes that there may be social and cultural conditions and intersectional identities that influence primary school children's gender social behaviours. For example, in the playground and in different activities, primary school children use social and cultural gendered symbols to represent themselves and their peers. Some trainees perception of these gender equal performances can be related to these perceptions of what it means being a boy and a girl in the classroom and the relation with being successful, whether academically or in sport, could bring inequalities to the schools setting.

4.2.1 'Sissy' or 'tomboy'

Earlier, Hannah explained that in her school “they have like the girls' football team and they've poetry quests where it's open to everybody and they really encourage the boys and girls to do it”. This quote exemplifies the fact that trainees consider girls playing football and boys doing drama poetry quests school practices that challenge the differences expected on the gender/sex conforming spectrums. As the example suggests, trainee teachers' expectations on gender are of girls being good at poetry and boys being sporty. In this sense, paradoxically Hannah's quote about 'the girls' football team and boys' poetry quests' highlights the difference between an hegemonic masculine 'football' team (Reay, 2001) and the reference to the 'girls' football team' endorsing gender difference sporting abilities in boys and girls. These trainee perceptions have been discussed in the literature review where it was pointed out that “girls interact more through written dialogue than boys, who tend to interact more through action and rapid, playful exchanges” (Calvert, cited by Craft 2010, p.92). Nonetheless, these trainees' perceptions, as argued by Craft (2010), are challenged when girls and boys are mixed together where it seem they interact differently. For example, “boys write more and girls are more playful” (p. 92). This perception could be related to the answer on the online questionnaire where trainee teachers argue that girls and boys have the same academic and physical abilities. Therefore, it could be implied that these gender performative acts are learnt and constructed within “stylized repetition of acts through time, and not a seemingly seamless identity” (Butler, 2006, p.61).

Trainees pointed out, as Butler discussed, that gender performative acts become temporary and might not need a label to superpose the action of children's behaviours in the primary school classroom. For instance, in school spaces a pupil might be transgressing the gender stereotype and performing different gender and sexualities dimensions. In schools, pupils who behave as a non-conforming gender are seen as 'sissy' or 'tomboy' (McInnes, 2004; Renold, 2006). As McInnes (2004) discusses, “the nesting of issues of gender nonconformity for young men under the umbrella discourse of homophobia

obfuscates the threat of nonmasculine boys to the social ordering of gender” (p.228). In this analysis how teachers and trainees encounter these behaviours is discussed; and whether they consider these behaviours as a way to identity expression or/and assumes there are “same-sex attracted” children (Ollis, 2009). In the interviews, Joshua, a trainee teacher, illustrates that categorising a pupil who is attracted to a same-sex peer might be ‘hard to recognise’. Nonetheless, he makes a difference between being a ‘feminine boy’ and a ‘masculine girl’; in this sense, he separates gender performance with sexual identity:

I think it's definitely harder to, to recognise, gay females, but I think you would just kind of, if they were typically, if they ... they are acting in a way it was typically said gay for a female, I think you are pretty down being a tomboy at that age. I think that's where the gender roles comes into be, whereas a young boy acting typically gay, you would, they would say "ohh, he is, it's effeminate". Joshua/PGCE

Joshua argues that to identify a ‘gay female’ is harder because as he argues “you are pretty down being a tomboy at that age”. This argument relates to early discussions on the hegemonic masculinities perceived in school spaces and the relation to how gender performances/identities are constructed (Reay, 2001; Renold, 2006). As discussed in the literature review, mostly boys are the ones who are exposed to discrimination and harassment for ‘being feminine’. It can also be inferred that trainees perceive the boy’s non-conforming behaviour as being drawn to be really feminine. According to Joshua, boys acting ‘typically’ can be recognised as his quotes show “young boy acting typically gay, you would, they would say ‘ohh, is, it's effeminate’” and are perhaps linked with homosexuality (same-sex attracted identity). Thus, Joshua perceives that there is a difference between girls’ and boys’ non-conforming behaviour. According to western social constructions of gender, these are seen as atypical and somehow related with the children’s sexuality rather than gender identity and/or expression. In a sense, Joshua makes references to how these gender

performances are perceived and how trainees might relate these gender performances with sexualities in the school context.

As the interviews with Hannah and Joshua suggest, trainees perceive these moments of non-conforming behaviour, even when they are transitory, as continuing behaviours that may develop as a sexual expressions (see Chapter One). For example, in the following quote from Alice, a trainee teacher, notes that “a boy who doesn't want to play sport and he's seen as a bit of a sissy” might represent how school perpetuates gender stereotypes. It seems that there is a perception of the conceptual meaning of gender and sexuality where boys' and girls' performances of gender are seen as binary and if they do not conform, they are suppose to change and normalize. In this interview extract, Alice underlines how she perceives that schools perpetuate gender stereotypes “reinforced by rigid gender roles”:

[...] one of the things that I think is quite important is, is more to a gender identity, and you know, teachers particularly in this country, well actually not necessarily particularly in this country, teachers tend sometimes, try to reinforce by rigid gender roles. So that means like boys playing football and girls playing netball, boys play a sport and girls doing crocheting, that kind of thing, and that can be enforced at quite a young age. Alice/PGCE

As Alice's quote illustrates, some trainees perceive and experience that school plays an important part in the reproduction of gender social roles in primary school children. This is in contrast to the example of Hannah who implies that schools challenge these gender stereotype expectations by doing more varied activities for boys and girls. In this example, Alice shows that there is a historical perception of how gender performance or social roles have to be claimed: “teachers tend sometimes, try to reinforce by rigid gender roles”. These “historical” performances are seen as natural acts, as exemplified by the trainees interviewed (Merleau-Ponty, cited by Butler 2006, p. 62). As noted by Alice, this perception of a ‘historical’ argument where children “can be enforced at quite a young age” represents how schools see gender in the primary school

settings. Thus, some trainees argue that gender performances may be temporary and that this performance depends of the pupils' backgrounds and the school settings. Nonetheless, for the interviews it could be inferred that the way trainee teachers perceive gender stereotype and expectations might affect their school practices around heteronormative discourses. Then trainees should reconsider their perceptions of gender performances. As Butler (2006) argues, gender is a social phenomenon where gender has to be rethought and reconstructed on the base of how society is constituted.

Hence, this reconstruction of gender is seen in schools as having girls playing football and boys participating on poetry quests, and challenges to gender stereotypes are perceived as concerns for schools and teachers. Then, trainee teachers' school practices, as discussed in the literature review, are in some ways, related to gender identities and the reproduction of social roles. For example, Renold (2006) exposes the hegemonic heterosexual matrix in the primary school discourses where gender expectations are tied to heterosexual discourses and gender expectations are perpetuated. Likewise, this process of gender and sexuality identity formation is experienced in the external environment of schools and families, and in the social and cultural framework, and "in both it is complementary and antagonistic" (Arnot, 2002, p.61). These representations of gender (sex) stereotype and the pursuit of masculinities and femininities and sexualities in schools are simultaneously related, as suggested by the following quotation:

I suppose people, homophobic bullying that I've seen is just sort of picking guns for how they are, how they behave, you know, dress, walk, talk, however and so it's very verbal and even teachers, you know, I've seen teachers call, all you know, that 'camp little boy' and this one or this out, and you just think 'oh!' Rosie/PGCE

Rosie, a trainee teacher, suggests that one of the main reasons for homophobic bullying in primary schools is the way some children 'behave'. Thus, these homophobic assaults could be not based on the grounds of being

lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (children identifying themselves as part of this sexual diversity community) but on a marginalization for being 'ambiguous' in the gender binary spectrum. This trainees' perceptions are similar to Meyer's (2010) discussion of "the threat of being perceived as a 'sissy' or a 'tomboy' and the resulting homophobic backlash limits the ways in which students participate in school life" (p.106). This Rosie extract illustrates how there are some discourses where overheard situations where teachers marginalize pupils, because of their non-conforming behaviour performances in school spaces, are part of the everyday school day. This shows that schools are seen as a heteronormativity space that perpetuates hegemonic heterosexualised discourses (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009). Thus, some trainee teachers might present a resistance to children's behaviours that are non-conforming throughout homophobic and discriminatory discourses (Mills, 2004). Thus, trainee teachers' awareness of how harmful the using of these discriminatory words can be is essential. Reflecting on this point, Peter, an educational officer, says:

We can't make an assumption about a child's behaviour and what they might grow up to be, but what we do need to make sure schools understand is that some of these children will grow up to be gay. James/EO.

For instance, how a girl or boy should behave in primary school is related to the heterosexual matrix in school spaces and this might be perceived as social conditioning in diverse hegemonic practices. James sees these behaviours of boys and girls as typical narratives which might suggest that trainees are aware of expectations of gender identities but that they are reluctant to associate non-conforming gender identities as constructed identities in school spaces. As the extracts from trainee Lucy showed before, some teachers have expectations of young boys being loud and young girls being quieter. According to Rosie, the terms used by teachers to describe children with non-average behaviour might be in some way heterosexist and misogynist. Gerouki (2010) discusses these statements as "the onset of homosexual attractions, non-straight behaviour, sissy attitudes, effeminate mannerisms and behaving differently" (p.338). As

discussed in the last section, trainee teachers perceive that boys are the most harassed and discriminated against based on the way they behave; for example, being 'sissy' or 'feminine' or if they act differently from their male peers (Epstein, 1998; Gerouki, 2010; Jackson, 2006).

Thus, trainees' narratives show that heterosexist hegemonic discourses of power, and the assumptions about being masculine and feminine, are present in the primary schools context. Butler (2004) discusses this idea and the construction of being masculine and feminine in her discourse of what gender is and how it is constructed from the normative matrix. In these trainees' narratives, there is a perception that being 'feminine' and being a 'boy' do not comply with the normative matrix of binary gender. The trainee teachers' enduring question is that these acts of harassment and homophobic discrimination might be based on gender (sex) stereotype. Although, there is a perceptible relationship between these two concepts, as has been mentioned before, gender and sexuality are distinct concepts that are interrelated. Finally, some trainees indicate that these gender expectations norms can be challenged and redefined.

4.3 Undoing gender stereotype in primary schools

This section discusses trainees' perception of gender beyond the gender binary and the heterosexual perspective of social and cultural reproduction of gender, sex and sexualities in the primary classroom. As discussed before, being a boy or a girl has been heterosexualised in the primary school classroom (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Reay, 2001; Renold, 2007). In Chapter Two, it was argued that trainees should be prepared to reflect positive images of masculinity and femininity and to create spaces where children can express themselves equally and are able to achieve the same goals. In the interviews with trainee teachers, there was a sense that schools treat boys and girls equally in respect of gender and sexualities, Also, trainees perceive that some schools have a positive reaction to primary school children who belong to diverse genders or on the sexuality spectrum. In the following quotation, Ellie, a trainee teacher, discusses

the idea of having a transgender pupil in her classroom and she highlights that teachers should make all pupils feel safe:

I think absolutely. I think that a child should be made to feel safe so they can do that, and if that's what he/she honestly feels and believes then yeah we need to support them, ain't it? Ellie/BA Primary Education.

In a sense, Ellie makes a reference to creating a safe environment for pupils who need support. Ellie continues to explain, "if that's what he/she honestly feels and believes then yeah we need to support them". It seems that trainees are open to supporting different pupils with issues in order to create safe spaces. In the case of gender non-conforming behaviour, trainees might perceive that heteronormative schools and masculine hegemonic spaces on primary schools (Reay, 2001) have to be challenged. As Skelton (2002) points out, there is a reproduction of hegemonic masculinity in the school spaces. It is argued that this reproduction of social gender might have to be challenged by confronting trainees' beliefs and preconceptions about gender stereotypes in the classroom. Trainees argue about how teachers and parents might influence children gender behaviour too. For example, Hannah and Alice, trainee teachers, suggest:

I think people brought the gender perspectives on the children. Hannah/BA Primary Education

Teachers tend sometimes, try to reinforce by rigid gender roles... that kind of thing, and that can be enforced at quite a young age. Alice /PGCE

These quotes reflect a perception of how gender is enforced and embodied in the primary school classroom. These arguments are supported by the literature review; for example, Reay (2001), Renold (2007) and DePalma and Atkinson (2009) discuss how hegemonic heterosexual discourses are portrayed in primary school settings and perpetuate gender binary discourses. For instance, this debate is reinforced with the moral preconceptions of

childhood innocence and social and cultural norms (Renold, 2002; Robinson, 2008). In this respect, Alice highlights two things regarding the gendered classroom. First, she says that there is a perception that teachers have the power to reproduce gender stereotypes and that there is tendency to do that. And secondly, it seems that trainees are aware that children can be embodied in gender social roles from “quite a young age”. It can also be inferred that there is an understanding of how schools may perpetuate gender stereotypes based on teachers’ social and cultural backgrounds and expectations. In the following quotation, Rosie, a trainee teacher, refers, too, to how pupils at a young age may be naïve about gender roles and expectations:

So at young age you are probably are more open to sort of look at the world in different eyes than an adult might to, so to build on their ideas, and you know and you look at a Year 1 class and, you know everybody plays with everybody, and as they get older, and obviously people are different, you are not gonna like everyone and for various reasons, but it is about saying them “That's OK”, you know. Rosie/PGCE.

As this quotation suggests, trainees perceive pupils as more naïve about gender or sexual biological differences among their peers at a young age: “you know everybody plays with everybody”. This implies that there is a perception of gender neutrality even for teachers at young age. Rosie argues that pupils may be “more open to sort of look at the world with different eyes”; here it can be inferred that social roles and expectations are embodied during our lives in different contexts. In this case, it is suggested that pupils learn about gender stereotypes and expectations in school spaces. In this narrative, Rosie explains that as children “get older, and obviously people are different“, the school environment might change. For example, a non-gender conforming boy in a Year 1 class could be perceived differently from his equivalent peer in Year 4. Paradoxically, trainees are susceptible to children’s gender expectations too.

As discussed before, trainees recognise this gender non-conforming behaviour in the classroom and they describe these performances as ‘being

effeminate' or 'a bit sissy'. Trainees perceive these non-conforming performances and it seems that they are aware of these narratives where those categorical words embodied the hegemonic masculinity and the expectations of heteronormativity in primary schools. Thus, trainee teachers discuss how they can challenge gender expectations and look for equality on gender and sexuality issues when it has been pointed out that some primary school children have dominant images of gender stereotypes. These dominant performances, such as hypersexualized toys, make pupils aware of gender identities and expressions in their cultural and social frameworks. Nonetheless, Maya, a trainee teacher, gives an example of how some classroom activities could be seen as non-gendered behaviours and could challenge these dominant gender expectations:

When it comes to something like junk modelling, the girls and the boys they would all junk model they, doesn't seem to be gender specific, you can do what you like with junk modelling, but there are certain blocks and bricks, and stuff ... that the boys play with and the girls are not interested in.
Maya/BA Primary Education

Maya's quote explores the idea that some activities can be gender neutral. This means boys and girls participate without being submitted to a gender inquiry and they both like to participate in the same activities such as "junk modelling". In contrast, when the activities are more boys specific, such as "blocks and bricks" girls seem not to have an interest in playing with them. Here, Maya makes two arguments: the first about sexual differences where boys and girls may have different gender behaviours based on their biological backgrounds. For instance, trainees perceive that boys like to play with 'masculine' toys where being a boy represents regimes of masculinities (Jackson, 2006). These activities where boys are involved in "sparring and physical" acts and where boys "are able to exhibit their heterosexual masculinities" (Kehily & Nayak, 2006, p.132-3) have been discussed by trainee teachers throughout this chapter. In the second argument, trainees seem to perceive girls as being quieter and not to relate with these more 'physical' activities.

As discussed in Chapter One, Reay (2006) pointed out that there is a dominant discourse of a “masculinity” hierarchy for boys where trainees perceive that girls’ expectations might be different from boys’ expectations, for example ‘being sporty’. Also, trainees think that although they prepare non-gendered activities, boys and girls might look for these gendered activities by themselves. It can be inferred that Maya’s illustration refers to a social construction where children understand social roles and expectations. In the following quote, Eva, a trainee teacher, reinforces what has been discussed about ‘young age’ and how girls and boys may look for different gender expressions:

I think girls are much more self-conscious and they seem older in the years, and the girls definitely, at that age, when they are younger there's not really much difference. Boys are still into the sports and just doing, you know, boy things, not all of them, but you know, the majority of them. Eva/PGCE.

As Eva argues, there is a perception that when children are young it is easy for trainee teachers to challenge gender stereotypes. Thus, trainees have to consider the different dimensions of gender and children’s varied social and cultural identities too. Some trainee teachers’ experiences of non-conforming gender or undoing normalised gender are continuous and emerging challenges that have to be understood since the training programmes. Therefore, trainees perceived these gender normalizations as social conditioning and natural outcomes in primary school children. As Maya suggests:

I think boys and girls behave differently for lots of different reasons, mm you know some of that socialization, sort of I don't know whether some sort of innate ... capacity to see things differently and then actually process things in a different way, eh mm, to have different needs from adults, you know I really don't ... there are differences but whether that's based around gender I don't know. Maya /PGCE

Maya's perception of gender is illustrated by the understanding of gender as part of socialization and part of being innate in any individual. Maya's description of how boys and girls have different capacities and how they process things in different ways seems to exemplify biological differences that contribute to gender social roles. This perception aligns with MacNaughton's (2006) argument that, "children learn how to behave in ways appropriate to their sex role or category through observation, imitations and modelling" (p.128). As discussed before, trainees perceive girls as being more flexible across the gender spectrum than boys, where boys who cross over into the feminine side of the spectrum may be subjected to discrimination and harassment (see Chapter 5). Thus, understanding that it is necessary to re-think what gender is, and how social and cultural expectations of gender affect behaviours in primary school children, is a key challenge in addressing gender and sexuality issues in primary schools.

Summary

This chapter has discussed trainee teachers' awareness and perception of gender stereotypes in primary schools. The main findings suggest that:

- Trainee teachers are aware of gender binary expectations in primary schools (hegemonic heterosexualized acts in the school spaces);
- There is an awareness of a moral panic³ scenario in the debate about gender/sexualities in the educational context;
- Trainee teachers perceive/articulate a distinction between gender identity and performance and sexuality in the primary school;

³ As mentioned on section 4.1.1, Cohen (2011) discusses 'moral panic' as a situation that threat social and cultural beliefs and behaviours (p.46).

- This gender/sexuality discourse has become conflated with the essentialist discourse of gender binary and pupils' gender performance expectations;
- Trainee teachers perceive that gender non-conforming (gender/sex stereotyping) in primary schools is seen as the initiation of homophobic bullying based on discourses of masculinity as the baseline of gender performances/identities discourses (heterosexual matrix in primary schools).

As discussed in Chapter Two, Meyer (2010) and DePalma and Atkinson (2009) suggested that gender (sex) roles, such as 'pink for girls' and 'blue for boys' are sexual representations which are strongly constructed since early childhood and which promote dominant values in gender and sexualities, including normative understandings of 'female' and 'male' sexual behaviours, identities and desires. This may appear a simplistic representation of how societies perceive gender representation but it is an everyday example of how those images have an impact on the lives of primary school children. In the narrative of 'the boy who once dressed up as a princess', trainee teachers' awareness of different dimensions of gender, sex (biological), sexual identities and expression was pointed out. Likewise, the trainees' perceptions of gender and sexual performances were discussed. The trainees' conception of gender from the male/female binary perspective in the primary school context was explored. In a similar way, the ways in which trainee teachers perceive gender expression and gender identity as a social and cultural hegemonic gender expectation that is perpetuated in primary school was examined. Primary schools battle to overcome derogatory language associated with gender non-conforming behaviours, and problems such as homophobia have to be challenged with a better understanding of what constitutes gender.

Finally, trainee teachers perceive that in school settings binary patterns such as being a boy and being a girl, masculinity and femininity performances, are created and perpetuated in everyday school practices. Throughout this analysis

and discussion, the trainee teachers have questioned these images of masculinities or femininities and how they influence their sexualities and gender/sex performances. Because of the trainee teachers' perceptions it seems that gender has to be taken responsibly in teaching practices and in teacher training as a key to prevent different social inequalities, discrimination, harassment and homophobic bullying. Prior studies have noted the importance of trainee teachers' awareness of equality rights, multicultural contexts and social diversity in promoting positive attitudes and perceptions towards homophobia or other discriminative practices in schools (Curran, Chiarolli & Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2009; Gerouki, 2010; Milton, 2003).

Chapter 5. Trainee teachers and the awareness and perceptions of homophobia in primary schools

This chapter discusses trainee teachers' awareness and perception of homophobic language and homophobic bullying in primary schools. As in Chapter 4, the key themes discussed in this chapter emerged from the online questionnaire and interviews with the trainee teachers and educational officers (see Chapter Three). Firstly, the trainee teachers' awareness of the use of homophobic language such as 'gay' or 'poof' in primary schools is explored. Secondly, how trainee teachers perceive homophobia, such as homophobic bullying and homophobic language, in primary schools is examined. This second part also discusses how social and cultural factors in the popular media, particularly on television, interact to perpetuate homophobic narratives in primary schools. Finally, the chapter explores the ways in which trainee teachers perceive the challenges of these homophobic acts in their respective primary school settings. As discussed in Chapter Three, one hundred and ninety-eight trainee teachers responded to the questionnaire (NQ=198) from twenty-one different universities across the United Kingdom; a total of eleven trainee teachers and three educational officers were interviewed. In the questionnaire, seven of the twenty-one questions were related to homophobia and homophobic bullying in primary schools and a descriptive analysis of the questionnaire finding is presented in this chapter. The main analysis presented here is based on the interviews with trainee teachers (see Chapter Three, section 3.4).

As discussed in Chapter One, homophobia and homophobic bullying in schools have to be seen as expressions of violence, harassment and intimidation (Phillips, 2007; Poteat & Rivers, 2010; Smith, 2004; Sanchez, 2009). Likewise, as discussed in Chapter 4, pupils who perform non-conforming gender stereotypes and behaviour, in relation to social and cultural expectations are the most likely to suffer from homophobic language and homophobic bullying acts. By talking about non-conforming gender stereotypes, this study refers to the understanding of 'non-conforming' in relation to the hegemonic norms of

heteronormative societies, where socially and biologically defined male and female behaviours are expected in pupils from an early age. As discussed in Chapter One, school spaces such as playgrounds, toilets, and school corridors and other common spaces are where these language harassment and assaults generally occur (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; HRW, 2001; Meyer, 2010). In exploring the use of homophobic language in primary schools, informal conversations with trainee teachers reveal that trainees witness homophobic language in the social spaces of schools. A majority of trainee teacher participants in the questionnaire agree that primary school students are aware of homophobic language such as 'that's so gay' or 'poof' (see Table 9). Interestingly, this finding is supported by recent research in UK such as the non-profit organization, Stonewall (see Chapter Two, section 2.2), in which it was noted that teachers in primary schools are aware of homophobic bullying taking place in early years settings.

This study similarly shows that trainee teachers are aware of homophobic language and bullying in the primary school setting. Trainees set out the social and cultural context that defines pupils' understanding and knowledge of 'being an LGBT individual' and how pupils might understand and perceived homophobia outside and at school. In this chapter analysis, children learn about homophobia as it is presented on popular media, mostly TV, and as a social agency that perpetuates, challenges and addresses sexual diversity issues in different dimensions and perspectives in our social and cultural frameworks. To conclude the chapter, the last section explores how trainees consider they could challenge homophobia in their schools and how their schools are currently challenging homophobic language and bullying through educational policies that advocate sexual diversity rights. The last section also discusses how LGBT pupils in primary school are perceived and why it is important that trainee teachers challenge homophobia and advocate a positive culture around sexual diversity, for example by including transgender children at primary school.

5.1 "That's so gay": trainee teachers and the awareness of homophobia in primary schools

In the online questionnaire, the findings from the present study reveal that over half of the trainee teachers (64.1%) strongly agree/agree that pupils are subject to homophobic language and bullying in primary schools (Q2). In other words, in a training teaching classroom more than half of the trainee teachers are aware of pupils using sexually derogative words in primary schools (see Table 9). Similarly, the Stonewall School Report and The Teachers' Report (Guasp Ellison & Satara, 2014; Guasp, 2012) revealed significant findings about teachers' perceptions of homophobia in schools: "two in five primary school teachers report hearing other insulting homophobic remarks such as 'poof', 'dyke', 'queer' and 'faggot'" (p.3). It is noteworthy that when comparing findings from the present study with existing research, established teachers working in schools have almost the same perceptions as the trainee teachers who may be working in very different ways in primary classrooms. The findings suggest that homophobic bullying is present and is recognizable even to individuals working less regularly in primary school settings and that trainees and teachers are probably more aware of these issues. This suggestion is based on the trainees' narratives of 'innocence' in pupils' practice of homophobic language and homophobic bullying acts in schools (see section 5.2.1), where trainees and teachers may underrate these behaviours.

Despite the finding from interviews and questionnaire data that many trainee teachers were aware of homophobic language and behaviour in primary school, it is important to note that a third of trainees (26.3 %) were unsure if these acts were performed in primary school, and, further one in ten strongly disagree/disagree that primary school pupils are subject to homophobic language or bullying in primary schools. The question (Q.2) about homophobic bullying and homophobic language explored the extent to which trainees feel that primary pupils are subjected to these acts. Again, in the next question (Q.3), trainee teachers were asked if they could provide any evidence (personal, academic or social interactions) that illustrated that these acts took place.

Nearly two thirds of trainees (64.7 %) revealed being aware of evidence about homophobia and bullying in the primary schools. Almost one of third (27.8 %) were unsure about any evidence and 7.5 % of trainee teachers strongly disagree/disagree that there was any evidence that homophobic bullying takes place and that homophobic language is used in primary schools (see Table 9).

Table 9. Trainee teachers and the awareness of homophobic language and bullying.			
Category Questions	Strongly agree/agree	Unsure	Strongly disagree/disagree
2. Pupils are subjected to homophobic language or bullying in primary schools.	64.1	26.3	9.6
3. There is no evidence that homophobic bullying takes place and that homophobic language is used in primary schools.	7.5	27.8	64.7

As Robinson and Ferfolja (2008) have argued, trainee teachers “often consider sexuality, particularly lesbian and gay sexualities, as a moral, private, adult issue relegated to personal relationships and family” (p. 127). This could be related to the predisposition of some trainee teachers and primary teachers in general to consider primary school children as naïve and innocents within the discourse of sexualities (Kelley et al., 1999; Robinson, 2008) (also discussed in Chapter 4). In those cases, homophobic bullying in primary schools, when it does occur, may be interpreted as ‘sexually innocent’ acts (Robinson, 2008). In this sense, a perception of pupils as sexually innocent may underlie some trainee teachers’ perception that pupils ‘cannot’ perpetrate homophobic bullying.

As Amelia, educational officer, argues in the interview, some pupils use homophobic words “even without them having a full understanding of what it

is'. Thus, further research is needed on how primary school pupils use these words and in which sense pupils misuse these terms. In contrast to these 'innocent' performances, where pupils are perceived of as not being aware of homophobic language or acts, interviews with the trainees reveals pupils' appropriation of homophobic language in the school settings. It was mentioned in Chapter One and supported by evidence in Chapter Four, that school pupils are aware of homophobic language and that regardless of their sexual orientation they might experience homophobic bullying in the primary schools.

Knowing where students experience homophobic bullying might clarify the importance of awareness of the LGBT community to trainee teachers. In the findings of this study the trainees' awareness about homophobic language and bullying in the primary school setting but at the same time their lack of preparation to address it was noticeable. Likewise, it seems that trainees' awareness of the use of homophobic language is associated with pupils being naïve about derogatory language practices, and that primary school children misunderstand because of their status as sexual (and intellectual) 'innocents'. In the questionnaire, just over half of the trainee teachers were aware of pupils being subjected to homophobic language or bullying in primary schools and the same half had witnessed these acts. As future teachers, it is expected that trainees be prepared to address diverse barriers to inclusion in the educational learning environment.

Consequently, pupils' use of derogatory language and homophobic language may perpetuate homophobic bullying and acts of harassment and discrimination in primary schools. In this sense, trainee teachers pointed out that in primary schools generally homophobic bullying is perpetuated because of the existing gender-sex stereotypes (see Chapter Four). As Meyer (2010) argues "fear of having boys act too girlish, and as a result, possibly be perceived as gay shows how homophobia is a by-product of sexism" (p. 65). Even though, sexual identities and expression are just one part of the pupils'/teachers' identities, it is an essential part of any individual. The terms 'that's gay' and 'poof' are used in different social spaces and it is understood as a way to identify

something that you disagree with. Therefore, for some primary school pupils, these words mean that being gay is 'wrong' and/or is 'not ok'.

5.2 “Excuse me, what do you mean?”: homophobic language and homophobic bullying in primary schools

This section discusses how trainee teachers perceive the use of homophobic language and homophobic bullying in primary schools settings. For instance, the title of this section: *“excuse me, what do you mean?”* was an expression used by one of the trainees interviewed reflecting on pupils' homophobic language in the classroom where expressions as 'that's gay' are repeated through a characterized discourse in the schools spaces. The literature review discussed how teachers tackle students' homophobic bullying and language in primary schools, where they are seen as children who misunderstand and/or misrepresent such derogatory 'language' and bullying acts. By asking pupils 'what do you mean?' when using homophobic language, it seems that some trainees perceive pupils as naïve about gender and sexual issues (see Chapter Four, section 4.1). Consequently, when asking pupils what they 'mean' it is critical for the trainees to know what they are dealing with. It might be implied that once trainees know what a pupil 'means' by, for example the word 'gay', they could tackle the derogatory language using different approaches such as referring to this behaviour as 'homophobic' or as a 'naive' use of the term. In the online questionnaire, trainees were asked two questions about their perception of primary school pupils' awareness of homophobic language such as 'that's so gay' or 'poof'.

Three quarters of trainee teachers (75.3 %) think primary school children are aware of specific homophobic language such as 'that's so gay' or 'poof' (Q1) (see Table 10). This is related to the almost two thirds of trainees that believe that primary students are subjected to homophobic language or bullying in primary schools. As presented in Chapter One, previous studies showed that three quarters of primary school teachers report hearing language such as 'that's so gay' or 'you're so gay' or derogatory words such as such as

'poof', 'dyke', 'queer' or 'faggot' in primary schools (Guasp et al., 2014; Poteat & Rivers, 2010). This means that there are similarities in the perceptions of the use of derogatory language in primary school settings between the teachers' reports and this study with trainee teachers. Thus, pupils' understanding of the use of this derogatory language is essential to address homophobic bullying in school spaces. For instance, pupils' behaviours in the classroom and school settings are shaped by their gender identities, that are constructed and based on games in the playground, the clothes they wear and classroom interactions with their peers (Francis, 1998; Renold, 2000).

Table 10. Trainee teachers and the perceptions of homophobic language.			
Category Questions	Strongly agree/agree	Unsure	Strongly disagree/disagree
1. I think primary school pupils are aware of homophobic language such as 'that's so gay' or 'poof'.	75.3	9.6	15.1
4. I do not think homophobic language is tolerated in primary schools.	68.2	20.2	11.6

This means that primary school children tend to position and perform both masculinity and femininity through relational discourses, and the role of schools may perpetuate this dichotomy and impact on the gender identities of children. Schools represent gendered and sexualised social and cultural values and at the same time may represent discrimination and prejudices towards some of these 'non-conforming' performances (Allan et al., 2008; Flores-Crespo, 2007; Renold, 2000). To resist this dichotomy and not to represent 'appropriate' femininity and masculinity discourses might cause harassment and discrimination towards these non-conforming children in the schools context.

Thus, the role of the school in challenging homophobic bullying is essential. As show in Table 10, two-thirds of trainee teachers (68.2%) think homophobic language is not tolerated in primary schools (Q4). It seems, then, that trainees think of school as a social cosmos where homophobic bullying and language is challenged.

5.2.1 Trainee teachers and the perceptions of homophobic language

Homophobic language has been described as homophobic labels or appellations to any performance or situation that might be related to or perceived as part of the LGBT community. Similarly, homophobic language has been described as a practice of verbal act to discriminate and harass individuals, particularly homosexuals, based on their sexualities (Smith, 2004; Sanchez, 2009; Poteat & Rivers, 2010). Amelia, an education officer, and Joshua, a trainee teacher, elaborate about pupils using homophobic language in the primary school context:

[...] sometimes homophobic language can be used, especially amongst younger children, even without them having a full understanding of what it is you know if they say something like "that song is gay. Amelia/EO.

I find sometimes the word "gay" and "faggot", and things like that bandied around, children don't know what they mean. Joshua/PGCE.

As Amelia and Joshua discuss in their interviews, primary school children might not fully understand the use of "gay" and "faggot"; nevertheless most of what children learn is through language. In these quotes, as discussed before, there was a discourse around pupils' 'innocence' about the use of homophobic and derogatory language. This could be followed by Amelia and Joshua's statements such as "even without them having a full understanding" and "children don't know what they mean" which imply that educators are aware of these performances but they perceive or imply that the understanding of childhood sexuality is associated with innocence. Thus, teaching in non-

gendered classrooms and being aware of derogatory use of language might improve the sexual diversity inputs in primary schools. Also, as Meyer (2010) points out, “the problem of ignoring and devaluing gender and sexual diversity in schools is persistent, prevalent, and has long-term tangible harms on many students” (p.101). Thus, teaching in non-gendered classrooms and being aware of derogatory use of language might improve the sexual diversity inputs in primary schools.

In contrast, Robinson (2008) discusses this narrative of “children’s sexuality within this discourse is read as non-existent or immature at the most” (p.116). It is suggested that these discourses are related to the promotion of heterosexualised hegemonic discourses rather than the presumption of gender and sexuality behaviour in children where primary school children are seen as gender and sexually aware (Renold, 2000, 2002; DePalma & Atkinson, 2009). On this point about pupils’ awareness of their own gender/sexuality performances, it seems some trainees perceive pupils’ gender/sexuality discourses as non-existent. In this sense, trainees undervalue the use of derogatory language or discriminatory acts grounded in sexual diversity issues. This point is also articulated by Joshua who mentions that, “children don’t know what they mean” when they use derogatory words to their peers. Nonetheless, children’s behaviours where boys don’t want to be ‘girls’ or girls don’t want to be ‘boys’ might contradict this discourse of gender and sexuality illiteracy and supposed ignorance/innocence. In the primary school classroom, there is a contradiction where sexuality is suppressed but gender performances are pushed to the limits.

These gender performances in the primary classroom have been discussed in relation with the way girls are seen as ‘quiet’ and boys as ‘loud’; if these acts are not performed in the classroom, they can be seen as negatively/problematically different or non-conforming. As a result, trainees perceive that some pupils might use words such as ‘faggot’ or ‘tomboy’ to refer to their classroom peers’ non-conforming behaviour. In the school context, as seen in the literature review, these derogatory words are related to homophobic bullying in the form of verbal assaults and harassment provoked by gender-

conforming expectations. For example, boys who are not sporty are seen as 'girlish', and girls being sporty are seen as 'boyish'. As discussed before, these pupils' non-conforming behaviour might incite harassment and discrimination by their peers and even their teachers (see Chapter Four). Although most trainee teachers in this study seem aware of pupils' performances of particular gender identities, some still perceive that pupils "don't understand what it means" or they don't have a "full understanding" of these performative acts. These statements about pupils using words without understanding the "true meaning" of derogatory words is noted in various studies which argue that primary school children are innocent of sexualities beliefs. Such misconceptions explain the prevalence of the underestimation of homophobic language in primary schools, (DePalma & Jennett, 2007; Robinson, 2008). For instance, Laura noted that some students might use derogatory words to create tension in the school spaces:

*I think you do see children using language that I am not sure they even really know what it means but they hear it from somewhere and they know there are certain words they shouldn't use and sometimes it is more the case that they know they shouldn't been saying and that is why they're saying to get reaction rather than actually meant to cause offence.
Laura/PGCE.*

In this sense, Laura implies that some children might know what derogatory words mean but seek to create tension with other pupils. According to Laura's quote, there is a perception that these derogatory words used by pupils are well-known or that at least are recognized by children in primary schools. Also, there is an assumption that pupils recognize that the use of these words is 'wrong'. This previous extract illustrates how trainees perceive discriminatory language: "you know of course all schools challenged all types of prejudices, and children know racism is wrong, children know that certain things are wrong". This quotation makes clear how schools challenge "all types or prejudices" such as racism. Then, Amelia points out that pupils "know that certain things are wrong". It can be inferred that this "certain things are wrong"

refers to homophobic language and bullying. In this sense, there is an association with gendered and sexualised derogatory language with the act of doing something that is perceived as “wrong” such as racism; except that this sexualized and gendered derogatory language is not perceived as verbal violence and harassment. Based on Amelia quotation, it can also be inferred that there is a complexity in the use of gendered language in schools, because it perpetuates hegemonic heterosexualised discourses and it endorses a discriminatory connotation to gender/sexualities performance acts.

Thus, there is a discussion about whether or not pupils completely understand the use of this language as “homophobic” because of the verbal and physical violence practice related with gender stereotypes and sexualities. In contrast to the trainees’ perception of primary school children’s ‘innocence’, trainees questioned how and why pupils might use and perform these discriminatory acts. Rosie, a trainee teacher, and Peter, an educational officer, discuss the use of this homophobic language in primary school pupils and how pupils might perceive these words as positive or negative depending on their previous knowledge of these words. Negative connotations of the word ‘gay’, for example, imply that is wrong to be gay or being different. Rosie points out how a word changes with time. When she attended school, ‘gay’ was related to being ‘happy’ and now she realises that the use has different connotation in the schools:

So and as you are guys saying about how the word ‘gay’ is always seen as a negative connotation...When I was in school that’s what it was, but I didn’t know why it was, and then I always remember being told, that you know gay mean ‘happy’ until it was really, I always remember it was very bizarre how that sort of comes around, but I’d just say now some people don’t tackle it positively, is just ‘don’t say that word’, which kind of adds to the issue to just be and that’s it just should be positive. Rosie/PGCE.

[...] they hear negative things about that and therefore choose to use sort of insults and they don’t necessarily understand you know, so they might call

someone 'gay' or they might either use these sort of, they might use language that is used in a derogatory word not knowing what it means. Peter/EO.

In primary school, the main discourse about sexualities belongs to the gender dichotomy and conforming to gender expectations; pupils might recognise and understand the meaning involve in these homophobic 'appellations' in the primary school spaces. Even though it seems that trainees' arguments about pupils not knowing that these derogatory words might be correct, it seems that there is an emotional connotation intended to discriminate or harass others. For example, when some of these derogatory words are used to have a negative connotation about boys who are more academic than sporty and they can be perceived as "not a real man" (Jackson, 2010, p.510). Therefore, the trainees' oversimplistic perception of pupils using derogatory words to their peers may be considered as a lack of understanding of discriminatory and homophobic discourses in the primary school context. Likewise, the trainee teachers' simplistic reaction to these performances may perpetuate homophobic language and bullying.

As noted by Rosie, trainees and teachers that do not tackle this language positively by challenging these appellation acts, may be passively disinterested in challenging homophobic language and harassment in primary schools. Also, challenging homophobic language passively, such as "just don't say that word", it can be seen with a non-objective intention. Being passive or/and neutral in addressing homophobia can perpetuate gender and sexual discrimination and fail to tackle the root causes of gendered structural inequalities in primary schools. It seems that being aware of the existence of this homophobic language is not enough to address verbal acts that discriminate against and harass LGBT or gender non-conforming primary school children. For example, pupils who have reproduced the use of 'that's so gay' arbitrarily to describe situations or things that they do not feel comfortable or disgusting with have to be challenged in their derogatory discourses. In this way, the use of the expression 'that's so gay' is not being seen as a homophobic word but just as a derogatory slang.

Here, according to Joshua, a trainee teacher, teachers should address and challenge this language when students use simply 'non intentional' derogatory words such as 'that's so gay':

It'd be better to say 'this is the word faggot and this where the word comes from, d'you think this is a nice word? This is the word 'gay' and you are using it to say bad, d'you think that's a good thing to do?' ...and talking about what the words mean. Joshua/PGCE.

In this interview extract, Joshua underlines again that pupils might not know or understand what they mean when they mention the word 'gay' or 'faggot'. As DePalma and Jennett (2010) discuss "the predominance of name-calling and the use of 'gay' as a term of abuse in primary schools were not seen as homophobic" (p.19); this argument was presented by teachers who had had experienced and consider these acts irrelevant. Nonetheless, as Joshua points out it is "better" to address the use of these words with primary school students. In this way, as Joshua implies, it would be possible to create a discussion with pupils that challenges the meanings of derogatory words and, as pointed out by Rosie, it might be possible to create a positive meaning for diverse words such as 'gay' or 'lesbian'. It can be seen from the quotations above that homophobic language is a practice of verbal violence. As discussed in the literature review, particular aggressions such as name-calling are more common in primary schools. Finally, it seems that trainees see these practices as a form of humiliation and shaming and that these acts are directly related to gender stereotyping and homophobic bullying.

5.2.2 Trainee teachers and the perceptions of homophobic bullying

Thus, homophobic language is deep-rooted in the cultural and social lives of young people and may perpetuate homophobic bullying and harassment (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; DePalma & Jennett, 2010; Poteat & Rivers, 2010; Robinson & Ferfolja, 2008). Although these acts of physical and verbal assaults are generally on pupils who identify themselves as part of the lesbian, gay,

bisexual or transgender community, it seems that pupils who behave with non-conforming gender (sex) social and cultural stereotypes are submitted to these homophobic acts too. As noted by James, an educational officer, homophobic bullying is not only targeted at the LGBT community:

I don't think that only people who are gay or have gay family members suffer homophobic bullying...and so actually anybody who is perceived to be different, whether it is that they've, I don't know got a disability, whether it is they're not good at football, whether it's that them all quiet, whatever it is. James/EO.

James illustrates two important points in this passage. First, he seems to relate homophobic bullying with gender stereotypes in primary schools. In this extract, “anybody who is perceived to be different” illustrates how homophobic bullying in primary schools is currently related to primary school children’s non-conforming behaviours. In this context ‘being different’ refers to the sex dichotomy and what is expected of being a boy or a girl in the primary school context. Secondly, James highlights how pupils’ gender (sex) non-conforming behaviours are associated with homosexuality by peers and teachers in the primary schools too (discussed in depth in Chapter One). Notably, homophobic bullying in schools has been highlighted mostly between boys because they expect their peers to be loud, aggressive, dominant and tough. These expectations are based on their gender ‘masculine’ performances expectations. In these cases, if their peers do not conform to these rules they might be subjected to homophobic bullying. Likewise, in James’s quotation, it seems that having a family member who belongs to the LGBT community might contribute to harassment or aggression by peers. As an example, of these expectations, Rosie, a trainee, explains why non-conforming pupils are picked on in schools:

Homophobic bullying that I've seen is just sort of picking guys for how they are, how they behave, you know, dress, walk, talk. Rosie/PGCE.

This quote is particularly interesting because of the trainee teachers' perceptions of harassment that boys experience for being considered to be different. For instance, being subjected to homophobic bullying may have nothing to do with pupils' sexuality. It may be that peers denigrate and discriminate their classmates on the basis of a range of characteristics, of which non-conforming gender behaviour is just one. A boy who is labelled 'gay' could suffer the worst name-calling by his peers and this act demonstrates the entrenched nature of homophobia in primary school boys. Hence, as elsewhere mentioned in the interviews, these homophobic practices are more commonly seen amongst boys. This passage shows Rosie making sense of pupils being picked on for being themselves. Thus, James and Rosie's quotes exemplify how pupils are picked on for 'being different' to the norm. James and Rosie's statement about homophobic bullying in primary schools are similar to previous research on homophobic bullying in schools. These quotes pay attention to the relation between gender stereotyping and homophobic bullying in primary schools. Primary school children somehow relate these different behaviours with being 'gay' or 'tomboy'. Though trainee teachers' perceptions of these performances are evident, trainee teacher's gender expectations of pupils are heterosexualized and pupils are expected to perform gender heteronormative roles in school spaces.

In the following quotation, Hannah, a trainee teacher, illustrates how some trainee teachers' feels about the incidence of homophobic bullying in primary schools. In the informal conversations, after the interviews (see Chapter Three, section 3.4), it was clear how mixed were their perceptions of homophobia in the primary school settings. Trainees seem to understand that it is possible to find verbal harassment and some physical abuse in school spaces but many of them were surprised at the level of homophobic bullying that occurs nowadays in primary schools. Some of these bullying acts where attribute it to popular media such as TV, as discussed in the following section. In the quotation below, Hannah underlines how shocked she was about homophobic bullying and pupils' feelings about it. Similarly, trainee teacher Alice's quotation suggests that understanding pupils' social and cultural context

might help to comprehend pupils' misbehaviour and the perpetuation of homophobic bullying in the primary school:

I was kind of shocked by some of the things that we were told about and just about kind of the percentages of homophobic bullying, and how it makes some of the children feel, which is it seems obvious but actually when you are kind of looking at other people's accounts of things it's a lot more shocking than you first think of. Hannah/BA Primary Education.

Anything can affect how a child gets on at school or learns...for example they might not get on but it's because they don't understand a cultural norm, not that they are misbehaving. Or maybe they can't concentrate in class because they aren't getting enough food or sleep at home. Alice/PGCE.

Hannah explains why homophobic bullying in schools shocked her. She argues that knowing how a child feels about homophobia and being harassed for 'being different' makes the importance of awareness and challenges of these acts more understandable. She also notes that "it seems obvious" what pupils feel and what they experience for being different and that as trainee teachers, being conscious of the statistics and the experiences makes a difference. Likewise, Alice discusses how "anything can affect how a child gets on at school" from what they eat to social norms. Thus, it seems to Alice that in primary schools, pupils learn social and cultural norms that might be different from home or are alienated for contextual circumstances. Therefore, if schools challenge homophobic bullying and promote a diverse and safe environment, it might prevent pupils misbehaving. It can also be inferred that at home pupils may face different difficulties, such as gender discrimination or homophobia, and that schools are the spaces to challenge these negative narratives. Homophobic bullying has different dimensions and practices that can be represented as physical or psychological harassment. Also, homophobic bullying can be perpetuated by different actors such as teachers, peers, school administrators and/or family members.

Overall, these homophobic appellations have been mentioned as discriminatory acts, a form of homophobic bullying that is perceived and described by trainee teachers as acts of verbal violence mostly between boys (Poteat & Rivers, 2010; Phillips, 2007). For example, these boys' behaviours are known in the literature review as 'lad' performances, part of laddish culture, where male pupils practice "verbal and physical violence, humiliation, and shaming usually done in public by males to other males" (Phillips, 2007, p.158). Jackson (2010) discusses how these "disruptive behaviours often, although not always, involved sexual innuendoes, sexist comments and homophobia" (p. 508). Homophobic bullying and language can thus be seen as a form of verbal violence (pejorative words and/or denigrating phrases) that humiliate and shame individuals based on their gender expression, sexualities and identities. Thus, trainee teachers acknowledged and recognised that homophobic language exists in primary school (see Table 9 and 10). In this way, trainee teachers' different perspectives on how pupils experience these violent acts are relevant. Hegemonic gender social and cultural dimensions are expected in primary schools and pupils are subject to these gender normative conditions. Notably, trainee teachers are aware of derogatory and discriminatory acts in primary schools. There is an understanding of homophobic bullying but it is mostly related to gender non-conforming acts rather than expressions of sexual identity.

5.2.3 "What is on the telly?": trainees' perceptions of LGBT issues in popular media

The fact that trainee teachers are aware of homophobic language and homophobic bullying in primary schools has been discussed. From the conversations with trainee teachers, it seems that trainees perceive that this homophobic language and bullying behaviours originate from social and cultural practices. In the following paragraph Rosie, a trainee teacher, shows how the popular media represents homophobic bullying acts and she questions how pupils might perceive these "tragic events":

It's more and more in the News about different types of bullying and tragic events that happen through it, so you could use them as you know, a sort of hook and look at and get the children to exploring before you start teaching them to get ideas, because they don't, I think that sometimes we miss getting pupils's ideas first and foremost about what they think because often or not you know, as I don't know who said it, but is quite intriguing we are born without judgements, judging is something that we learn along the way. Rosie/PGCE.

Rosie argues that in the news media there is a representation of bullying acts and that they can be used as a tools to show pupils what is happening around them. Using stories in the media to show pupils how bullying works gives children the chance to ask questions about what is homophobic bullying and why we have to challenge it. Rosie's expression, "hook and look", symbolises the interaction between the media and the way pupils learn social skills and positive behaviours. Using popular media is one approach to teaching pupils about homophobia and its consequences. Some of these homophobic acts may be being perpetrated by primary school students but they may not be aware that these misbehaviours are homophobic and discriminatory performances towards their peers, as suggested earlier by Joshua and Peter (see section 5.2.2). Consequently, popular media can be a tool to discuss and challenge homophobia and at the same time is where pupils learn about this homophobic language and harassment.

Most importantly, as Rosie illustrates, trainees are aware that homophobic language is used and perpetuated on TV and it is then reproduced in primary schools where some pupils might experience inappropriate feelings about their identities which makes them experience some difficulties in their life such as depression. In other words, it is expected that these popular media spaces might promote what is positive and what is wrong in the modern social and cultural spaces and not the opposite that might perpetuated homophobia and discrimination. 'What is on the telly?' represents how trainee teachers perceive the influence of popular media on primary school pupils' homophobic

acts. When talking about homophobic language in the interviews, trainee teachers mentioned that pupils might pick some phrases such as “that’s so gay” from TV or social media (i.e. YouTube). In this way, the trainees’ narratives suggest that pupils’ use of derogatory social slang could be misinterpreted as homophobic language and per se as homophobic bullying. As mentioned in the literature review, some studies showed that nowadays pupils learn different discourses on gender and sexualities from media (Kelley et al, 1999; Renold, 2002; Robinson, 2008).

It is interesting to note, as Rosie mentioned before, how popular media can be seen as a tool to challenge homophobia, too. For example, popular media such as the TV programme Teletubbies which portrays a purple character, ‘Tinky Winky’, as a boy who wears a lady’s purse could challenge primary school children’s expectations of gender performances. As discussed in the literature review, these representations of gender non-conforming characters in the popular media may help to challenge gender stereotype and homophobia in society. However, some popular media may perpetuate homophobic and discriminatory acts to diverse individuals, too. The next interview extract highlights this statement. Maya, a trainee teacher, illustrates these points when she talks about the “negative” TV in the seventies and when she mentions some “bland” TV shows:

I don't know, well you know it's sort of endemic in our society, isn't it? You know, it's woven into our culture, it's not so bad on the telly...when I was a little girl to be honest you know, because it was really quite negative in the 70s, it was just unbelievable and, so...bloody crappy Americans films, and some of this culture, sort of this bland culture [...] programmes that children see or adverts where a certain type of relationship or behaviour is promoted actively, actually there's a lot of that promotion to sexuality in our society. Maya/BA Primary Education.

According to Maya, TV media nowadays is “sort of endemic in our society”. This suggests that sexuality and gender expectations are somehow

represented on TV programmes where individuals are hypersexualized. In contrast, at the beginning of the quote she mentions that TV in the seventies was quite negative and that today “it’s not so bad on the telly”. As this paragraph suggests, there has been a change between the 70s and today in television. Gender stereotypes were commonly seen in TV and they were seen as a normal gender expectations. As discussed in Chapter One, sexualities and gender began to be discussed in the sixties during the ‘sexual revolution’, which opened a new space for sexual expression and identities, (Luker, 2007). As a consequence, these new sexuality and gender portrayals began to be accompanied by discrimination and offences towards some groups with diverse social and cultural backgrounds. In this sense, Maya suggests that the representation of LGBT individuals is better in today’s popular media.

Maya suggests that TV and other popular media have challenged and promoted a positive image to the LGBT community but at the same time she implies that TV is hypersexualized, which gives a negative image of diverse sexual identities in society, especially to primary school children. She makes sense of her contradiction about the improvement in TV programmes nowadays. For instance, she talks about the “sort of this bland culture” in TV programmes that presumably do not represent different behaviours around sexualities:

I also think that advertisements, I think that the media, I think the people that make programmes and so on and, they got a massive responsibility too, you know, to actually be diverse and embrace everything. Maya/BA Primary Education.

This interview extract highlights what Maya perceives as the importance of the popular media as a social agent through which the perception of the LGBT community in society could be improved and challenged. In this conversation Maya implies how important the media is and how it can be a positive influence on pupils and on the other hand can encourage pupils to gender stereotype using what they learn from the media. In this respect, James, an educational

officer, highlights that there are more positive images of gay people in the media than before when more stereotypical images of being gay were shown:

There're more positive images of gay people in the media, there's some very stereotypical images of gay people in the media, people talk about it more. I don't think when I was in school people talked about gay issues at all. James/EO.

This quote in particular is interesting because it exemplifies how LGBT individuals are stereotyped in the media too. For example, some TV programmes present 'feminine' gay characters or 'masculine' lesbian characters. Raley and Lucas (2006) argue that, "although portrayals of gay male and lesbian characters have become more positive over time they are still being ridiculed on TV" (p.32) and these perpetuate sexuality stereotypes and 'normalize' heterosexual characters. However, according to James the portrayal of positive gay characters is new and this allows pupils to speak more about LGBT identities in school. For instance, Golombok (2015) discusses how the portrayal on TV of gay characters with adopted children, for example, presents a positive image of new modern families (see Chapter 6). In this way, society and new cultural frameworks are created from popular and social media challenging gender, sexual and sexuality expectations. In the following quotation Lucy, a trainee teacher, notes that it might be difficult for straight/cisgender individuals to understand what means to be gay or lesbian in society:

It's complicated because things like the spectrum and gender identity and so on are, I suppose, strange to straight/cis people and our society doesn't talk about them much. Sensitive because there is still a lot of stigma in our society about being gay. Lucy/PGCE.

I think it's good to be role models that were gay, so would that be teachers, or people from the community...celebrities that are gay possibly using them as a stimulus. Joshua/PGCE.

Lucy also argues that homosexual people may not speak out “about being gay” because it is considered a sensitive topic and a stigma in today’s society. Lucy’s perception of homosexual stigmatization comes from her awareness on gender/sexualities spectrum. In Lucy’s case, it is important to mention her acknowledgment of sexual diversity and her use of specific terminology such as “cis people” (see Chapter One). Joshua’s narrative is similar to Maya and James’s idea where popular media is seen as a positive means to challenge homophobia in society. In this case, Joshua makes reference to gay characters or actors being role models for primary school children. As mentioned in the literature review, cultural media such as children’s storybooks that portray diverse families might help pupils to feel comfortable with their diverse family or with their own identities. It can also be inferred that Joshua suggests using these role models when necessary to encourage pupils who might think of themselves as being part of the LGBT community. The trainees feel that popular media, for example TV, can be used to challenge homophobia in schools and to promote safer spaces for LGBT pupils in primary schools. In contrast with some trainees’ experiences where TV media is seen as positive way to address LGBT community to pupils, Rosie, a trainee, makes a reference to the media as a source where pupils learn homophobic language and behaviour:

I think it's happened more in primary now, just because of the media and stuff kids will see things on the telly, like 'that's so gay' so as with everything kids pick up on things so they carry on the trend without necessarily knowing what it's meaning. Rosie/PGCE.

Rosie refers to popular media, “telly”, as a place where pupils learn slang such as ‘that's so gay’. She implies that primary school children acquire this derogatory language from an early age “because of the media and stuff kids will see things on the telly”. Here, it seems that Rosie refers to media as the Internet (i.e. YouTube) and TV as a popular media for pupils. Similarly, Rosie suggests that any media should be considered as “hook and look” and can be used as an approach to identify what pupils know about LGBT issues and how they relate to homophobia in schools. In addition, she suggests that teachers should “get

the children to exploring before you start teaching”, she means that trainees can use social media to introduce pupils to the understandings and repercussions of homophobia in schools settings. Lilley and Ball (2013) argues that, “59% of the UK’s 11–12 year-olds with internet access have a profile on a social networking site” (p. 6), the most popular sites “including Facebook, YouTube and Twitter” (p.11). It is important to mention that the study did not sample younger children because of ethical issues/research cost. This could imply that some younger children may have access to some social media sites. Rosie implies that primary school children first learn about slang through the popular media but she does not refer explicitly to Internet social media.

Thus, there is a contradiction with Rosie’s statement about the way social media should be used to address and challenge homophobia but at the same time has the influence to perpetuate these prejudices. For instance, some studies such as Pescitelli (2011) discuss how the Internet can have a positive impact on LGBT youth. It is clear that trainees perceive the impact that popular media has in pupils nowadays. Overall, trainee teachers perceive popular media as a pedagogical tool that could reflect the pupils’ awareness and acknowledge LGBT individuals and also as a media where primary school children learn these derogatory marks. Therefore, it seems that trainees recognise that popular media has an impact on the way pupils perceive and understand gender and sexualities in society. Also, trainees see popular media as a way to address and challenge homophobic discourses in primary schools.

5.3 Challenging homophobia in primary schools

This last section discusses the trainee teachers’ perception of challenging homophobic language and homophobic bullying in primary schools. Also, it discusses trainee teachers’ perception of LGBT children at primary school. For instance, Ellie, a trainee teacher, explains how she perceives herself as being able to address sexual diversity in the primary classroom. In this sense, her quote illustrates how trainee teachers may feel about challenging sexual diversity and homophobia in the primary schools. Also, it seems that there is a

fear of 'dealing with the problem' and 'dealing with the school ethos'. She underlines that this fear is related to being a new teacher and to not knowing how a school deals with sexual diversity or homophobic issues:

I really, I don't know how I'd deal with it, 'cos is a trainee and certainly so is a new teacher it would be really difficult to think in that situation, because you are new to the school, it's all very new, I'd like to think I'd be very well 'this is the situation we need to deal with it', but I don't know, I don't know how I'd be [...] I think it'd be, well it needs to be discussed at this level you know, at in the school, at staff meetings so it needs to be brought in before the situation arises. So it's addressed kind of in a standard way you know, in an agreed way throughout the school. Ellie/BA Primary Education.

Elli shows there is a lack of confidence on how to deal with homophobia in the primary school setting. Nonetheless, in this analysis it seems that trainee teachers would feel comfortable challenging homophobia and homophobic bullying in a primary school where the school's and teachers' attitudes allow addressing sexual diversity issues as part of the school culture. As Ellie argues, these homophobic attitudes have to be discussed and brought to the attention of teachers in staff meetings even before they occur. It can be inferred that trainees would be feel safer addressing these issues when the school culture allows them to challenge discriminatory and derogatory acts.

For example, in the informal conversations with participants, a trainee teacher who joined a religious school mentioned that she was surprised at the culture and ethos of the school which addressed and challenged homophobic language and bullying in the school spaces. Although she found more changes were necessary she was pleased with the ethos of her school and how it made her feel welcome and safe in order to challenge homophobia. While this school culture was positive in tackling homophobia, it was difficult for her to talk about her sexual identity (being a lesbian) in a religious primary school. As she mentioned, being a LGBT teacher is not an easy task. For instance, Clarke (cited by Nixon & Givens, 2004) argues that lesbian and gay teachers might "fear being

viewed as perverted and as a corrupter of young innocent children” (p. 226-27). This argument might explain her lack of confidence or her fear of challenging homophobia in the school. Here, the identities of trainee teacher influence their attitudes and perceptions of homophobia in schools (see Chapter Eight).

Thus, it seems that for trainee teachers the school culture and environment plays an important role in confronting homophobia. These contradictory cases, where trainees would like to tackle homophobia but are afraid to do it, are exemplified by the questionnaire answers on challenging homophobia in the primary classroom. The most noticeable result to emerge from this section of the questionnaire is that more than half of the trainee teachers (63.2%) said that they felt competent to address pupils’ questions about gay or lesbian issues in the classroom. Trainees indicated that they ‘would not feel nervous responding to a pupil’s questions about gay or lesbian issues’. This implied they would be able to challenge sexual diversity in the classroom. However, it seems that they are not completely sure about the precise mechanisms or techniques for dealing with these situations.

Likewise, some trainees in the interviews feel that they would be happy to address these issues too. However, it seems that they are not completely sure how they will deal with these situations in the classroom. As was mentioned in Chapter One, reading children’s stories that address sexual diversity has been a common way for teachers and researches to address gender and sexuality issues with primary school children. In the analysis of the questionnaires, I used the example of children’s storybooks that explicitly challenge homophobic language and/or present diverse families to question trainees’ perceptions and feelings on challenging sexual diversity topics. Just over half of the trainees (51.5%) mentioned that they would favour the use of these stories with children, while almost one-third of trainees (28.8%) were unsure about being able to challenge homophobic language explicitly and 19.7% of trainees would not use children’s storybooks that explicitly challenge homophobic language, (Q10). Overall, it seems that even when there is a pedagogical resource to

challenge these homophobic issues just half (51.5 %) trainees would prefer to use this tool to address homophobia in schools (see Table 11).

Table 11. Trainee teachers on challenging homophobia.			
Category Questions	Strongly agree/agree	Unsure	Strongly disagree/disagree
10. I would prefer not to use pupils' stories that explicitly challenge homophobic language	19.7	28.8	51.5
13. I would feel nervous responding to a pupil's questions about gay or lesbian issues.	22.2	14.6	63.2
15. I would feel comfortable reading pupils' stories that explicitly challenge homophobic language.	63.1	27.8	9.1

For instance, in the interviews trainee teachers were introduced to the children's storybook *King and King*, which is a gay love story for early age children. Some trainees were surprised in a good way about the representation of a gay love narrative in a children' storybook and some were amazed at how 'fearless' the story was. Just two of the trainees, who identified themselves as part of the LGBT community, were aware of the existence of this book and were interested in using it to address gay and lesbian issues in the primary classroom. This may imply that trainee teachers' identities have an impact on their expectations and experiences of teaching. Nonetheless, it seems that being knowing how these books explicitly challenge homophobia may change the perception of trainee teachers about using these books as a pedagogical tools. In this way, trainees were introduced and questioned about their feelings and perceptions on using these children's storybooks (see Chapter 6). It is significant that, trainees were more positive once they had read the story and the way some books embodied gay and lesbian issues.

In the same questionnaire, the question was rearticulated in order to have a better understanding of how trainees would feel reading these stories. The different emphasis relied on asking trainees if they would 'feel' comfortable to use it or not. Approximately two-thirds of those surveyed (63.1%) felt that they would feel comfortable reading pupils stories that explicitly challenge homophobic language (Q14 & Q15). This is related to the two-third trainees who felt positive about responding to a pupil's questions about gay or lesbian issues. There is a slightly difference between the 51.1% would favour using children's storybooks that explicitly challenge homophobic language and the 63.1% who would feel comfortable with it. It is interesting to note that when asked how trainees feel about challenging homophobic language, two-third of trainees strongly agree/agree that they would challenge it.

However, when asked if they would prefer not to use the children's storybooks, just half of them would use them. Trainee teachers' responses on explicitly challenging homophobic language through children's storybooks have been discussed above. Given how they felt or perceived these challenges, it can be inferred that two-thirds of trainees would feel comfortable addressing gay and lesbian issues and using children's storybooks that explicitly challenge homophobic language. At the same time, it is important for them to be part of a safe and positive culture school in order to use these explicit pedagogical tools. As discussed in Chapter One, non-profit organizations and governmental institutions such as Ofsted have been working on practical guidelines to tackle homophobia in schools. Recently, Ofsted has promoted training for tackling homophobic language and bullying from the initial teacher training in order to develop their literacy on sexual diversity issues. This section explores how trainees describe their perspectives on homophobic language and bullying in primary schools and how they feel these acts could be challenged. It has been mentioned that two-third of trainees would feel comfortable challenging homophobic bullying. Maya, a trainee teacher, explains how she perceives these challenges:

We had a few issues in the school, not issues but a few incidents where children called each other 'lesbians' and I wasn't sure, I didn't feel that I had received enough information to know how to deal with that, so where that I experience or what I meant that they shouldn't be used as an insult, and what it was, because we were all see this (in the) school, you know, I wasn't quite sure how to deal with that. Maya/BA Primary Education.

Maya highlights some issues about not knowing how to deal with these name-calling issues. In her example about the use of 'lesbian' as name-calling, she was not sure that she had received enough training to address the 'insult'. This quote is interesting because there is a consistency in the trainees' perceptions that they feel they have not had enough training and knowledge to challenge these kinds of derogatory and discriminatory language and behaviours in pupils. In this extract, Maya mentions, too, that there is a contradiction between the idea of pupils using these labels as 'insults' and being aware what they really meant. This quote illustrates how trainees are afraid of challenging homophobic language or homophobic bullying. Primarily, trainees have to be sure that pupils are using these labels as derogatory or discriminatory acts, and then understand what they mean when they use this language and the context in which pupils are using it. Being able to understand this situation is complex if trainees do not have enough training or if they do not acknowledge the implication of name-calling.

In this respect, Maya illustrates the experiences of some trainee teachers where there is an awareness that homophobic language occurs in the primary school settings. Consequently, trainee teachers mention feeling comfortable addressing these homophobic issues if necessary. But despite this certainty, there is inexperience and anxiety about dealing with homophobia. According to Maya's experience ("I wasn't quite sure how to deal with that"), there may have been a few occasions where trainees could challenge these issues but their training was not enough to make them feel ready to make a strong statement in the school setting. Joshua talks about his experience with a headmistress who challenged homophobic slurs in his primary school:

I once went to a school, I have a lot of respect for this head teacher...she did a similar assembly to do with homophobia, and she said, 'let me tell you some words that you are never gonna say them again, I want to you to know the words that are bad, that are racist', and she said, "so, you don't call people 'black bastards,' 'niggers,' 'chinkies' or 'pakies,' you don't say that, that's just disgusting and terrible', and children were, all gone: 'ohh!' ... gasping, at least then they knew the words... They now knew, should say 'these is the words, and you don't say them, cos it makes people feel bad'. Joshua/PGCE.

In the interview, Joshua apologised in advance for the use of 'derogatory' words but he mentioned that it was important for him to illustrate how this headmistress challenged all the primary school pupils. Joshua was impressed on how the head teacher addressed homophobic language in primary school. The quote aims to illustrate too, how teachers might challenge homophobia in a more explicit way, using as an example other derogatory remarks based on different backgrounds: "so, you don't call people 'black bastards,' 'niggers,' 'chinkies' or 'pakies', you don't say that". As this extract suggests, pupils are aware of different derogatory remarks and they are aware of their use for discrimination and harassment to diverse individual identities. It can also be inferred that pupils might use these words in different context. Joshua continues to explain how pupils were really shocked and that they were 'gasping' at the way the headmaster addressed the issue of homophobic language. "They now knew, should say 'these is the words, and you don't say them, 'cos it makes people feel bad'": Joshua illustration exemplifies how primary school pupils are aware of derogatory words and how they can clearly understand the meaning of these words. Therefore, teachers and trainees are able to challenge and address any discriminatory and derogatory remarks in primary schools.

5.3.1 Trainee teachers' awareness of LGBT pupils in primary schools

Within the school culture, talking about diversity usually refers to different identities such as religion, ethnicity, and social-economic background. Sexual

identities have been denied in the primary school context and talking about LGBT pupils seems slightly constricted (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Payne & Smith, 2014). This section discusses how trainees perceive pupils who might belong to the LGBT community and whose sexuality expressing itself through different gendered and sexualized normalised performances in the primary school setting. In accordance with the theoretical framework, LGBT children are identified here as non-normative individuals, children who deviate from the expected (Stockton, 2009 p. 245). In these cases, the trainees' perception of these LGBT primary school children may have an impact on the way trainees challenge sexual diversity in the classroom. In some cases, as one of the trainees informed me, pupils who are dealing with sexuality feelings might need some confident and assertive responses to their gendered and sexualized performances. In this interview extract, Maya, a trainee teacher, underlines that assuming that a child is "probably gay", is a difficult task:

I've not sort of encountered any sort of homophobic bullying and there are children that who, obviously you don't know at this stage, but there are pupils who I assume, are probably gay, and that you know, they don't seem to encounter any issue, which is, which is good to see. Maya/BA Primary Education.

Maya suggests that knowing if a child is gay or lesbian is apparently difficult to identify at this early age on primary school pupils. At the same time, she implies that pupils she assume "are probably gay" are doing fine in the school context. How and why Maya assumes some pupils are gay is not clear in her narrative; nonetheless, it is implied that some pupils' behaviours may lead to this assumption (see Chapter Four, gender non-conforming behaviour). In this respect, it has to be considered that pupils who belong to the LGBT community do not have to perform any different to any other pupils. Secondly, it seems that the quote "they don't seem to encounter any issue" could be making the point that talking about sexual diversity it is just important when schools are dealing with homophobia. Being a LGBT child in a primary school may have different connotations and children may experience discriminatory statements

from 'being a faggot' to 'being different'. Labelling or using a word to describe an individual in the sexual diversity community is a risky and a complex issue; this implies that to label a child as LGBT is in some way limited.

The complex issue of label limitation can be exemplified when talking about transgender individuals where "not all transgender people are either trans women or trans men: the trans community also includes other gender variant people (who sometimes use the term gender queers to refer to themselves)" (HRW, 2011, p. 7). As discussed in the literature review, there is a lack of research and preparation in relation to transgender pupils in the primary school context (Payne & Smith, 2014). What teachers might know and ways in which teachers and trainees should be prepared to work with transgender pupils is still the subject of research. Transgender pupils in schools are an important dynamic to the understanding of how hegemonic heterosexualized spaces work in the classroom. After all, as Payne and Smith (2014) point out, "being transgender" is a taboo that brings "fears and panic" to the primary school settings and also "the resistance to a transgender child can seem irrational and extreme" (p. 415). It seems that educators' fears of transgender pupils are similar to some teachers' experiences with gender non-conforming pupils where teachers have mixed feelings and reactions towards gender and sex no-normative behaviours (Gerouki, 2010).

Similarly, DePalma and Atkinson (2006) argue that, "for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, their deviance is always identified with excess" (p.10). Ellie, a trainee teacher, shows an ideal perspective for LGBT children; she argues that all pupils have to "feel safe" and teachers should "support them". In the context of gender and sexuality, trainees might aim to create an inclusive, equal and varied experience where male and female or masculinities and femininities are not part of the curriculum and the school environment is the way to generate non-gendered classrooms and to promote inclusion and diversity. During the interviews, Joshua, a trainee teacher, explained that he was interested in transgender children and the school space:

I've just learnt about transgender children actually, in one of the units, I've just started, right in the book, saying promotes acceptance from transgender people. Joshua/PGCE.

In the interview, Joshua explained how children's stories with transgender characters could challenge gender and sexualities in school spaces. Joshua's narrative about transgender children was around acceptance and pupils' rights. Similarly, it shows how transgender has begun to be an issue in the educational context. Payne and Smith's (2014) study on transgender pupils in primary schools raised different questions in education such as the necessity for theoretical and pedagogical frameworks for gender and sexuality in the school context. The overwhelming position where transgender pupils in the primary setting appear to be alienated from the school's discourse of justice, inclusion and equity that they deserve must also be discussed.

As discussed in Chapter Four, pupils who are dealing with their sexuality and gender non-conforming behaviour, 'LGBT children', may be exploring a very subtle, very invisible hegemonic heteronormativity representation of their gender and sexual expression. Bond (2009) suggests that a LGBT pupil is seen as a 'ghostly gay child' who is separated from the adult gay, "thinking that the child can be carefully controlled embodiment of no complication" (p.5). This might imply that pupils find it challenging to fit in the heterosexualized hegemonic environment of the primary schools. This perception of protection and control is perpetuated by western culture's idea of childhood 'innocence' where pupils are embodied in heteronormative and gender dichotomy expectations (Renold, 2002; Robinson, 2008). As Bond suggests, all pupils should be consider gender/sexuality equals, and it is expected that trainees acknowledge the possibility of encountering LGBT pupils in their classroom, yet in these interviews, it appears that trainees are limited in their perceptions of LGBT pupils to non-stereotypical primary school children's behaviours.

Summary

This chapter has discussed trainee teachers' awareness and perception of homophobic language and homophobic bullying in primary schools. It has also discussed the challenge of addressing homophobia in primary schools and included a brief discussion about LGBT children. The main findings suggest that:

- Trainee teachers are aware of homophobic language and homophobic bullying in the primary schools (mostly based on gender non-conforming behaviour);
- Trainee teachers seem to be aware of pupils using homophobic language to their peers in a derogatory way; they are concerned about how 'implicitly' pupils conceive of words such as 'poof' or 'tomboy' as offensive, discriminatory or as verbal harassment in the school context;
- Trainee teachers perceive a potential relationship between the social and cultural perceptions of female and male dichotomy, performing gender stereotypes in schools 'being boy and girl', and the homophobic language and the homophobic bullying in the primary school settings;
- Trainee teachers perceive that being subjected to homophobic bullying may have nothing to do with the sexuality of primary school children at all;
- Trainee teachers perceive popular media, particularly TV, as a place where pupils learn homophobic language; also, trainees agree that some TV programmes could be used as a learning context to address and challenge homophobic language and bullying in schools;
- Trainee teachers perceive themselves as having a lack of confidence and preparation to challenge homophobia in primary schools

Overall, there is a relational discourse between gender stereotype and homophobia, and discrimination against pupils based on their gender expression/sexualities in primary school. It could be implied that there is a contradictory position on pupils' knowledge about sexual diversity. On one hand, primary school children are perceived as 'innocent' of knowledge and discourses about sexuality, while on the other, trainee teachers perceive that pupils do understand and recognise gender non-conforming/sexual expressions in primary school. These trainees' perceptions of pupils as 'innocent', for example, without the acknowledgement of these words as homophobic, might dilute the idea of challenging the use of these derogatory words. This means that trainee teachers should recognise these derogatory words as homophobic language that perpetuates and promotes verbal harassment and humiliation by pupils to 'the other' pupils in the primary school. It is clear that more work needs to be done around gender expression in primary schools in order to challenge homophobic language and bullying.

Thus, it seems the trainees perceive that LGBT primary school children struggle in this hegemonic heterosexualized gender binary about being masculine and feminine in primary school spaces. It can be suggested that primary school children who are bullied should have the same respect and treatment as all other pupils. Trainees perceive that challenging homophobia in schools is possible and necessary. Nonetheless, they understand the need to develop literacy on gender and sexualities in the primary school context in order to be able to tackle homophobic language and homophobic bullying. Finally, trainees perceive that it is necessary to improve the school experience of LGBT pupils who, as the literature discussed, are submitted to harassment and humiliation for being 'different' or because they belong to the LGBT community, for instance as part of same-sex families.

Chapter 6. Trainee teachers and the awareness and perceptions of same-sex families in the primary school

This chapter explores trainee teachers' awareness and perception of same-sex families in primary schools. As discussed before, this analysis was based on themes that emerged from the online questionnaire and the interviews with trainee teachers and education officers (see Chapter Three, section 3.4). As discussed in Chapter Three, one hundred and ninety-eight trainee teachers responded to the questionnaire from twenty-one different universities across the United Kingdom and a total of eleven trainee teachers and three educational officers were interviewed. In this study, same-sex families represent sexual diversity discourses in the educational context. As argued by Whitlock (2014), "experiencing intersections of place, sexuality, and families will challenge the assimilationist politics of mainstream lesbian and gay people" (p.80). In the last decade, as discussed in Chapter Two, policies that promote equality for the sexual diversity community such as the same-sex marriage have been developed. Nonetheless, the teaching of non-traditional families and relationships, particularly same-sex families, in primary schools has been mostly overlooked in educational policies of multiculturalism, inclusion or citizenship education.

In accordance with the literature review, this analysis focuses on gay and lesbian families which are seen as non-traditional or non-conforming families by some social and cultural backgrounds. In the interviews with trainee teachers, same-sex relationship and/or same-sex families were discussed to highlight and represent the notion that LGBT families are a current topic in the sexual diversity and educational discourses (Whitlock, 2014; Meyer, 2010; Lindsay, et al., 2006; Lambert, 2005; Lipkin, 2002; Maney & Cain, 1997). From the trainees' interview responses, it seems that same-sex families have gained more visibility in social and cultural spaces; and it could be inferred that same-sex families are seen as a challenge to the discourses of the hegemonic heteronormative traditional family stereotypes in society (Golombok, 2015; Whitlock, 2014). Hence, in order to explore trainee teachers' perceptions of

same-sex relationship families in the primary school it is necessary to understand their sexual diversity discourses in the school context.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section describes trainee teachers' awareness of gay and lesbian families in the educational context. The second section discusses how trainee teachers perceive same-sex families in the primary school spaces. As noted by some trainee teachers, it seems that there is a positive perception of gay and lesbian families in the school setting. This perception by trainee teachers is focused on how school focuses on non-traditional families as units of 'love', 'caring' and 'nurturing' spaces for primary school children. It also illustrates how trainee teachers feel about seeing or interacting with gay and lesbian parents in the school context. The third section discusses how trainee teachers perceive themselves as being inclusive, in relation to non-traditional families, in their school spaces. Overall, it can be inferred that trainee teachers' perceptions of same-sex families are based on the same terms as heterosexual 'traditional' families where, in the educational context, the primary emphasis is on children's well-being. Finally, trainee teachers perceive that primary schools as social spaces should consider same-sex relationships as part of the school community.

6.1 Trainee teachers and the awareness of same-sex families in the school context.

This section discusses trainee teachers' awareness of same-sex families in the educational context. The chapter also explores whether trainees are aware of any homophobic or discriminatory discourses towards these non-traditional families. It has been mentioned that gay and lesbian parents are concerned about their children being bullied and harassed based on the grounds of homophobia or discrimination in the school spaces (Perlesz & McNair, 2004). In the online questionnaire, two questions were asked to explore if trainee teachers were aware of the possibility of having a gay or lesbian families in their primary schools (Q19 & Q21). Considering that talking about same-sex families might be a new issue for some trainee teachers, it was necessary to explore if

they were aware of same-sex families with primary school children. The first question (Q19) asked trainees if seeing a gay couple with children would bother them and the second question (Q21) asked if they would avoid talking with parents who belonged to a same-sex relationship. These questions were developed with the purpose of exploring trainee teachers' awareness and recognition of same-sex families in the educational context.

Table 12. Trainee teachers and the awareness of same-sex families.			
Category Questions	Strongly agree/agree	Unsure	Strongly disagree/disagree
19. Seeing a gay couple with children does not bother me.	90.4	7.6	2.0
21. If one of my students has a gay or lesbian parent(s) I will avoid talking to the parent(s).	1.5	0.5	98

Almost all the trainees agreed (98%) that they would talk with a gay or lesbian parent in the school context; one in ten trainees would avoid talking with a gay or lesbian parent (see Table 12). It can be assumed that trainee teachers' social and cultural spaces are being challenged by non-conforming hegemonic social roles where gay and lesbian individuals can foster a family. Ninety percentages of trainee teachers (90.4%) strongly agree/agree that seeing a gay couple with children would not bother them (Q19). Only a small number of respondents (7.6%) indicated that they would be unsure whether they would be bothered to see a same-sex family and a very small number (2%) agree that it would bother them this situation. Similarly, these responses show a positive awareness of same-sex families. As discussed by Maney and Cain (1997) "elementary school teachers who feel uncomfortable around students of gay or lesbian parents may cause a lasting negative impact on students' self-

esteem and general well-being” (p. 237). This fairly positive perception implies that trainee teachers are open to inclusion and diversity in their social and cultural spaces (Q19) and the school environment (Q21).

Overall, these results (Q19 & Q21) indicate that trainee teachers are aware of same-sex families and that there is a positive response towards gay and lesbian parenting. The trainee teachers’ positive awareness of gay and lesbian families implies a better acknowledgement and perception of these non-traditional families. James, an education officer, makes an interesting statement about the awareness of same-sex families. He implies that gay and lesbian families have been always around but in today’s society are more visible:

Same sex couples have the legal right to adopt children, civil partnership means that we are seeing same sex relationships legally recognized, and while all these relationships have always existed, they're more visible in our schools communities more than ever. James/EO.

Here, James suggests that same-sex family lifestyles have been part of our everyday social and cultural for some times. However, the visibility/invisibility of these families has only been a political, cultural and social issue in the last decade since civil partnership and same-sex marriage became legal in UK (see Chapter Two, section 2.1.1). This statement evokes how same-sex couples have been marginalized and discriminated against in terms of social status such as the right of having a family or marriage. For instance, Vanderbeck and Johnson (2015) argue that the new legal framework of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013, in England and Wales, offers a platform where schools could address same-sex families and relationships in the educational context. As overall, it can be inferred then that different families are more visible in the society, and therefore it is expected that this visibility should be reflected in the educational context (Donovan, 2008; Kissen, 1999; Whitlock, 2014). A trainee teacher, Kate, echoes this view which suggests that there are no typical families “anymore”:

I think it's strange that you just automatically presume somebody is heterosexual, no there shouldn't be any sort of assumptions which way some, you know someone is and families are that's what's said before, you know the typical family isn't anymore the two beautiful children and they are very different, and families and lifestyle choices, and that should be reflected as it schools sort of like a reflection of society, that should be reflected from very, very young age should be spoken about just as a typical issue, is just became typical language and the norm I suppose. Kate/PGCE.

Kate illustrates how there are social assumptions where families are perceived just as heteronormative lifestyles and norms. This is highlighted when Kate mentions, “you know the typical family isn't anymore the two beautiful children”. Like Kate, Golombok (2015) suggests that the “traditional nuclear family of heterosexual married couple with biological related children is now in the minority” (p. 1). This image, of a family with “two beautiful children”, is a typical popular media portrayal of a western family lifestyle where the heterosexual couple have two children, (mostly one boy and one girl); and somehow, this image is expected to be a reflection of the standard family. Kate suggests that different family styles should be shown to children from an early age to challenge stereotypical language (i.e. when referring to a family as one mum and one dad). In this sense, as Kate describes, talking about same-sex families in primary schools might change the way the idea of family is visualized and the language that is used to refer to different family choices. This idea of schools challenging non-traditional discourses can already be seen in some schools. For instance, Eva, a trainee teacher, describes how she was surprised about the way same-sex families are recognized in a religious school:

They do celebrate difference quite a lot in our school, which it's quite nice... I think it just comes down from the Head teacher, cos I'm surprised with it being, it is so [religious] the school, but I think I'm aware there's a couple of same sex couples, parents that the Head teacher knows... So I'm surprised that the more I've been in that school the clearer it is, that they are very accepting of difference. Eva/PGCE.

Eva explained in the interview how the religious school she is working in is open to diversity. She recognizes that the school's ethos of diversity and inclusion is influenced by the headteacher and can be seen in the teachers' involvement. Eva implies that the headteacher is aware of same-sex couples and that she is surprised by the inclusiveness of the school too. Although Eva does not imply that same-sex families are more visible or more accepted, it is important to recognize the participation of LGBT families in traditional discourses such as this religious school. In some ways, this acceptance of difference means that nowadays there is an intersection of religious and sexual identities in school frameworks. It can be inferred, too, that some religious schools might be open to diverse families who are associated with their religious background, and, that traditional families are not typical anymore; therefore, schools may find that more non-traditional families are more visible (Golombok, 2015). As Eva and Kate argue, there is an awareness of same-sex families in the primary school context. James also highlights that non-traditional families may be more visible and that there is a need to teach children about same-sex families from an early age. As Kate says, trainees should address these issues from a young age in order to challenge gender expectations (same-sex families) and discriminatory prejudices to LGBT individuals.

6.2 Trainee teachers and the perceptions of same-sex families in primary schools

This section discusses how trainee teachers perceive same-sex families in primary schools. As pointed out in the literature review, children who belong to non-traditional families might be associated with "negative outcomes" (Golombok, 2015, p. 192) and as Meyer (2010) highlights, "children of gay and lesbian parents indicate that they experience increased harassment at school and their parents were often excluded from school life" (p. 52). In this sense, Curran et al., (2009) argue that trainee teachers should feel comfortable challenging heterosexualised discourses such as non-traditional families in the school context. In this study, the online questionnaire set out four statements to explore the perceptions of trainee teachers towards gay and lesbian families

(see Table 12 and 13). Similarly, during the interviews, trainee teachers discussed how they perceived primary school children with gay and lesbian parents, their parents' interactions and how to address same-sex families in primary school discourses.

Table 13. Trainee teachers and the perceptions of same-sex families in the classroom.			
Category Questions	Strongly agree/agree	Unsure	Strongly disagree/disagree
5. I think it is necessary to teach primary school children about gay and lesbian families.	76.3	16.1	7.6
6. Primary school children with lesbian or gay parents may respond differently to classroom activities.	24.7	36.4	38.9

In the online questionnaire, trainee teachers were asked to think about whether it is necessary to teach primary school children about gay and lesbian families (Q5). This question was developed from the statement that same-sex families are misrepresented in the educational context (Kissen, 1999; DePalma & Atkinson, 2009). And as DePalma and Atkinson (2009) argue, celebrating gay and lesbian family discourses in the school context challenges the heterosexist discourses of diverse cultural and social frameworks (i.e. the institution of marriage). Therefore, exploring how trainees perceive the teaching of same-sex families opens a discussion about their questioning of heteronormative discourses in primary schools. Most of the trainees surveyed (76.3%) indicated that they agree/strongly agree that is necessary to address same-sex families in primary school. A minority of participants (16.1%) indicated that they were unsure about how necessary it is to teach about gay and lesbian families in the school context. Lastly, a small number of trainees (7.6%) think it is not

necessary to teach about same-sex families (see Table 13). These results suggest that the majority of trainees are positive about addressing the issue of gay and lesbian families in the school context. It can be inferred, too, that the majority of trainees are aware that same-sex families are present in educational discourses.

When the participants were asked if primary school children with lesbian or gay parents might respond differently to classroom activities (Q6) the majority of trainee teachers (38.9%) disagreed with this statement. But 24.7% of those who were surveyed indicated that children in same-sex families might respond differently to primary school classroom activities. One-third of the participants (36.4%) were unsure whether growing up in a gay or lesbian family could have an impact in children development. Trainee teachers on the whole demonstrated that they are uncertain how children who belong to a gay or lesbian family respond different to school activities, (i.e. Mother's Day or Father's Day celebrations). In this sense, this question could equally represent non-traditional families such as single families or foster families where trainee teachers have to challenge the idea of traditional heterosexualised families (i.e. having a mother and a father).

For instance, Joshua, a trainee teacher, argues that being part of a single parent family means that he can relate to non-traditional families and this makes him sympathetic to single or gay parents in the primary schools. Joshua also argues that he does not see any difference between these non-traditional and traditional families in the development of primary school children. As Patterson (cited by Donovan, 2008) discusses, "children's well being and adaptation depends not on sexuality of their parents but on the quality of the families' relationships" (p.17). Therefore, the trainees' positive perception of same-sex families contributes to providing a safe and inclusive environment for children and parents in the school.

In contrast to this last statement, it can be inferred that some trainee teachers think that children who are raised in same-sex families may grow up confused, in comparison with those in a traditional family (Clarke, 2001); or

that the might be subjected to harassment and discrimination such as homophobic bullying (Clarke et al., 2004). For example, Amelia, an educational officer, describes an example of why trainee teachers should be able to challenge homophobic bullying of pupils who may feel exposed because of their gay or lesbian parents:

I think it's important for them to challenge that, because for the child to just have a gay family member, or is beginning to feel that they may be gay themselves, then actually that's a very powerful statement if somebody says 'that's gay' in a mean and a negative way. Amelia/EO.

This illustrates an idea that has been discussed in all interviews. Trainee teachers agree that homophobic bullying can happen to any pupils, especially those who are part of the sexual diversity community, including same-sex families (see Chapter Five). Thus, Amelia explores how trainee teachers might experience these challenges when pupils learn in school that 'being gay' is 'wrong' or 'it's not ok'. As Amelia describes, to be subjected to discriminatory and derogatory acts or verbal violence for belonging to a different non-traditional family is "a very powerful statement" that should be recognized by trainee teachers. Clarke, Kitzinger and Potter (2004) discuss how homophobic bullying has been used to undermine same-sex families. Similarly, Ray and Gregory (2001) argue that although children in traditional heterosexualised families and same-sex relationships grow up with similar healthy and nurtured framework, children with gay and lesbian families may experience some difficulties such as homophobic bullying. In this sense, Brooke, a trainee teacher, discusses why she thinks it is important to consider same-sex family discourses in the school spaces. As she mentions, children and families' "experience within school" is important to feel that they, same-sex families, belong to the school and therefore to the society:

You have to be really, really sensitive to children's backgrounds and because, there's nothing worse than feeling that you don't fit in, like at all, like there's no place for you in your experience within school, because

schools it's a ... if, if ... how you, it's a really, really big part of your life and, and when you're in school you are part of a family, you're part of a community...and so within a primary school you should be reflecting about entire community, you should be reflecting every aspect of that community. Brooke/PGCE.

In this quote, Brooke highlights some concerns about why children backgrounds and family relations are important into the school community. The extract “there's nothing worse than feeling that you don't fit in” implies that children need to feel that they fit in the school spaces and that it is the responsibility of trainees to make school spaces feel welcoming to students. It is also interesting to note that Brooke describes school as “a really, really big part of your life” and that school has to be seen as a family too: “you are part of a family, you're part of a community”. This idea of seeing primary schools spaces as a family or/and as community that should care about nurturing children with positive experiences is a common idea among trainee teachers. Brooke also says that schools “should be reflecting about entire community, you should be reflecting every aspect of that community”; this reflects her perception that same-sex families should be part of the school community and should be embedded into school practices such as the school curriculum. This perception is supported by Lindsay et al. (2006) who discuss how families emerge as an important “core organizing feature of society” and that “it is inevitable that family life emerges as a topic in the school curriculum” (p. 1070).

6.2.1 Same-sex families in the primary schools

A common perception amongst interviewees was that same-sex families have to be seen as caring and lovely family relationships. Kaeser (1999) discuss this idea of love as a conceptualization of family where same-sex families are compared to heterosexual families and validated as being as worth of love as heterosexual families. For instance, Hannah, a trainee teacher, argues that talking about parenting and family relations in the primary school context

means talking about love. This means same-sex couples with children are seen as a traditional relationship that depends on who share your love with:

You know, well not that it doesn't matter, but it shouldn't matter, whomever your parents are like I was saying before about the poster it just depends whom your love share as long as you've got somebody that cares for you. It shouldn't matter, should it? Hannah/BA Primary Education.

Trainees' perceptions that these relations are subject to prejudice are showed in the following quotes: "but it shouldn't matter, whomever your parents are like" and this emphatic question, "It shouldn't matter, should it?" Hannah explains that there are posters in her schools that show diverse families (i.e. same-sex families). Therefore, these quotes illustrate trainees' perceptions of how society stigmatizes same-sex families and how schools may challenge these negative perceptions using posters that show loving family relationships. It can be implied that for trainee teachers same-sex couples are beyond the 'homosexual spectrum' and are seen as traditional families that share love and not as a sexual matter. Similarly, Rosie, a trainee teacher, reinforces these perceptions of the association between 'love' and 'family', and the awareness of judgments of diverse families:

It's just love and then it's family, and they were happy and everyone is happy, and that is kind of the way it should be and then you learn of the differences, and hopefully we can slowly but surely stop the judgments, you know that are made, I'd like to think. Rosie/PGCE.

Clearly, Rosie implies that there are judgments of same-sex families "you know that are made" and that there is a 'hope' that slowly these prejudices will be changed because it is the "way it should be". In this reflection, Rosie emphasizes the relationship between 'love' and 'family', as Hannah stated. It seems that trainees are strongly supportive of same-sex families, in the sense that they see same-sex families as a caring and children's protection issue rather than associate them to a LGBT cultural and social issue. These trainee teacher

discourses where family is defined as 'love' and about 'caring' relationships are positive ones. Nonetheless, as Cahill and Tobias (2006) suggest, public discussions about families and family well-being policies are mostly seen "as a legal unit comprised of a married man and woman with their own biological or adopted children" (p.7). Therefore, political, social and cultural frameworks that undermine LGBT issues may challenge trainee teachers' positive, 'love' and 'caring', perception of same-sex families in the educational context. James, an education officer, also argues that when talking about sexual identities, such as same-sex marriage or gay parents, educators fear that they will have to talk about 'sex' (as sexual intercourse):

Teachers, and schools, and often parents, and school governors worry that they have to talk about sex. And it is not talking about sex at all, and their school will have a sex and relationships education policy where, which will tell them how they do and don't talk about sex regardless their sexual orientation, but they think that if they have to talk about gay people they have to talk about sex, and that is nowhere in our agenda at all. James/EO.

James's quote illustrates a common teacher's perception which is that "if they have to talk about gay people they have to talk about sex". Similarly, James argues that educators worry about talking about gay or lesbian issues such as same-sex relationships, as described by Clarke (2001): "stereotypes of gay men as paedophiles and lesbians as aggressive... remain powerful determinants of public perceptions of lesbian and gay parents" (p. 555). As seen in Chapter Two, some social and cultural groups see the educational policies that challenge homophobia or anti-discriminatory discourses towards sexual identities as a homosexual agenda and the promotion of homosexual lifestyle. Thus, as James highlights, teachers may worry about teaching about same-sex families, and it can be inferred that trainees or teachers might not want to be associated with any 'homosexual agenda'. Nonetheless, James continues to explain that talking about gay issues in primary schools "is not talking about sex". As discussed in Chapter One, sexual diversity issues in primary school are not related to sexual

intercourse but with different social and cultural dimensions such as same-sex or any LGBT relationship and pupils' well-being.

6.2.2 Trainees' perceptions on addressing same-sex families in the classroom

While trainee teachers perceive that same-sex families are welcome in the primary school setting, it is not clear what they think about addressing same-sex families' issues in the school classroom activities. For instance, trainee teachers were asked to indicate whether they should consider gay or lesbian families when they celebrate Mother's Day or Father's Day, (Q7). The overall response to this question was very positive, 77.2 % of trainee teachers agree that they should consider same-sex families in celebrations for mothers and fathers. Approximately, one of ten trainees disagree (10.1%) or were unsure (12.7%) that gay or lesbian families should be celebrated on these festive days in primary schools (see Table 14). In summary, these results show that the majority of students perceive same-sex families should be considered and celebrated on parent celebration days. This response is similar to that for Q5 where trainees were asked if they would feel comfortable talking about lesbian and gay families. Although a minority of participants disagrees that this should be considered, on the whole there is a correspondence between trainees' positive perceptions and the idea of addressing same-sex relationships in the classroom.

When asked whether if they would feel comfortable talking about lesbian and gay families as part of their curriculum programme, 79.3% of the trainees reported that they would feel comfortable with this (Q20). A minority of participants (15.2%) indicated that they feel unsure about talking about lesbian and gay families as part of their curriculum programme. A very small number of those surveyed (5.5%) suggested that they would not feel comfortable talking about gay and lesbian families as part of the curriculum (see Table 14). As discussed in Chapter Two, it is suggested that diverse families should be included throughout the primary school curriculum.

Table 14. Trainee teachers addressing same-sex families in the classroom.			
Category Questions	Strongly agree/agree	Unsure	Strongly disagree/disagree
7. I think teachers should consider gay or lesbian families when they celebrate Mother's Day or Father's Day.	77.2	12.7	10.1
20. I would feel comfortable talking about lesbian and gay families as part of my curriculum program.	79.3	15.2	5.5

In the interviews, I used children's storybooks with gay or lesbian characters to ask trainee teachers how they would feel about using this pedagogical material to challenge gender stereotypes and homophobia in schools (see Chapter Three, section 3.4). A small group of the trainee teachers who identified themselves as LGBT were aware of these children's books. Ellie and Laura, trainee teachers, refer to these children's storybooks when discussing how to challenge stereotypes of gender and sexualities, for example by reading stories about same-sex families. In the interview, I asked if it would be possible for her to read these storybooks to her class:

I think it is but other teachers might disagree with me and the head teachers might disagree with me as well, and say that it's not really suitable for children, but I just think is a nice story, this nice illustration about a king marrying another king... I think is important that stories like these are read to children, if they do have two dads or two mums, they think that they are not the only person in the world to have parents like

that and because otherwise children might feel like that read in some way and start to resent their own family life. Ellie/BA Primary Education.

I think children, I don't know they don't have the ideas sometimes adults have... maybe some children will be like why is a boy with a boy but when you explain...I think children are much more accepting of differences. Laura/PGCE.

Ellie's perception is that some teachers and headmasters may not agree that children's storybooks that challenge gender and sexualities should be used in the classroom. It seems that some teachers perceive these storybooks as "not really suitable for children". Ellie suggests that these kind of storybooks have to be read in order to allow children who have two mums or dads feel that they fit in their social and cultural spaces as the school. In the same vein, Laura highlights how 'adults' might have other perceptions of these books. And she notes that perhaps some children would be puzzled by the story about two kings; nonetheless, Laura implies children are more open to differences. Lastly, Ellie describes how reading these storybooks could improve the experience of same-sex families'; children could relate to the families in the storybooks and do not "start to resent their own family life". Brooke, a trainee teacher, also talks about same-sex families and how children might interact with 'conforming' ideas of relationships in classroom activities:

We were talking about this [school event] and one boy went 'Is [Alex] a boy or a girl?' If I was kind of conscious to pick a name, maybe not familiar name as well and I said '[Alex] is a girl' and this little girl went-- and she's a Jehovah's Witness-- I know that, that matters: 'of course she's a girl, she's marrying [Adam], [Adam] is a boy'...and then this other little kid went 'that doesn't matter ... Adam could be marrying a boy', and I went 'that's right, he could, but he's marrying Alex' so that's what's happening. Brooke/PGCE.

In this quote, Brooke refers to different religious backgrounds in the school context and how they interact in issues of marriage and family. For Brooke, there is a perception that religious background might influence how

same-sex families or same-sex relationships are perceived: “and she's a Jehovah's Witness-- I know that, that matters”. Brooke suggests that religious backgrounds may have a heteronormative perception of marriage and family relationships, (see Chapter Seven). Brooke highlights, too, that another pupil was aware of same-sex relationships. Thus, this quote implies that trainee teachers understand the different backgrounds of their pupils and that all these identities have to be considered in order to celebrate these differences in an inclusive environment in primary schools. Brooke implies that some cultural and social frameworks might restrict ‘other’ social and cultural identities based on their beliefs such as not accepting same-sex marriage.

In her example, Brooke perceives the two children's opinions as social and cultural challenges that are relevant in the school context. Trainee teachers that recognise and celebrate these children's social and cultural differences are being inclusive in their school spaces (Meyer, 2010; Robinson, 2002). Finally, Brooke perceives that the use of a neutral name such as ‘Alex’ provoked a discussion between these two pupils. This pedagogical strategy allows her to discuss a same-sex relationship issue in the classroom and challenge heteronormative hegemonic ideas. This perception is supported by Kissen's (1999) argument that teachers should reconsider the model of ‘traditional’ families in order to challenge discrimination and exclusion in the school context.

6.3 Celebrating same-sex families in the primary school classroom

This section discusses how trainee teachers perceive themselves as being inclusive, in relation to non-traditional families, in their school spaces. In this sense, Maya suggests that children are open to talking about different family issues in the school classroom and that this can give them an opportunity to talk about non-traditional matters at school:

A lot of the children are quite open um talking about, you know, that their family situation and their whole life and share and you know, talk about them or their auntie this and that, and then obviously you get to meet the

parents in different contexts so you get an idea of their family circumstances as well. Maya/BA Primary Education.

Maya suggest that primary school children share different experiences in the classroom and this reflects the diverse circumstances where children develop. This statement contradicts Robinson (2002) who mentions that some trainee teachers are “often unfamiliar with children’s social lives beyond the setting” (p.428). It is possible, therefore, that when the classroom environment makes this a possibility, some children with same-sex parents, need to express their feelings about their family circumstances. Maya’s quote implies that trainee teachers should be prepared to interact with diverse social and cultural family frameworks. This combination of findings provides some support for the premise that it is necessary to teach primary school children about gay and lesbian families. It can also be inferred that, as Katie, a trainee teacher, describes above, children should be taught about the inclusion of diverse families at an early age. The following quotation illustrates how Hannah, a trainee teacher, perceives the role of schools in addressing same-sex families and promoting diversity and inclusion in schools:

I think that should all be, just as kind of natural every day, you know, to just be there just for the children ... I think that should just be something that's in the classroom. I know somebody who's telling me about that in their school are posters or words on all different kinds of families, and it's and it doesn't really matter as long as you are loved, you know around schools that's just reinforcing that kind of normality almost, I suppose you can say about things. Hannah/BA Primary Education.

Hannah suggests that schools should take a “natural” approach where pupils are able to relate these non-traditional matters with inclusivity and diversity settings every day. Hannah describes a school, also mentioned by a third person, where posters with “all different kinds of families” are used to promote diverse families in the schools. As implied by Hulsebosch, Koerner and Ryan (1999), teachers’ “professional commitment to relationship with parents

in the interest of the child superseded any personal responses to family identities” (p. 186). In this sense, it could be considered that even trainees who do not support same-sex families should support inclusive practices for children with non-traditional families. Hannah also suggests that these school practices have to be positive in order to reinforce and celebrate inclusion, “that’s just reinforcing that kind of normality almost”. Thus, Hannah implies that pupils should see same-sex families as ‘natural’ and ‘ordinary’ situations in life. Similarly, Joshua, a trainee teacher, asserts his belief that diverse families have to be seen as “this is a part of life”:

I've worked with a lot of families doing placement where [unclear] socially deprived areas, which come from social deprivation, which maybe, are single parent families. So, I've worked with a lot of different diverse families in that sense [...] I don't think it's about making a big song and dancing scene or 'there's people in this world who are gay, tha, tha, tha' and making a big deal about it. I think it's about it's acceptable, and this is a part of life. People do come from sexual orientations, and different family backgrounds and I think that, that promotes a wider acceptance. Joshua/PGCE.

Joshua explained that he worked with families with different backgrounds such as single parents and socially deprived families. In this sense, Joshua relates same-sex families with other diverse families who might be subject to discrimination or social exclusion in the educational context. Joshua states that although it is important to talk about same-sex families and any other diverse family, it is important not to make an unnecessary demonstration of it. Like Hannah, Joshua says that celebrating same-sex families is about making it “acceptable” and in this way promoting “a wider acceptance”. Thus, Hannah and Joshua think that schools should promote all kind of families in order to challenge discrimination against same-sex families in the educational context, to make it acceptable and ordinary and make it visible.

Summary

This chapter has discussed trainee teachers' awareness and perception of same-sex families in primary schools. The main findings suggest that:

- More than 90% of trainee teacher are aware of same-sex relationships and are not bothered by seeing a gay couple with children. Nonetheless, trainees' perception about addressing these same-sex families in the classroom is less positive (76.3%);
- Overall, trainee teachers show a positive approach to gay and lesbian families and the 'caring' and 'protection' of children who belong to these non-traditional relationships;
- Some trainee teachers argue that some schools already support gay and lesbian families and promote inclusive environments in the school context;
- Although, there is a positive reaction to the need to address same-sex families in primary schools, trainee teachers lack understanding about how to address these issues in the classroom.

Overall, trainee teachers are aware of the implications of talking about gay and lesbian families in the school context, such as the differences within diverse religious or cultural backgrounds. The fact that these intersections of politics, social and cultural frameworks are being challenged as gay and lesbian families enter the educational context has also been discussed (Golombok, 2015; Whitlock, 2014, Meyer, 2010). As pointed out by Lindsay, et al., (2006) "in more progressive contexts some parents and children can challenge heterosexism, re-shape school curricula and administration, and educate the wider school community" (p. 1074).

Trainee teachers think that peers and other educators might subject primary school children who belong to gay and lesbian families to harassment and discrimination. Thus, trainee teachers perceive that they should challenge these issues beyond the promotion of diverse families and acknowledge the consequences of gay and lesbian discrimination and harassment in primary schools (Robinson, 2002). Finally, these results suggest that trainee teachers feel positive about including same-sex families in the primary curriculum. It could be inferred that trainee teachers relate same-sex families to social inclusion and diversity. Together these results provide important insights into trainees' perceptions of lesbian and gay families. It seems that on the whole there is an awareness of same-sex families and a perception that it is necessary to improve their inclusion into the primary school classroom.

Chapter 7. Trainee teachers and the perceptions of sexual diversity in primary schools

This chapter discusses trainee teachers' perceptions of the need to address sexual diversity in the primary schools. In previous chapters, trainee teachers' awareness and perceptions of gender stereotypes, homophobic language and homophobic bullying and same-sex families as key themes associated with sexual diversity in the primary school settings were discussed (see Chapter One). This chapter discusses these trainee teachers' awareness and perceptions of sexual diversity and its impact on their teaching experiences or expectations in particular. As argued in the literature review, studies on sexual diversity in the school context highlight the importance of the study of teacher training and the perception of gay and lesbian issues (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Kissen, 2002; Letts & Sears, 1999; Maddox, 1988; Payne & Smith, 2014). Similarly, these studies have suggested that heteronormative social and cultural frames are displayed in school spaces and by various frameworks such as educational policies or the teachers and school staff's own perceptions of sexualities in schools (Allan et al., 2008; Milton, 2003; Nixon & Givens, 2007).

The key themes discussed in this chapter emerged from the online questionnaire and interviews with the trainee teachers and educational officers (see Chapter Three, section 3.4). The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the perception of trainee teachers of legal and policy frameworks about teaching sexual diversity in primary schools. The second section explores how trainees perceive themselves as role models and responsible for the inclusiveness of sexual diversity issues in the primary school classroom. Finally, the third section discusses trainee teacher perceptions of diversity and how they understand challenging LGBT issues in the primary school classroom, as well as the kind of barriers trainee teachers imagine they will encounter in primary schools.

7.1 Trainee teachers, sexual diversity and educational discourses

This first section discusses the perception of trainee teachers of legal and policy frameworks about teaching sexual diversity in the primary school. As discussed in Chapter Two, educational policies might advocate or undermine sexualities education in primary schools. For example, the controversial Section 28 law that prohibited ‘the promotion of homosexuality in schools’, repealed in 2003, persists in the sexual education debate between the educational institutions and legal discourses (Johnson & Vanderbeck, 2014). These sometimes contradictory legal and educational frameworks are related to social and cultural frameworks in British society. Therefore, understanding trainee teachers’ perceptions of sexual diversity in schools is essential in order to challenge homophobia and heterosexism in the primary school setting. As DePalma and Atkinson (2009) also discuss, sexualities and LGBT issues have been recognised in the school context by those concerned about homophobic acts perpetuated in school spaces. These homophobic and discriminatory acts have given new roles and responsibilities to trainee teachers towards inclusion and diversity in schools.

The section is divided in two parts. First, the trainee teachers’ perceptions of legal frameworks is discussed, in particular the so-called ‘Section 28’ legislation framework which has been the source of continuous debate in the educational setting in spite of being repealed more than a decade ago. Secondly, the online questions that explored trainee teachers’ perceptions of sexual diversity in primary school in relation to educational views around inclusion and diversity in schools is discussed. Overall, trainee teachers show a positive approach to teaching about sexual diversity discourses. Indeed, it could be argued that trainees advocate inclusion and diversity in primary schools.

7.1.1 “Piece of legislation”: Section 28

As discussed in Chapter Two, discourses of sexualities and sex education have been discussed between legislation frameworks and educational settings for several years (see Chapter Two, section 2.1.2). Although, this legal framework

was repealed more than a decade ago of the legacy of the Section 28 act is still present in educational discourses. James, an education officer, discusses how some teachers and educators perceive legislation frameworks such as the so-called 'Section 28':

There's a piece of legislation called section 28, and which even though it was repealed in 2003, and it was a piece of legislation which mistakenly, mistakenly, schools thought they couldn't talk about gay issues and that wasn't what it was meant for at all, but even after it was repealed in 2003, it left schools very unsure whether they could or couldn't talk about it. James/EO.

James highlights how schools perceived this legislation as advice not to challenge sexual diversity in schools, creating a confusing environment for teachers who were hesitant to cover any gay or lesbian issue in schools (Johnson & Vanderbeck, 2014). James explained that even after this legislation was repealed in 2003 "it left schools very unsure whether they could or couldn't talk about it". It can therefore be assumed that trainee teachers may feel unsure about how to address gay and lesbian issues in primary schools based on state educational guidelines and policies. For instance, state education policies might create frameworks that obstruct the inclusion of some sex education topics, such as sexualities, in schools. Peter, an educational officer, discusses this view:

I don't think it has to be different, it is and it's been unfortunate, and you know, parents can still pull their children out of Sex Education lessons. Peter/EO.

Peter points out, for example, how some educational discourses might somehow exclude some children from the opportunity to have a better understanding of Sex Education: "parents can still pull their children out of Sex Education lessons". Moreover, primary school children might not be able to acknowledge different sexual identities and diversity in their social spaces. It is interesting to note that Peter implies that the way to learn about gay and

lesbian issues is through Sex Education and not other subjects in the schools. Similarly, in Chapter Six it was discussed how gay or lesbian issues are related with gay or lesbian sex (intercourse) and not with equity or citizenship (section 6.2.1). In Chapter 6, some trainees discussed how same-sex families and relationships should be discussed in the school classroom as part of pupils' cultural and social backgrounds. In conclusion, this brief view about educational legal frameworks and their relationship with sexual discourses makes it possible to acknowledge some of the school practices around sexualities in primary schools. Also, it can be argued that schools as well as the training programmes are concerned about addressing sexual diversity in schools and being associated with 'the promotion of homosexuality' in schools.

7.1.2 Sexual diversity and the educational context

This section gives contextual information about how trainee teachers perceive some educational discourses related to sexual diversity. In the on-line questionnaire three questions explored how trainees perceived (1) the appropriate age to learn about gay and lesbian issues; (2) addressing sexual diversity issues in the classroom; and (3) the relationship with inclusive education and sexual diversity. As argued in Chapter Two, normative and educational discourses shape pedagogical practices that might challenge diversity and inclusion in schools (Youdell, 2009). Thus, educational discourses and pedagogical practices might undermine or advocate these practices and have a positive or negative impact on trainee teachers' behaviours and attitudes. Also, some social and cultural backgrounds intentionally or unintentionally influence educational policies and cause tension between the school curriculum and the teaching of sexual education. For instance, these questions explore the beliefs and/or preferences of trainee teachers in respect of some subjective scenarios on sexual diversity and educational practices.

In response to question Q17, trainee teachers were asked if they believed children needed to be of an appropriate age to learn about gay and lesbian issues at school. Most of the trainee teachers (49.4%) believe that children need

to be of an appropriate age before they can learn about the meaning of sexual diversity. In this case, the trainee teachers' perception of what an appropriate age is might be subject to their own experiences or/and social and cultural backgrounds. Almost one-third of the participants (29.9%) strongly disagree/disagree with this statement, suggesting that some trainee teachers believe that there is no one 'appropriate' age at which children should learn about gay or lesbian issues such as same-sex families (see Table 15). As discussed in Chapter Six, trainee teachers argued in the interviews that children should learn about gay and lesbian issues such as same-sex families and relationships from an early age. These results are consistent with Bickmore (1999) and Curran et al.'s (2009) discourses of age-appropriate for learning about gay and lesbian issues might be challenged by acknowledging the heterosexual matrix and the heteronormative practices in primary schools. This acknowledgment of the heterosexual matrix is seen in the trainee teachers' narratives of awareness of gender stereotypes and homophobic language in primary schools (See Chapter Four and Five).

Table 15. Trainee teachers, sexual diversity and the educational discourses.			
Category Questions	Strongly agree/agree	Unsure	Strongly disagree/disagree
17. I believe children need to be of an appropriate age before they can learn about the meaning of sexual diversity.	49.4	20.8	29.9
18. I would prefer to talk about ethnic and religious diversity rather than sexual diversity in my classroom.	37.7	18.2	44.2
22. I do not think inclusion in schools entails talking about gay or lesbian families.	18.2	19.5	62.4

As Bickmore (1999) argues, primary schools “are places where young people’s identities are formed” (p.15). In this sense, pupils should be able to create positive and inclusive beliefs about the LGBT community. A minority of participants (20.8%) indicated that they felt unsure if children needed to be of an appropriate age to learn about gay or lesbian issues or not. There are some contradictions about the need to address sexual diversity issues in primary schools. For example, in Chapter Six, almost all the trainee teachers agreed that children should know about gay and lesbian families in schools. However, it seemed that same-sex families were considered in the context of ‘love’ and ‘caring, and not as a sexual diversity issue.

In the second question, trainee teachers were asked if they would prefer to talk about ethnic and religious diversity rather than sexual diversity in the classroom (Q18). The question was aimed at the trainees’ understanding of current educational guidelines on the promotions of diversity and inclusion discourses in primary schools. Some of these guidelines could be considered to focus on religious and ethnic inclusion and I was interested in whether teachers perceived gender and sexuality to form part of these inclusion frameworks/narratives in educational discourses. Based on these educational discourses, it can be inferred that some teachers would prefer to talk about issues such as religion or ethnicity rather than sexualities.

In the questionnaire, 44.2 % of trainee teachers indicated that they would talk about ethnic, religious and sexual diversity issues without any distinction. In contrast, 37.7 % of trainee teachers strongly agree/agree that they would prefer to talk about ethnic and religious diversity rather than sexual diversity in the classroom. A small number of those interviewed (18.2%) suggested that they would feel unsure about talking about sexual diversity in the classroom in the same way as religious or ethnic diversity issues. From the responses, it seems that trainee teachers are divided about with how necessary it is to teach sexual diversity in the primary school compared with other marginalised groups (see Chapter Two, section 2.3).

Finally, trainee teachers were asked if they thought that inclusive education in schools entailed talking about gay and lesbian families (Q22). Over half of the trainees (62.4%) think that inclusive education involves same-sex families in the school context. This response is related to question Q5 where more than two-thirds trainees mentioned that it is necessary to teach primary school children about gay and lesbian families (see Chapter Six, section 6.2). In the interviews, the trainee teachers argued that teaching about sexual diversity discourses is necessary to advocate social inclusion in primary schools. In addition, 19.5% of trainee teachers were unsure if inclusive education in the school context entails teaching about gay and lesbian families. A minority of trainee teachers (18.2%) does not think inclusion in schools entails talking about gay or lesbian families. In conclusion, these results match those observed in earlier studies which found that primary school teachers relate teaching about same-sex families and LGBT individuals with diversity and inclusion rather than sexual education (Meyer, 2010; Curran et al., 2009).

7.2 Trainee teachers and the perceptions of their roles and responsibilities

This section explores trainee teachers' perceptions of their roles and responsibilities towards the teaching of sexual diversity in schools. In this sense, it examines how trainee teachers perceive themselves as role models and that one of their responsibilities is to advocate diversity and inclusion in their school spaces. In the interviews, it was clear that trainee teachers were aware of these new challenges and social responsibilities such as the inclusion of same-sex families in the school context. For instance, whilst a minority of trainee teachers answered in the online questionnaire that they would not feel comfortable addressing gay and lesbian issues in the classroom, in the interviews almost all trainees agreed that children's safety is one of the most important responsibilities for them. Maya, a trainee teacher, describes how she perceives teachers' responsibilities in the primary school, and how she perceives her role as a trainee teacher in respect of diversity. In the interview, Maya was

describing her situation from the perspective of a trainee teacher in a faith-based primary school:

I'm not a religious person at all but I think is very important that we teach people to love, we teach people to be tolerant, we teach people to be understanding, we teach people to be accepting and I think as a teacher you have a very big responsibility. Maya/BA Primary Education.

Here, Maya argues that although she might not be part of this religious community, for her it is important to teach about love, tolerance and understanding as a social and cultural ethos. It can also be suggested that for trainee teachers, children's safety and their understanding of 'other' identities is "a very big responsibility". This idea of 'love' is discussed by Weems (1999) as the "pedagogy of love", where being an elementary teacher is seen as a portrayal of "maternal love" (p. 27-29). In contrast to this statement, in the interviews the concept of love was related to the idea of inclusion and respect of diversity, for example, to the inclusion of same-sex families in the school context and the acceptance of differences between individuals. In this sense, the idea of 'love' is a softer approach that focuses more on celebrating diversity than on challenging discrimination and oppression of marginalised groups. Thus, it is expected that trainee teachers should be prepared to celebrate social and cultural frameworks that are different from their own. In the literature review, there were suggestions that teachers should be aware of the social spaces in the school environment (i.e. children's interaction in the playgrounds). Lucy, a trainee teacher, explains how teachers might be responsible for looking after children's interactions in school spaces:

I think is just about keeping, you know, 'cos you know who sits next to who and who is friends with who and all that, so I think you need to keep your eye on it and making sure maybe you are going out to play time and stuff, making sure that there's no issues there. Lucy/PGCE.

In Lucy's quote, there is a suggestion where teachers are expected to act as social agents looking after the children's interactions and behaviours in these social spaces. In this way, Lucy is implying, for example, that children's discriminatory or derogatory acts happen in different spaces in the schools and that it would be possible for a trainee teacher to recognise who is the aggressor and victim of these acts. What Lucy highlights is an expectation that teachers will interact with students, "making sure maybe you are going out to play time and stuff, making sure that there's no issues there". Like Lucy, some trainee teachers perceive that the responsibility of being inclusive has to go beyond the classroom to other school spaces. Overall, it seems that trainee teachers perceive that they may be able to create an inclusive environment in the school classroom and be inclusive about sexual diversity issues in the primary schools. These trainee teachers' perceptions suggested that trainees perceive themselves as responsible for being inclusive and advocating diversity in the schools.

7.2.1 Trainee teachers on "being inclusive rather than teaching inclusivity"

As showed above, over half of the trainee teachers agree that inclusive education involves same-sex families in the school context. In the interviews, trainee teachers described their expectation of being inclusive rather than teaching inclusivity in the primary school classroom and remarked on the idea of trainee teachers as role models of inclusiveness. Therefore, it can be argued that inclusive education can be related to sexual diversity minorities. Evans and Lunt (2002) explore the limits of inclusive education which suggest that teachers should "make one school for all pupils" (p.3). For instance, to make schools more diverse and inclusive, Peter, an educational officer, discusses the difference between diversity and inclusion in the educational context:

I suppose diversity and inclusion means taking into account two different things. Diversity means for us accepting that people come from all different backgrounds, or different cultures or different faiths, and that is something that should be celebrated, and for inclusion, I mean, inclusion is a word we

tend to use particularly much because of kind of implies that there's an external that needs to be included and there is that inclusion, whereas internals are more normal. Peter/EO.

Here, Peter implies that diversity refers to talking about different backgrounds such as religions or ethnicity, and inclusion is related to an individual who is being excluded for being different. Peter argues that diversity has to be celebrated and accepted. In this way, teachers are inclusive. Likewise, James, an education officer, discusses how teachers can be inclusive and challenge sexual diversity issues in the schools:

We don't need to have a gay lesson, because I don't think that's the most relevant way to do it, it's a but making sure you're developing what we call an inclusive curriculum, so curriculum the way you talk about a range of issues that includes lesbian, gay and bisexual issues too. James/EO.

According to James, having a particular lesson to challenge gay issues is not “the most relevant way to do it”. A better approach to LGBT issues in primary schools is, when addressing different issues on diversity in the classroom, LGBT issues are included. The results of the practices will be seen possible when LGBT issues have been discussed across the entire curriculum rather than just as part of a single class on sex education. In other words, as James highlights, schools should have “an inclusive curriculum”. This view was echoed and discussed by Kate, a trainee teacher, who argues that the best way to address inclusion and diversity is being an inclusive teacher:

I think, rather than doing sort of set lessons around things with just being inclusive with you know, being pragmatic and having books, and chats, and thinking about the currents affairs and about but also being reactive to think, as I said follow the children's leads. Kate/PGCE.

Kate's narrative is similar to James's. It is clear from the interviews that trainees are looking for an inclusive curriculum in their classroom in order to

address gay and lesbian issues although in this quotation Kate specifically refers to “just being inclusive”, it is clear that an inclusive curriculum is needed. This idea of tackling different issues, while preliminary, suggests that teachers should be trained to be inclusive and, as Kate points out, to think “about the currents affairs and about but also being reactive to think”. Likewise, Kate explains that teachers should “follow the children’s leads”; this idea emerged, too, in the perception of how to tackle homophobia in schools where pupils were asked to explain the use of words as ‘that’s so gay’ in the classroom (see Chapter Five, section 5.1.2).

Similarly, Kelly and Brookes (2009) discuss this idea of children leading their learning and understanding of sexual diversity issues where teachers’ assumptions of limited “cognitive and emotional capacities” (p. 209) in children might undermine pedagogical practices that challenge sexual diversity issues. It can therefore be assumed that trainees should consider children’s reactions and awareness of any topic first before a ‘clarifying’ intervention, for example, before clarifying why they are using derogatory marks such as ‘that’s so gay’. In this sense, Kate implies trainee teachers should consider and acknowledge children’s diverse identities, too. Similarly, Amelia, an education officer, argues that an inclusive environment in school may allow children to feel more included and to be able to challenge any prejudice around them:

I think it needs to be flaked out that actually you know these things are challenged and the way to come about challenging it, and the benefits in terms of the inclusive school community and the calm and happier place that school becomes if these things are challenged because everybody feels included, people know that if there is any prejudice then it will be challenged. Amelia/EO.

Amelia raises the idea of creating inclusive spaces and practices in the school context. For her, “the inclusive school community” approach is a positive case where schools challenge different issues such as homophobic bullying. Amelia implies that teachers and pupils benefit from inclusive schools where

marginalised groups are found. Hence, it seems that trainee teachers and educational officers perceive that challenging gay and lesbian issues is not just about an inclusive curriculum but rather about being inclusive. Similarly, Kate reinforces this idea that “it's not just about the curriculum”:

I suppose it's not just about the curriculum it's about the wider, you know, how you, are with other teachers, different members of the staff, the parents, you know, wherever in the school and how they work as a whole, cos I think that's important for to, to ... cos you can be inclusive and diverse in the classroom but if it doesn't reflect on the whole school. Kate/PGCE.

This seems to be what Amelia calls the “the inclusive school community”. Here, Kate indicates that inclusive schools have to go beyond the curriculum. In this sense, teachers, staff members and parents have to be able to be inclusive and integrate as a whole. Kate also implies that teachers can be inclusive and diverse in their classroom practices but that has to be reflected in all school spaces in order to be truly inclusive. Maya’s narrative is similar to Amelia and Kate’s; Maya focuses on the idea of being inclusive as a teacher:

I think children do need, being taught to be inclusive and accepting, and to not judge people based around sexuality [...] you would have to practice what you preach and make sure that you are very inclusive in all of the latitudes you are giving, somehow you bring into everything. Maya/BA Primary Education.

As noted by Maya, it can also be inferred that trainee teachers should teach pupils to be inclusive and accepting of diversity while being inclusive as a teacher. In summary, trainee teachers perceive that the best way to challenge any discriminatory act or address any diversity situation is to be open to accepting differences within individuals and groups. Overall, there is a consistency among trainee teachers where being inclusive as a teacher is the most important key to having a more diverse and inclusive environment in

primary school spaces. Therefore, trainee teachers' perception of marginalised populations is essential to challenge hegemonic teaching practices.

7.3 Trainee teachers queering the primary school classroom

This section explores trainee teachers' perceptions of teaching sexual diversity in the primary school classroom. As discussed in Chapter One, Sears (1999) introduces queering teaching as a framework to advocate for the 'others'. In this sense, "teaching queerly demands we explore taken-for-granted assumptions about diversity, identities, childhood, and prejudice" (p.5). Moreover, Robinson and Ferfolja (2008) imply that in order to tackle homophobia and heterosexism in the school context it is necessary to highlight the significant impact that teachers' perceptions and practices can have in challenging these issues. Other studies also highlight the importance of the trainee teachers' articulation of diversity and multicultural societies in the schools (Leavy, 2005; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Overall, the idea of queering the primary school classroom appeared in the interviews when trainee teachers discussed inclusion and diversity and effective practices to challenge sexual diversity discourses in the educational context. In addition, this section explores the barriers and challenges to teaching about sexual diversity that are perceived by the trainee teachers.

The section is divided into three parts. First, the trainee teachers' awareness of diverse identities in the school classroom is described. It can be argued that trainee teachers' perceptions and awareness of different identities in the classroom allow trainees to improve their teaching practices and engage with diversity and inclusion. The trainee idea 'under one umbrella' refers to the concept of sexual diversity and the inclusion within this concept of the diverse identities of students such as ethnic, race, religion and others. It also highlights the primary school as a social space where there is an increased presence of beliefs and diversity within the individuals and groups. Throughout the online questionnaire trainee teachers were asked how they felt about teaching diverse identities in the classroom such as religion, ethnicity and social backgrounds

and gay and lesbian issues. The second section explores trainee teachers' perceived barriers to teaching about LGBT issues in the primary school context. For instance, a trainee teacher's lack of confidence, the lack of training in diversity issues or homophobic issues are some of the challenges to tackling homophobia or heterosexism in the school context that are mentioned by trainees. In the final section, trainee teachers' perception of challenging sexual diversity in the classrooms is discussed.

As discussed in Chapter One, trainee teacher perceptions and beliefs have an impact on how trainee teachers challenge and address LGBT discourses. The importance of teacher training in advocating inclusion and diversity in primary schools is also discussed (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Lindsay, et al., 2006; Szalacha, 2004; Page & Liston, 2002). Thus, trainee teachers were asked to indicate whether they would feel comfortable asking children about their understanding of gay and lesbian issues. And finally, the interviews discussed how trainees perceive these diverse pupils' identities in the primary school classroom.

7.3.1 "Under one umbrella": diverse identities in the classroom

During the interviews, inclusion and diversity in the school spaces and how primary schools understand inclusivity in primary schools was discussed. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Bridger and Shaw (2012) argue that student diversity in the schools needs effective practices that link these diverse identities. They suggest that these practices "go beyond tools, techniques, initiatives and policies" (p.123). In this section, how trainee teachers perceive different identities such as religion, ethnicity, and sex in the primary school classroom is discussed. For instance, Lucy, a trainee teacher, talks about how different backgrounds such as "gender, race, sex, and religion" come under the same umbrella. It can be suggested that Lucy is aware of these diverse identities and the need for effective pedagogies to address different backgrounds. This extract "under one umbrella" summarizes the idea of inclusion in education which believes that all different backgrounds should find a place in schools (Evans & Lunt, 2002). In the following quotes, Lucy describes schools as social

spaces where every identity is created and the schools have to accommodate diversity and inclusive approaches:

All kind of under one umbrella, sort of gender, race, sex, religion, it's all under equality now, so yeah, it should all be included, shouldn't it? Lucy/PGCE.

Like in Year 1 there was a boy, he's from [country] ...they are very inclusive of him really which is nice and that's kind of from the teachers you know, and the children, making sure he's not left out or anything, so yeah there's a lot of the school I work in and they do kind of make sure that's something that there are posters saying you know "it doesn't matter what we look like" or "doesn't matter where we come from, we are all the same" or "it would be boring if we were all the same". Lucy/PGCE.

In the first quote above, Lucy implies that there are different identities intersecting together in the schools classroom and she highlights that some identities can be more visible than others. For instance, one of her examples suggests that ethnicity is more readily acknowledged in a pupil. In the second quote, Lucy describes some practices used in relation to inclusion within the classroom such as embracing different ethnicities. Lucy explains how her school creates a safe environment for a pupil who was from another country. She argues that not only teachers but also pupils were “making sure he's not left out or anything”. Lucy describes how some posters around the school positively addressed differences within pupils. For example, "it doesn't matter what we look like" and "it would be boring if we were all the same" and this indicates that the school was aware of how these differences between children might affect their school development and social interactions within their peers. Another example is Laura, a trainee teacher, who describes her experience with traveller students:

I think at first I was a bit ...didn't know what to expect just because I never work that group of children before didn't know what are their needs

particularly if they were different anyway but I found them really similar to other students. Laura/PGCE.

Laura highlights how working with minority communities can be perceived as challenging at first; nonetheless, she implies that working with minority groups helped her to improve her confidence and to be more inclusive in the classroom. The trainee teachers argue that inclusive schools and inclusive staff improve the way people interact in the school spaces around diverse identities. Similarly, my findings suggest that trainee teachers perceive diverse identities in the classroom such as religion, ethnicity and social backgrounds. Nonetheless, diverse sexual identities may be undermined in the primary school context.

Table 16. Trainee teachers and diverse identities in the classroom.			
Category Questions	Strongly agree/agree	Unsure	Strongly disagree/disagree
11. I would feel comfortable talking about race, ethnic, religious and sexual diversity in my classroom.	81.6	9.2	9.2
12. I would feel comfortable talking about race, ethnic, religious diversity but not about sexual diversity in my classroom.	32.5	13	54.5

Two questions were asked to explore how trainee teachers perceive the idea of addressing these diverse identities in the classroom (Q11 & Q12). A majority of trainee teachers (81.6%), strongly agree/agree that they would feel comfortable talking about race, ethnic, religious and sexual diversity in their primary school classroom. Similarly, 54.5 % of trainees argued that they would not feel comfortable just talking about race, ethnic, religious diversity but not about sexual diversity in the classroom. In this sense, it seems that trainee teachers recognise sexual diversity as part of children’s intersectional identities.

However, 32.5% of trainee teachers would felt comfortable addressing racial, ethnic and religious diversity but not sexual diversity and 9.2% of trainees would not felt talking about racial, ethnic, religious or sexual diversity in the primary school classroom. A minority of participants 9.2% and 13% were unsure about how they would feel about talking about race, ethnic, religious and sexual diversity in their classroom (see Table 16).

Overall, these results imply that a small number of trainee teachers feel more confident addressing religion or ethnicity than sexual diversity issues in schools. Peter, an educational officer, discusses the hostility between religion and sexuality in the school context. Although, trainee teachers stress that all identities should be respected and that children have to be able to express themselves according to their social and cultural backgrounds, it is essential that trainee teachers challenge any discriminatory act:

Often people do talk about balance in terms, you know, religion, teaching things about sexuality, we don't really see it as a balance. I mean, all schools do have legal obligations to teach, things like different families, but also to eradicate discrimination, prejudice, generally. Peter/EO.

Peter implies that schools try to find a balance between individual faith and sexuality issues. Nonetheless, as he argues, harassment or discriminative acts based on sexuality grounds should have no place in schools. This means schools should aim “to eradicate discrimination, prejudice, generally”; as Peter points out schools have a legal obligation to tackle homophobic bullying and discrimination (see Chapter One, section 1.3). For instance, in the interviews, trainee teachers were asked to look at a children’s storybook with gay characters. I asked Alice, a trainee teacher, if she thought her school would allow reading these non-heteronormative books:

Of course some religious schools might not want it read. But I probably wouldn't want to be at a school like that...I consider myself a progressive

sort of person who would not be comfortable with discrimination.
Alice/PGCE.

Here, Alice seems aware of and acknowledges diverse identities in the primary classroom, and may be more receptive to work with children intersectional identities. Therefore, it could be implied that trainee teachers' confidence is a significant ability needed to challenge LGBT issues in primary schools. An example of this is the capability that trainee teachers feel when they are trained to address these sexual diversity issues. Kate, a trainee teacher, describes how she felt after a training session on same-sex families:

I was fortunate enough to have a training, and they as well and they were using it. We need to have what's related to all different types of relationships and families around, around the classroom, books like "Tango and Me Makes Three". Kate/PGCE.

Here, Kate points out the need for confidence in trainee teachers that has been discussed before. It seems that trainee teachers feel they could tackle homophobia if they were properly trained (see Chapter 5). In this case, Kate's quote is about "all different types of relationships" and this means not just gay or lesbian families but all kinds. It could be argued that when trainees feel confident they are able to challenge sexual diversity issues. In conclusion, and as Pallotta-Chiarolli (1999) points out, children live in multicultural spaces; in this sense, primary school children are more aware of social justice and diversity discourses than those teachers expect. It has been mentioned that pupils, teachers and staff in the schools have multidimensional identities too. Primary schools are spaces where these identities are encountered. Accordingly, educational spaces build new social and cultural frameworks for diversity (Bridger & Shaw, 2012; Taylor, 2012). Thus, it can be inferred that a trainee teacher's responsibilities might not be to address all these identities but that they should be inclusive and open to all of them. And overall it seems that trainee teachers feel more inclusive to sexual diversity, particularly same-sex families.

7.3.2 Trainee teachers perceived barriers to the challenge of homophobia and sexual diversity

Although trainee teachers might feel comfortable addressing and challenging sexual-diversity issues in the primary schools, there are some barriers they could encounter. During the interviews, some trainee teachers argued that lack of confidence was one of the barriers to tackling homophobia in primary schools while others implied that not having a supportive school staff (head teacher and other teachers) might make difficult to challenge any LGBT issues. Also, as pointed out in the literature review, there is a concern that some educators perceive children as innocent or naïve about issues of sexuality (Vavrus, 2009; Renold, 2002) and this could be a barrier to being able to address sexual diversity issues in the classroom. For example, Amelia, an educational officer, discusses how teachers might tackle homophobia but their confidence might be a barrier to tackling these issues:

I think teachers have different levels of confidence in tackling these issues, and my experience is that most teachers or all teachers that I've come across actually want to tackle them but maybe haven't got the confidence. Amelia/EO.

Here, Amelia describes a teacher having “different levels of confidence in tackling this issue”; this may imply that some teachers feel more confident than others. In the interviews, one trainee teacher commented that being actually teaching, as a trained teacher, would improve their confidence in the classroom. Another trainee teacher indicated that having their own classroom, as a trained teacher, would make a difference in the way that they could tackle homophobia; in this sense, this trainee implies that teachers are responsible for the way these derogatory discourses are challenged. As Amelia describes, there are different levels of confidence and it may be the case therefore that these different levels are due to social and cultural backgrounds and teaching experience as well:

I think the more established you become in a school the more confident you are more have to say, hmm, cos I think that you are dealing with deep

rooted sort of views... I 'd be like "ohh," you know "we shouldn't be saying this" because we are role models and you know, if we are saying it children will go and say it, pick up on that". Kate/PGCE.

Kate, a trainee teacher, asserts that being a teacher gives her the opportunity to challenge different social and cultural issues such as homophobia. In this sense, her view is related to the idea that teachers have to be seen as a role models and this could improve their level of confidence. Amelia and Kate's idea makes a connection between different levels of confidence where Kate argues, "the more established you become in a school the more confident you are". For instance, Lucy, a trainee teacher, describes how non-supportive staff could be a barrier and Laura, a trainee teacher, implies how positive staff could improve the school spaces:

Most of the teachers in my school seem very kind of open to talk about things, so it's not really something on the table. In a previous school I worked, it was a [religious] school and it was all to do with, we had to do things really close with the priest and stuff, and I don't know how that would ...work. Lucy/PGCE.

They were really involved a lot of times you could see them coming into the classroom or just walking around they know all the students' names it was kind amazing...they were really involved and they really care. Laura/PGCE.

In this quote, Lucy compares the school where she worked previously and her current school where staff seem more open. In her previous faith-based school she argues that it was necessary to address different topics with the priest and this make difficult to challenge any LGBT issues. For instance, she implies that her new school is more "open to talk about things". For Lucy it seems that staff and the headmaster are more open to discuss issues such as gay and lesbian families or homophobia. Similarly, Laura highlights how a positive staff can improve the school spaces; in the conversation, Laura was discussing how in her school the headmaster and deputies are involved with being

inclusive with their students. In this sense, these positive attitudes advocate more inclusive and diverse spaces. In contrast, Maya, a trainee teacher, discusses a similar idea where staff or groups with different backgrounds can be a barrier to challenging gender stereotypes or homophobia in the school context. Maya focuses on social backgrounds to explain how some social frameworks might perceive sexual diversity:

I would find if I lived in the town most of us lived in which is [small village], where there's a lot more poverty and a lot more whites, sort of sense of cultural superiority, how you know, it's just more obvious ...that there's a whole section of that society that is unaccepting, or I don't know, race, gender, you name it they're just more narrow-minded. Maya/BA Primary Education.

Here Maya discusses her perception of a small village with a mostly white population where there is a “sense of cultural superiority “. She implies that this social framework, of small village and mostly white people, is perceived as “just more narrow-minded” and this affects the way they perceive and accept different social and cultural backgrounds such as sexual diversity discourses. Thus, trainee teachers are aware that connections exist between the intersections of different identities and that these differences might be a barrier to inclusiveness, as mentioned in the literature review. For instance, in the interviews I asked Alice, a trainee teacher, about her training on sexual diversity associated with social inclusion or diversity matters:

No, I don't think we've ever discussed it. It was brought up as one aspect of inclusion/diversity but not discussed, and touched on briefly in our Sex Ed seminar, but only in terms of, how would you answer questions about what being gay is, etc.? I think more does need to be done. Alice/PGCE.

Alice says that some topics are “brought up “ but “not discussed” in the training programmes. This may be the reason why some trainee teachers lack the confidence to address some social and cultural issues. Likewise, Alice

suggests that, “more does need to be done”; there is a perception that inclusion and diversity are just being presented in the seminar but there is not more discussion about how to address these issues in the primary school context. In general, therefore, it seems that their main difficulties relate to the lack of training on sexual diversity issues and the subjects of inclusion and diversity in the primary school context. This could also be related to the lack of or different levels of confidence that trainee teachers have in the classroom. Overall, trainee teachers have indicated that these frameworks have an impact on how social groups perceive different non-normative discourses. It can thus be suggested that trainee teachers would encounter different obstacles and that their understanding of these social and cultural backgrounds would improve somehow the way they tackle issues such as sexual diversity in the primary schools. Consequently, it seems that trainee teachers believe that it is essential to receive training, not just about gay and lesbian issues but about inclusion and diversity in general.

7.3.3 Trainee teachers on challenging sexual diversity in the classroom

The importance of teacher training in challenging prejudices about sexual diversity in primary schools has already been discussed (DePalma & Atkinson, 2009; Szalacha, 2004). This section explores the challenges that trainee teachers face when addressing sexual diversity in the primary school. In the following quote, Amelia, an educational officer, points out that trainee teachers are supposed to develop “all sorts of skills to manage the classrooms”; these include teaching inclusion and diversity in the primary classrooms:

It's really important that trainee teachers develop all sorts of skills to manage the classrooms, to manage behaviour, to create an environment that it's caring and respectful and everybody feels included. Amelia/EO.

Hence, Amelia perceives that creating a caring and a safe environment is essential in the primary school context and that it is expected that trainee teachers develop these skills during training in order to advocate inclusive and

diverse spaces in the classroom. Thus, as discussed before, it can be argued that trainee teachers perceive that training on inclusion and diversity is necessary. How much it is possible to cover in a PGCE programme, for example, was also discussed:

There's so much else that you are supposed to be learning about, is so much either is connected to an assessment, whereas, I don't know, stuff that's basically, you know, it's theoretical, there's so much to cover and in the course I'm doing, especially within a ten-month PGCE. Maya/BA Primary Education.

Maya highlights this problem of not having enough time to discuss during training, in her quote when she asked how much it is possible to cover “especially within a ten-month PGCE”, or in a such short training programme. Maya’s argument about learning inclusiveness and diversity in the primary classroom could also be related to the trainees’ lack of confidence to challenge some sexual diversity issues such as homophobic bullying. Maya’s idea is similar to Kate’s, a trainee teacher; they point out that once trainee teachers have a classroom as a principal teacher it makes them feel more confident and gives trainees the experience they need to tackle gender stereotypes or homophobia in the schools. Likewise, Kate wonders how training programmes and somehow practices and experiences in the classroom can give trainee teachers different perceptions and an awareness of different issues:

I suppose it's only as I've got older and gone to university and going into sort of teaching and thinking about things is that you think about yourself more and you think "oh, how did I come up with these views? Kate/PGCE.

Kate reflects on the process of being a trainee teacher and how these programmes develop an awareness of their social and cultural spaces. In contrast with her perception of “there’s so much else that you are supposed to be learning about” and how they might be aware of how much has to be covered during a short training programme. Kate questions her self-reflections on social

and cultural attitudes: “oh, how did I come up with these views?” This could be interpreted as the interaction of her own social and cultural identities and the expectations of her acceptance of diversity.

Table 17. Trainee teachers and sexual diversity in primary schools.			
Category Questions	Strongly agree/agree	Unsure	Strongly disagree/disagree
14. I would feel comfortable asking children about their understanding of gay or lesbian.	58.4	28.6	13
16. I feel when I complete my trainee teacher programme I will be able to address gay or lesbian issues in schools.	46.8	35.1	18.2

In the online questionnaire, I asked trainee teachers if they felt that when the trainee teacher programme was completed they would be able to address gay or lesbian issues in schools and if they would feel comfortable asking children about their understanding of gay or lesbian meanings. Trainee teachers were asked to indicate whether or not they would feel comfortable asking children about their understanding of gay or lesbian issues (Q14). Over half of the trainees (58.4%) reported that they strongly agree/agree they would feel comfortable addressing gay or lesbian issues with children. 28.6% of trainee teachers were unsure about being able to ask children about gay or lesbian issues in schools, and a relatively small number of respondents (13%) indicated that they would not feel comfortable asking children about their understanding of what it means to be gay or lesbian (see Table 17). These results further support the idea that teachers are afraid of talking about some topics that might be related to sexual identities and the association between these ideas and the promotion of homosexuality (Allan et al, 2009; Robinson, 2008).

When trainee teachers were asked whether they felt they would be able to address gay or lesbian issues in schools when they had completed their trainee teacher programme (Q16), 46.8% of the trainee teachers said that they strongly agree/agree with this statement (see Table 17). 35.1 % of trainee teachers were unsure and a minority of participants (18.2%) disagreed that they felt that after completing the trainee teacher programme they would be able to address gay or lesbian issues in primary schools. These results further support the narratives of trainee teachers in the interviews, where they argued that they would feel more confident when they had more experience of working as a teacher in a school. Alice, a trainee teacher, illustrates this perception of confidence and what she thought about a seminar in sexual education:

Well, like most things in the Sex Ed talk we were told to be very cagey and not go into detail, but be honest. I think it was something like, some men love/marry other men, some women other women, and so on. Alice/PGCE.

In this quote, Alice illustrates that seminars in sexual education might not be challenging properly questions about sexual diversity issues. As Alice says, educators suggest that trainee teachers should be “very cagey and not go into detail, but be honest”. This means that there are still some concerns about talking about sexual issues with students. It could be inferred that some teacher educators providers, like schools, worry about how talking about sexualities with children might be perceived. These specific concerns are related to the question about what it means to teach sexual diversity in primary schools. James, an educational officer, discusses this situation where he explains that talking about LGBT issues such as gay and lesbian families is about ‘love’ and about having a positive perception of these non-conforming sexual identities:

What children in primary schools need to know is that gay people exist and that it is absolutely fine if you grow up to be gay...We have to be sure we send out a positive message about been gay, because otherwise it will be very difficult journey for those children when they go into secondary school. James/EO.

In this sense, James argues that teaching about gay and lesbian issues implies more than being inclusive and acknowledging and respecting individuals from any social and cultural background. James highlights that primary schools are the place where children need to start learning pro-actively about sexualities in a positive way (rather than simply teaching about sexual diversity on an ad hoc basis, for example, in response to homophobia in the school context). He implies that secondary schools are more aggressive spaces towards homophobia and sexualities. Therefore, trainee teachers should advocate a positive perception of diversity and LGBT issues to children in schools. Amelia, an education officer, argues that children should not just acknowledge discriminatory or derogatory words and actions but also be able to understand the implications of these acts:

It's not just actually the teacher saying "this is wrong don't do that", but actually getting the children to come to the conclusions themselves. I think is very, very powerful and if they do that through discussion, through dialogue then I think that is the most powerful way the children have reached those conclusions themselves and I think that's very, very rewarding. Amelia/EO.

Amelia suggests that pupils should develop their own sense of equality and social justice in relation to sexual diversity. She also stresses that these inclusive constructions have to be built through dialogue with pupils. Amelia describes these practices of inclusiveness as "very powerful". It has been suggested by some studies that teachers are expected to look at developing children's understanding of different social and cultural backgrounds (Pallotta-Chiarolli, 1999; Letts, 2002). How trainee teachers perceive themselves as responsible for creating safe spaces in the schools spaces has been discussed above. Amelia argues that trainee teachers should promote dialogue and discussion around issues of sexual diversity to create understanding and inclusiveness among their own pupils. In the following quotes, Hannah and Kate, trainee teachers, discuss how trainees challenge sexual diversity issues in the primary school context:

I think it should be covered as part of that, and then, you know introduce it from as early as possible, so if there are children who are, you know, experiencing sorts of feelings and issues then they've got that information from as early on as possible. Hannah/BA Primary Education.

With homophobic bullying, I don't, wouldn't think, I mean it might work, but I wouldn't things of sort of having a lesson with "today we are going to learn about homophobic bullying," so because it comes under so many different sort of different strands but yes, I mean through History it'd be ideal for a lot of current affairs you know. Kate/PGCE.

Hannah argues that primary schools students should learn about different identities from an early age; this point was often made by the trainee teachers in the interviews. As James suggested before, primary schools are a social space where children learn derogatory and discriminatory remarks towards sexual diversity; therefore, these spaces are an opportunity to challenge this behaviour. Trainees' perceptions of addressing sexual diversity issues for early age pupils in schools is related to their awareness of primary schools being seen as hegemonic heteronormative social spaces that have to be challenged. Similarly, as discussed by some trainee teachers, Kate argues that pupils could learn about gay and lesbian issues in different school subjects, for example History or Citizenship. In this way, LGBT issues could be part of a more inclusive approach rather than just being related to sexual health or AIDS. Some of the issues emerging from these quotes relate specifically to the idea that pupils can learn from an early age and that teaching about gay and lesbian issues is not talking about sex (for example, intercourse) but is rather talking about individuals, inclusion and diversity. These perceptions suggest that these trainee teachers are aware of sexual diversity issues and about their role as agents of social change. Finally, Lucy, a trainee teacher, illustrates how trainee teachers could deal with these sexual diversity issues in schools:

I think it you ought to be the best teacher you can be and deal with issues like this is not to be afraid of the parents or what they say would be, you

wouldn't be dealing with it right, I think, think you've got it of the child's kind of best interest at heart and make sure that whatever issues go on then it gets dealt with regardless of what parents or whatever. Lucy/PGCE.

Here, Lucy summarises what trainee teachers expect of themselves as a teachers in primary schools. In the interviews, it can be inferred that trainees look to being the “best teacher”; this includes challenging some social and cultural issues in the school context. Likewise, Lucy highlights something other trainees also discussed, that trainee teachers should look for “the child's kind of best interest at heart”. Indeed, she implies that somehow trainee teachers have a social responsibility “regardless of what parents or whatever”. Lucy is aware that trainees could encounter some difficulties with parents or staff that undermine issues related to gender and sexualities.

Overall, trainee teachers’ identities, such as their social and cultural backgrounds, have an impact on the way they perceive and are aware of sexual diversity issues in primary schools and how they can challenge and address these LGBT needs (Page & Liston, 2002). As discussed by Ollis (2010), training programmes build “teachers’ personal and professional confidence, which lead to a willingness, commitment and ability to address very sensitive gender and sexual diversity issues with students” (p.202). Thus, these finding suggest that trainee teachers perceive confidence, knowledge and professionalism as essential abilities to challenge sexual diversity issues in primary schools.

Summary

This chapter has explored how trainee teachers think about addressing sexual diversity in primary schools. The study has identified different trainee teacher narratives that illustrate the barriers and challenges to tackling discriminatory and derogatory acts towards the LGBT community in the primary school context. Although this study focuses on sexual diversity issues, the findings may well have a bearing on diversity and inclusion in general. Thus, this analysis provides a framework for the exploration of pedagogical tools that could

improve trainee teacher experiences and learning in relation to sexual diversity and inclusiveness in primary schools. The main findings suggest that:

- First, educational officers discussed the impact of legislative frameworks in the school practices. Although, trainee teachers do not discuss these educational policies directly, it was implied that there is an awareness of being cautious when addressing sexual diversity issues in primary schools. For instance, trainee teachers argue that seminars about sex education are lacking in information about different sexual identities. It can be argued, then, that the influence of educational policies still has an impact on the school practices outlined by the educational officers.
- Secondly, trainee teachers perceive themselves as role models with the responsibility of being inclusive to all students. Trainee teachers particularly point out that inclusive education is about more than teaching practices but about being an inclusive person. In this sense, trainee teachers argue the necessity of training programmes that challenge marginalised groups in the school context. This includes different cultural and social backgrounds; as one trainee teacher mentioned, all fit “under one umbrella”.
- Third, there are several barriers and challenges that trainee teachers encounter; in this study, lack of confidence was particularly highlighted. Trainee teachers associated this lack of confidence with shortage of training and non-safe spaces (i.e. faith schools). It was pointed out that trainee teachers challenge sexual diversity when they feel confident and comfortable about how to deal with some discriminatory or derogatory situations (i.e. when the staff is LGBT friendly or the headteacher challenges these sexual diversity issues).

Chapter 8. Addressing sexual diversity: identities of the trainee teachers and primary schools spaces

This section explores trainee teachers' diverse identities, such as religion or sexualities, and their interaction with the inclusion of sexual diversity issues in the primary school context. As discussed in the literature review, teaching about sexuality and sexual diversity is a challenge, not only from a pedagogical point of view but also as a personal matter. Teachers must confront their own identity and beliefs, the identity of the institution in which they work, and also the cultural and social identities of the parents and other school staff as well as the identity of each of their pupils. The process of acceptance and inclusion works at different levels in the social space of the school and the real world. It is a space that is created between a teacher and a pupil, where one or both of them might be an agent of social change. The section presents four trainee teacher narratives that relate their own identities to the idea of challenging sexual diversity in primary schools.

Some of these trainees' narratives are discussed in different studies where trainee teachers reflect on their own diverse identities and there is an overlapping of different social and cultural discourses (Curran et al., 2009; Nixon & Givens, 2004; Payne & Smith, 2014). As Nixon and Givens (2004) argue, "any student is at the intersection of overlapping cultures and discourses, both shaping them and being shaped by them" (p.233). In a broad sense, the aim of this study was to explore trainee teachers' perceptions of sexual diversity minorities in the school context. Here, these narratives give insight into the implications of diverse discourses that could advocate or undermine gay and lesbian issues in primary schools. It would be reasonable to argue that these narratives represent just a small portion of the multidimensional identities that could overlap in any individual but it makes a significant contribution to the understanding of how to address sexual diversity issues in schools. The discourse of religion as a tense relationship between the educational context and the necessity of teaching about sexual diversity was a particular feature throughout the study.

In this sense, it can be argued that religious backgrounds interact in controversial ways with sexualities in education (Johnson & Vanderbeck, 2014). The first narrative is by Eva, who identifies as a lesbian trainee teacher who works in a faith school. In her narrative, there is a discourse of trainee teachers dealing with their own identities and the misrepresentations of marginalised groups in the educational context. Like Eva, some trainee teachers have highlighted the lack of confidence to 'come out' when working in schools as trainees. In this case, Eva has to overlap her sexual identity with the school's religious identity. In the second narrative, Brooke identifies herself as a religious trainee teacher who accepts the idea of respect and tolerance towards sexual minorities but also struggles with some ideas such as gay couples having children. In the third narrative, Joshua describes his awareness of sexual diversity minorities as marginalised groups throughout his non-traditional family story. Although Joshua identifies as gay trainee teacher, his narrative focuses on how being part of a marginalized group, that is, a single parent family, makes him more likely to have a more positive approach to inclusion and diversity in schools. Finally, Rosie sees herself as a caring and protective trainee teacher who identifies with marginalised pupils.

8.1 Eva: sexual identities and religious schools

I picked upon this very, it's very young cohort teachers and all the and the older ones are very, very traditional [religion] and I felt uncomfortable. I'm gay and I had this debate with [a friend] and I said 'I dunno whether I feel comfortable coming out in the staff rooms'... I felt this, this sort of 'ohh', d'you know? Like ... a bit of a shield. Eva/PGCE.

Eva, a trainee teacher, appears to be concerned about coming out in the school where she works. She perceives some staff members as very traditional and identified with their faith background. Eva is uncomfortable in the staff room too and she describes herself putting up a shield between her and her colleagues. Other trainee teachers who identified themselves as LGBT in the interviews also mentioned feel uncomfortable about coming out to the staff in

primary school. It can be inferred, too, that LGBT trainee teachers may lack confidence when compared with “the older ones”, more experienced teachers. Nonetheless, Eva points out that working in a faith school could make the process of coming out particularly difficult:

There was that sort of uncomfortable, that certain people who I sit with, who I wouldn't feel comfortable with saying it's just general-what-did-you-do-on-the-weekend conversations that come up in the staff room, and I feel that I can't say, ehh... with my girlfriend. Eva/PGCE.

Eva explains that she feels uncomfortable in the staff room in the everyday conversation. For example, she refers to when some staff members ask about weekend activities and she can't talk about her girlfriend. This can be related to her feeling that she has to hide behind “a shield”. Previous studies have noted the importance of working in an environment where teachers feel safe to express themselves and this environment improves their work practices (Meyer, 2010). Eva highlights that being gay and a trainee teacher should not be an issue in the school context:

I also think well it's no one's business really either. But you almost feel like you are always coming out so, it isn't, it's no one's business but then you feel like you have to say it, otherwise you're holding yourself back and you are doing yourself like an injustice then. Eva/PGCE.

Here, Eva appears to be uncomfortable with the idea of coming out in the school. She perceives that coming out in the school context is not necessary; nonetheless, there is a feeling that there is a pressure that “you have to say it”, and in this sense there is a feeling of “always coming out”. Eva thinks that she has to hold herself back and not be honest about who she is. The following quotation shows that some faith schools are open to training on sexual diversity issues such as homophobic bullying:

We were at the training session a few months ago, someone came in from [city] Council and gave us like a staff meeting on homophobic bullying basically and also how the staff, there's probably you are sitting next to a gay person, are they comfortable in coming out in your staff room or are they not. You need to ask yourself why they are not comfortable in doing it, then why, then the children wouldn't be and that's where you need to address. Eva/PGCE.

Thus, Eva suggests that the city council as a governmental institution might have an influence on faith schools in challenging homophobic bullying. It is possible, therefore, that LGBT teachers, parents and pupils might have an opportunity for gay or lesbian issues to be discussed in faith schools. Eva describes this seminar as a way to make sense that in different social spaces 'you will find' LGBT individuals. Similarly, she argues that it was pointed out in the seminar that if LGBT teachers do not feel secure about coming out, then it has to be asked how schools can be expected to create a safe environment to tackle discriminatory acts such as homophobia. Eva discusses how she perceives that this religious environment could affect her teaching and her behaviour as a lesbian teacher:

I think a little bit like it affects me in a positive way in that school certainly because, ehmm, I'm not religious so I, I embrace what they do to a certain extent, but I like to bring other things into the classroom... And I think you don't have to do everything by the book in your classroom and that's what I'm looking forward to when I've got my classroom and I can make those children feel safe and secure and hopefully. Eva/PGCE.

Eva feels that this faith school in particular affects her in a positive way. She describes herself as not a religious person but she does "embrace what they do to a certain extent". This situation implies that it is possible to be a LGBT teacher and work in a faith primary school to a certain extent, as mentioned by Eva. Likewise, Eva suggests that having her own classroom "can make those children feel safe and secure"; it can be therefore assumed that some trainee

teachers perceive that primary classrooms are not safe and secure spaces for LGBT individuals. Lastly, Eva appears to be optimistic about the frameworks of some faith schools:

We have to deal a lot with collective worshipping, things that they do, it is very [religious] what they do but it's like everyone is different for a reason because 'God made us that way', which is quite nice in that sense. Eva/PGCE.

Even though this last discourse of “everyone is different for a reason because ‘God made us that way’”, presented by Eva, implies that some faith schools tolerate LGBT narratives in their schools, it does not imply that they challenge or address sexual diversity issues in a critical way. In this sense, there is a narrative presented by Eva where faith-based schools use an essentialist narrative around gender and sexuality. Also, Eva is clear on how she feels about being a lesbian teacher and how difficult it is when you are around traditional religious staff and administrators. Eva indicates that being in a religious school makes her feel insecure and unsafe. In the interviews, as discussed by Nixon and Givens (2004), trainee teachers implied a sense of powerlessness that is related to prejudice and lack of confidence because of how some school backgrounds may undermine and limit sexual diversity discourses. Thus, it seems that Eva, who identifies herself as lesbian, needs to build safe spaces for her and for her students in situations where social and cultural backgrounds are homophobic and heterosexist and where they create hegemonic heterosexual discourses of oppression in primary schools.

8.2 Brooke: religious identities and sexual diversity in schools

I'm also [religious], and there's a big kind of dialogue going on within the [religious] community about equal marriage and that is the kind of real tension where a positive dialogue it's happening where these kinds of conversation. And I'm a really active and committed [religious] as well, so I'm kind of really engaging in that part of the process, but at the same time

I know from my own deep experience that God loves all people and that's the end of it. You know. Brooke/PGCE.

Brooke describes herself as a religious trainee teacher who debates the tense discourse between her faith and sexual diversity discourses in the school context. She implies that these religious discourses are positive and that in particular her religious perception is “that God loves all people”. Thus, for Brooke this view of ‘God loves’ is a religious discourse that makes a positive framework for the sexual diversity community in the schools. Nonetheless, some trainee teachers do not share this discourse. During the interviews, it was implied that faith schools are challenging spaces to work and that it is difficult to feel safe as a LGBT teacher. Indeed, Brooke shows some struggle in her perception of sexual diversity and primary schools. During the interviews the online question ‘how do you feel seeing a gay couple with children’ was discussed. Brooke’s narrative is:

I struggle with that and I'd probably be really honest about it, and you know, know that, that's not the response I want to give, but sometimes I do struggle with that. So, I've just got to be completely, completely honest 'cos other way you could say 'oh gosh, you know, this person is really not discriminating at all' but actually I have to be really honest about where I'm at then. I think if you haven't got that honesty, you haven't got a real going on, you gotta have that, gotta have that honesty before you can do anything. Brooke/PGCE.

It could be argued that Brooke is conflicted about her perception of gay couples with children. In the interview, she is not clear about her position, and she even struggles to give an answer. She implies she is not a discriminatory person but it is something “going on” in the way she feels. In general, therefore, it seems that for Brooke there is a personal religious contradiction about “God loves all people” and the way religious communities might see the LGBT community and how this idea is somewhat limited by social and cultural

frameworks. However, Brooke highlights this positive perception of being a religious trainee teacher:

God loves all of people, so that doesn't mean God loves some people more than others, God loves each person absolutely 100% committed, you know, and that's it, so there's no way that I feel, and I often wonder, and I really believe that, just because I've been given this position, this very, very privileged position of being able to work with children, which is an absolute honour to be able to do that, does not give me the right to impose anything on the children about, about that value that may discriminate against other groups in any way, and I'd be horrified, I don't feel that I'm, I don't feel that I do discriminate. Brooke/PGCE.

This quote suggests that Brooke is aware that somehow some religious schools might impose religious beliefs about the LGBT community. She points out that she recognises that being a teacher does not “give her the right to impose anything on the children”. She also implies that being a teacher is a “very privileged position”. This view could be related to the perception that teachers have an impact on pupils’ perception and awareness of sexual diversity. Finally, Brooke talks about how children engage with these representations of sexual diversity in the primary school context:

You'd say it relates to positive engaging with children and to show positive representations, strictly within the early years, I'm an Early Year Specialist, positive representations of people from all backgrounds. So the first thing that comes to my mind from my teacher experience has been to children who might be struggling with a family background...you know, people you know have got a different, a different way, a different background, a different culture, a different ... all that kind of stuff. That's what it is to me, not just to kind of tolerate, but to actually, you know, really, really engage and support. Brooke/PGCE.

These findings suggest that although trainee teachers' identities might be in conflict with different social and cultural backgrounds, teachers could advocate inclusion and diversity in primary schools. Brooke's views of "positive representations of people from all backgrounds" are an example of how teachers can tackle homophobia from faith or any different social and cultural backgrounds in primary schools. As Brooke argues, primary schools have "not just to kind of tolerate, but to actually, you know, really, really engage and support". In this sense, she perceives her role as a caring professional who looks after the safety of children. Vogt (2002) discusses this idea of a caring teacher that could be understood as a moral identity as the "nature of their work" (p. 262). Likewise, as seen previously, some discriminatory frameworks towards sexual diversity in primary schools are based on "religious rhetoric and often mirror the attitudes of the education's students" (Kahn, 2007, p.111). Consequently, Brooke's narrative of a trainee teacher who identifies with a religion does not indicate a disadvantageous approach to the challenge of sexual diversity discourses; nonetheless, it is clear that religious frameworks in schools can create tense relations between LGBT communities and the educational context, such as the way teachers have to be engaged and support sexual diversity issues in primary schools.

8.3 Joshua: modern families in primary schools

I often think that there are reasons for the stereotypes because people do exhibit certain behaviours, but then, then again my, I was raised by just my [parent]...I know that my [parent] has worked very hard and did a very good job by me, so I don't know. I wouldn't want to generalize enough to say 'ohh, well people from foster families are this way, or people from adoptive families are this way'. Obviously there are certain behaviours, which are more common among them, categories, not necessarily something that's sweeping generalization for them all, wouldn't be accurate. Joshua/PGCE.

It has been mentioned that teachers' backgrounds affect their perception about inclusion and diversity in the classroom (Meyer, 2010). It can be suggested that when a trainee teacher has experienced discrimination for being part of a marginalized social group, the perception of diversity is more open. In this case, Joshua implies that being part of a single parent family has had an impact on the way he perceives non-traditional families. As Golombok (2015) discusses in her book *Modern families*, "most people have views on modern families...often based on speculation and assumption" (p. xii). Similarly, Joshua recognises that there are "stereotypes because people do exhibit certain behaviour" but he stresses that these stereotypes are not generalizations about individuals. In this sense, Joshua appears to be aware that belonging to a non-traditional family might bring prejudice to the school context. The following quote illustrates how some social backgrounds can influence the way diversity is perceived for some social groups:

I'm from [village] originally, which is from a small mining, formerly a small mining town where it's all really white working class people, and I know that I've got friends who were teachers here, who don't really know how to deal with it. They've said to me what you do when you've got a child who can't speak English in your class? What do you do when this happens? What did you do? Cos I've never been put in a situation where I've to deal with it. Joshua/PGCE.

Joshua uses his friends' inexperience to show how some social backgrounds have an impact on teaching practices for diverse students. In the interviews, trainee teachers were clear about the lack of confidence in respect of some situations such as pupils' sexualities or their same-sex families. In this example, the concern was about non-English-speaking pupils and the way teachers should deal with this situation. Therefore, it is possible that trainee teachers have a lack of understanding about how to deal with diversity in general. As a trainee teacher, being located in schools where diversity is not a common situation, it may be a challenge to advocate diversity and inclusion.

Joshua illustrates how he dealt with the issue of having a non-English-speaking pupil in his classroom:

I think he could only count to ten in English, and when he first came into the classroom obviously as a trainee teacher it was quite a challenge for me to deal with it, and obviously I had just to, it's one of the things 'what you gonna do?' you should suck it up, you've gotta, you've gotta turn into your best for the children. Joshua/PGCE.

Although this example is different from a sexual diversity topic, it is important to highlight that trainee teachers encounter all sorts of different identities in their classrooms. Likewise, trainee teachers' approaches are really essential to challenge discrimination or prejudice about these individual differences. Joshua seems to have struggled in this situation, too: "what you gonna do? you should suck it up". In this extract, Joshua exemplifies a situation where trainee teachers might feel inexperienced, yet have to deal with progressive practices. As Joshua remarks "you've gotta turn into your best for the children":

I'm quite sensitive to diversities in the classroom anyway, so I was very patient with him out, showed him how to sit down: 'I'm gonna sit down' and showed him what I was doing, and then ask him or get all the children to model to be. Joshua/PGCE.

I think that I've been lucky, I've had quite broad experience, so yeah, I do have a quite broad understanding of what different families, and I've tried understanding this, and compassionate as I can for different families. Joshua/PGCE.

Joshua describes himself as "sensitive to diversities in the classroom". This idea appears to impact the way he advocates diversity in the school spaces. And as he explained before, being part of a non-traditional family makes him aware of thought-provoking social backgrounds in traditional social groups:

“and I've tried understanding this, and compassionate as I can for different families”. Overall, as Golombok (2015) points out, “non-traditional families are more associated with negative outcomes” (p.192). Similarly, in the interviews, trainee teachers were aware of the difficulties pupils who belong to same-sex families might encounter in the school context. Finally, Joshua makes a point of being really patient and using strategies to teach pupils who may be marginalized such as the non-English speaking pupils. He also implies that in this way he teaches other pupils to be inclusive: “get all the children to model to be”. It may be the case therefore that trainee teachers are seen as a model and social agents that students imitate to be inclusive of diversity.

8.4 Rosie: trainee teachers and social agency

In the interview, Rosie sees herself as a caring teacher who considers pupils' identities and understands being a marginalised child. As Eacute and Esteve (2000) emphasize, when social changes occur it is necessary to develop teacher training programmes that advocate these social and cultural changes. For example, a child could feel marginalised for belonging to a same-sex family. In particular, Rosie somehow relates to pupils that she perceives belong to the LGBT community and she sees herself as a teacher with a caring role:

I think in a way, I'd want to kind of take that person under my wing, you know ... what I mean. Because it is gonna be tough for them, you know, they are gonna have a hard time, I suppose this is a bit of a relation, like a relate to that child, so it's like, you know mates and everybody as a teacher-student relationship is just like 'it'll be o'right' you know, 'it'll be o'right', so it's a bit like looking after them a bit maybe. Rosie/PGCE.

Here, Rosie evokes how pupils might be subjected to harassment and a “hard time” at school. She is aware of the struggle of being different in primary school. In this sense, it seems that her own experience of struggle in school spaces makes her create safe spaces for the pupils. As Marinoble (1999) argues, as a lesbian and educator mother, “affirming sexual diversity in elementary

schools amounts to nothing less than a paradigm shift in the school culture” (p.234). These paradigms might be challenged through different facets such as teachers’ abilities to create safer spaces; and, as Marinoble (1999) highlights, by teaching pupils “to value themselves and others in their similarities and as well as their differences” (p. 234). In this sense, Rosie could be perceived as a social agent who tries to shape social and cultural norms to create more positive social justice spaces in the schools (Francis & Le Roux, 2011). In the next quote, Rosie discusses how she would feel if she had to tackle homophobic language/bullying in her class:

I'd like to think I'd pull them up and go: 'Excuse me, what d'you mean? Why have you said that?' ...I don't know if I'd be afraid. I would be a bit hesitant, like 'oh God what they'd gonna come back and say', but that'd be like that with if I was pulling them off about anything, it'd be a bit like anything, basically this could go either way they could respect that I'm pulling them up, or they could be like 'ohhh'. Rosie/PGCE.

Here, when Rosie discusses how she might tackle homophobic language in the classroom, her lack of confidence and her worries about what could happen once she challenges homophobia in the school spaces can be seen. In the interview, Rosie shows a concern for protecting marginalised pupils in school spaces but at the same time she is protecting herself as a lesbian teacher in how far she could challenge these discriminatory behaviours. Rosie has this narrative of the possibility of change as an agent that can tackle certain pupils’ behaviours and advocate for a positive and safe environment in the school. This agency is seen in LGBT teachers where they relate to LGBT pupils or families that struggle to fit in with the primary school context (Page & Liston, 2002). Here, Rosie understands that the social and cultural context of the schools is important to consider:

You know it's not a deal, whereas if you go into a very religious [religion] school, yes it would be a deal more. So as much as the parents as the children ...I think the approach would be different, but you have to deal

*with it in both schools. But just how you deal with it, it'd be different.
Rosie/PGCE.*

Rosie highlights the importance of recognising the social and cultural school background in order to challenge heteronormative practices and homophobic assaults in those particular spaces. Rosie argues that teachers should deal differently in demanding school spaces, and in this sense she is aware of the challenge of particular schools. Here, her social agency is to understand these repressive particular spaces and advocate different narratives that challenge oppressive discourses of hegemonic heterosexualised discourses in the school context. Rosie perception of herself as caring and protecting also empowers her to see herself as an agent of change.

Summary

Trainee teachers' own identities and experiences are a significant element in understanding their awareness and perception of LGBT issues in primary schools. In the interviews, trainee teachers who belong to marginalised groups were more aware of prejudice and discrimination in sexual diversity situations. Their personal approach was also particularly positive towards diversity and inclusion in the primary school context. These particular trainees' narratives give a briefly overview of trainee teachers identities and behaviours respecting sexual diversity issues. For instance, it gives a new context to understand the importance of the teaching of inclusion and diversity in training programmes and in primary schools (Lindsay, et al., 2006). Trainee teacher identities have an impact on the way they challenge and tackle discriminatory acts such as homophobic bullying. In conclusion, this chapter provides different trainee teacher perceptions of sexual diversity in primary schools that are based on the trainees' personal and professional experiences and that contribute to a better understanding of the research questions. A critical reflection of these trainees' diverse identities and their social and cultural frames allows an understanding of the fears and difficulties some trainees might confront as teachers who advocate safe and better school spaces. In this sense, their narratives reflect

how hegemonic heterosexualised discourses are predominant in the primary school context. Also, and most importantly in this study, trainee teachers' identities are challenged by hegemonic heterosexualised discourses in primary schools. Finally, trainee teachers' stories make visible the prejudices and struggles that pupils, school staff and families that belong to the LGBT community experience.

Chapter 9. Conclusion

This chapter presents the conclusions of the study and summarises the findings of the research question about trainee teachers' awareness and perceptions of sexual diversity in primary schools. By sexual diversity in the primary school, this study referred to gender stereotyping, homophobic language and bullying, and same-sex families in the school context. The study has also explored different trainee teachers' perceptions of teaching sexual diversity in primary schools such as their teaching experiences or expectations about addressing sexual diversity issues in the primary school classroom. In addition to these outlines, the particular identities of some of the trainee teachers were seen as significant in relation to the awareness and perception of gender, sex and sexualities in the educational setting. Hence, this study explored individual trainees' identities and their relationship to sexual diversity and school spaces as part of an examination of how trainee teachers teach sexual diversity. The key themes discussed in this study emerged from the interviews and the online questionnaire with the trainee teachers and educational officers. A total of eleven trainee teachers and three educational non-governmental officers were interviewed, and one hundred and ninety-eight trainee teachers responded to the questionnaire from twenty-one different universities across the United Kingdom.

This final chapter is divided into four sections. The first section summarises the key findings in this study. Drawing on the literature review and the findings of this study, it focuses on the trainees' awareness and perceptions of gender stereotyping, homophobic language and bullying and same-sex families in the primary school context. The second section suggests the implications and recommendations for policy makers and trainee teachers' programmes based on the interviews and the review of pedagogical frameworks and non-governmental educational guidelines. This second section also acknowledges the limitations of the current study. The third section makes recommendations for future research work on sexual diversity and the primary

schools setting. It concludes with the significance of the findings and the contribution of the study.

9.1 Key Findings

With regard to the three main themes, I discussed first gender stereotypes in primary schools, and, the potential relationship between perceptions of being female and male in heteronormative school spaces, in particular how trainees are aware of and perceive primary school children performing being boys and girls at school. Overall, trainee teachers perceive how these masculinity and femininity performances are created and perpetuated in everyday school practices thorough heteronormativity frames. This hegemonic heteronormative gender bias is followed and extended by homophobic language and bullying in the school setting. Secondly, I discussed trainee teachers' awareness of homophobic language and bullying in the primary school settings. The social and cultural context limits trainees' and pupils' understanding and knowledge of sexualities; for instance, popular media, mostly TV, perpetuates and at the same time challenges sexual diversity issues. Finally, some trainee teachers perceive themselves as more progressive about challenging sexual diversity issues such as same-sex families. Accordingly, trainee teachers related same-sex families with social inclusion and diversity in school spaces. The trainee teachers' awareness of sexual diversity issues in social and cultural frameworks advocates a positive and inclusive environment in school spaces. In addition to the three main themes, the following points have to be considered as general findings:

- A majority of trainee teachers do not recall Section 28 as a legal framework that prohibited the promotion of homosexuality in schools by local authorities. Nonetheless, in the interviews, the educational officers still see Section 28 as a legacy that has informed and censored sexual diversity discourses in political debates around sex and relationship education in UK.

- Trainee teachers perceive themselves as responsible for creating inclusive and diverse spaces in the primary school classroom. However, trainees feel that they lack of experience and/or training to deal with sexualities in the primary school context.

- Trainee teachers' positive perception of diversity is echoed in their interview narratives. With respect to teaching sexual diversity, trainee teachers' awareness of diversity advocates a more inclusiveness in school spaces.

- Trainee teachers' perceived barriers to the challenge of homophobia and sexual diversity in primary schools are: (1) not having a supportive school staff; (2) the perception of primary school children as innocent or naïve about issues of sexuality; (3) particular cultural and social backgrounds around school spaces such as religion or ethnicity; (4) lack of training about sexual diversity associated with social inclusion or diversity in general.

- Addressing sexual diversity in the primary schools is seen as a personal matter where trainee teachers must face their own identity and beliefs. Thus, trainee teachers' identities and experiences impact the way they perceive gender, sex and sexualities discourses.

- Trainees' narratives about their own identities, emotions and perceptions towards sexual diversity in the school spaces have to be considered as an intersection that shapes the way they interact with diverse identities.

Overall, trainee teachers' perceptions of addressing sexual diversity in primary schools are portrayed across heteronormative social and cultural frameworks presented in school spaces. Similarly, there is an implication that several actors such as educational polices, other staff and teachers influence the

way trainees perceive the challenges and barriers to teaching sexual diversity in primary schools. For instance, the headteacher and other teachers might advocate or undermine sexual diversity education, or educational guidelines are not updated and educational policies that do not address the issue of sexualities and influence school discourses towards sexual minorities.

9.1.1 Gender Stereotypes in primary schools

The first aim was to explore trainee teachers' awareness and perceptions of gender stereotypes in primary schools. I have argued that trainee teachers might not recognise these gender representations in the school spaces since gender performances are seen as unspoken norms in the primary school context. Thus, there are gender performance expectations that are seen as 'normal' from biological, social and cultural expectations. The findings of this study suggest that the general perception of trainee teachers was that boys and girls in the primary school are seen as equals, for instance, in terms of their academic achievement. In the interviews, it was highlighted how some primary school children perform according to and as part of hegemonic heteronormative gender expectations. Some trainee teachers are aware of how these expectations of being boys and girls influence pupils' gender performances in school spaces.

The study has gone some way towards enhancing our understanding of heteronormative discourses in primary school spaces and of how trainee teachers challenge these discourses. As a trainee teacher pointed out, gender performances are "very subtle, very invisible"; this quotation summarises how gender performances and discourses are unspoken hegemonic heterosexualized acts in school spaces. Similarly, the trainee teachers discussed social and cultural images of masculinities and femininities that challenge gender expectations (boys doing poetry or girls sport), and how they influence primary school pupils' own sexualities and gender/sex performances. Therefore, trainee teachers' awareness of the different dimensions to gender, sex (biological),

sexual identities and expression are an important aspect of challenging these heteronormative discourses.

My analysis has also emphasised how these gender non-conforming performances by pupils are described as sexual identity performances. Trainees are aware that homophobic bullying and language are used as narratives to undermine these gender non-conforming performances. Prior studies have argued the importance of teaching about sexual diversity; nonetheless, it is important to highlight that understanding and acknowledging gender/sex performances and expectations may advocate equality, inclusiveness and a positive attitude to gender performances beyond binary gender expectations. In conclusion, I have argued that challenging gender expectations is critical to tackling homophobic discourses in primary schools, as is understanding that social and cultural expectations of gender stereotypes undermine discourses of equity, social justice and inclusivity in the primary school contexts.

9.1.2 Homophobic bullying and language in primary schools

Following the discussion in previous studies, it is argued that pupils who perform gender non-conforming norms are submitted to homophobic discrimination and harassment, and that these acts are based on the association between non-conforming performances and sexual orientation and sexual identities. Thus, the second aim was to explore trainee teachers' awareness and perceptions of homophobia in primary schools. I have argued that homophobic language and homophobic bullying have to be seen as discriminatory and derogatory acts that perpetuate verbal and physical violence in school spaces. The present study confirms previous findings and contributes additional evidence that suggests that homophobic language and bullying occurs in primary school spaces. In this study, trainee teachers are aware of homophobic language such as 'that's so gay' or 'poof'. As in previous studies with teachers, trainee teachers perceive that pupils use these derogatory words without knowing their meaning. It is noteworthy that this suggestion, as in the literature review, is based on the trainees' and teachers' narratives of 'innocence' in

pupils' awareness of homophobic words. In contrast, some trainees perceive that pupils learn the meaning of these words from popular media such as TV programmes.

In this study, there is a general perception that boys use more pejorative words and/or denigrating words than girls. Overall, trainee teachers acknowledged and recognised that homophobic bullying is more related to the use of shaming language such as not being a child who acts according to social and cultural expectations.. In general, it seems that trainee teachers respond positively to the need to tackle homophobia in primary schools. Nonetheless, there is a sense that they lack of experience of how to deal with issues of name-calling and disruptive behaviours in primary school pupils.

In conclusion, the findings of this study suggest that trainee teachers are aware of homophobic language in primary schools, and that despite the lack of confidence or training, they think that they are able to address and to tackle homophobic issues in school spaces. I argue that the main challenge to tackling homophobic discourses is the idea of primary school children's innocence and naivety. Thus, I have argued that trainee teachers have to recognise the use of derogatory words as homophobic acts that perpetuate and promote verbal harassment and humiliation of outcast pupils. Overall, the findings implied that it is necessary to promote educational policies that address sexual diversity issues and that advocate a positive culture for sexual minorities.

9.1.3 Same-sex families and primary schools

Finally, this study has explored trainee teachers' awareness and perceptions of same-sex families in primary schools. Building on the same argument, it is argued that primary schools should create a positive environment towards the LGBT community. Overall, there is a positive perception of same-sex families in primary school spaces. Trainee teachers recognise same-sex families as a part of any diverse family (i.e. single parenting) that cares for the well being of pupils. Same-sex families are related to the notion of love and caring; in this sense,

trainee teachers feel comfortable addressing same-sex families in the primary school discourses. Same-sex families are also compared with heterosexual families in their daily practices as a way of normalizing the LGBT family from the 'homosexual spectrum'. It is clear that same-sex families have become more visible as a result of new political, social and cultural discourses on same-sex marriage in England and Wales.

As with the previous findings, trainee teachers indicated a positive response towards teaching about same-sex families in primary schools. Trainees also perceive that pupils who belong to a same-sex family might be the object of discrimination and bullying; thus, it is necessary to portray all different kinds of families to children in school spaces. Some trainees highlighted how important it is to present non-traditional families to children from an early age in school spaces. The study has also shown that trainees view teaching about same-sex families as an inclusive practice to challenge heteronormative discourses. My analysis presented a positive scenario for same-sex families as far as trainees are concerned but it seems that more usually in schools practices, teaching about same-sex families is undermined by heteronormative discourses. In general, trainee teachers are aware of the implications of talking about gay and lesbian families in the school context, such as the differences within diverse religious or cultural background. There is also a lack of educational guidance and pedagogical frameworks that could help teachers to address same-sex families in the primary classroom and challenge heteronormative discourses of what a family means.

9.2 Implications and recommendations

This study has shown that trainee teachers have a lack of training and confidence to challenge sexual diversity issues such as gender stereotyping, homophobia or same-sex families. This study has also identified, like previous studies, that there is a representation and construction of heteronormative discourses in school spaces. For instance, same-sex families are not seen as LGBT families but as (hetero) normative families (within loving and caring

discourses). Thus, this evidence suggests that trainee teacher programmes may be immersed in heteronormative discourses too. Thus, this research provides a framework for the exploration of sexual diversity discourses in the primary school, particularly in its teaching practices. Although this study is an exploration of trainee teachers' awareness and perceptions of sexual diversity, it is hoped that the findings will add to a growing body of literature on how to approach LGBT narratives in the primary school context.

This study offers some insight into educational policies for the teaching of sexual diversity in primary schools and a critique of the educational guidelines that frame sex and relationship education in the UK. It has also raised important questions about the nature of pedagogical frameworks that advocate more inclusive and diverse practices in school spaces. I have argued that trainee teachers should receive better training on aspects of gender, sex and sexualities issues and on-going training is essential. The findings of this study complement those of earlier studies where gender and sexualities have been seen as part of identities and citizenship rather than just a sexual health issue. Therefore, this research has several practical applications. Firstly, it has implications for policy makers thinking about how to advocate for sexual minorities in the educational context. Secondly, the study implies that trainee teachers are aware of diversity in general such as religion or ethnicity and its implications in school spaces: thus, it is necessary to improve their training in pedagogies about diversity and inclusion. Finally, this section presents the strengths and limitations of the study. This study was limited by the relatively small sample size; nonetheless, the significance of the findings allowed it to identify and explore the main implications of sexual diversity in the primary school context.

9.2.1 Implication for policy makers

Although, Section 28 was repealed more than ten years ago, its legacy is still important in any discussion of the teaching of sexual diversity in the national curriculum. It was also stated that parents had the right to withdraw children

and young people from SRE classes in accordance with personal, social and/or cultural preferences. Hence, not all pupils have the opportunity to learn and understand about the concepts of sex, gender and sexualities. Moreover, not all the pupils have the opportunity to learn about their own identities and those of others. Overall, although the latest legal educational policies towards sexual diversity do advocate more positive scenarios, the legal frameworks are limited. Thus, based on these findings I recommend the following:

- The use of homophobic language in primary schools cannot be seen as children naivety or innocence to derogatory and discriminatory words.
- The SRE Guidance (DfEE 0116/2000), which was reviewed in 2014, has not been up-dated to consider sexual diversity issues such as same-sex families or diverse non-heteronormative relationships. Therefore, there is a need for educational guidelines and legal educational frameworks to be up-dated and to advocate high quality and effective sexual diversity teaching and learning environments in primary schools.
- The findings of this study suggest that educational policies and guidelines undermine inclusive school practices towards the LGBT community. There are also a number of important changes that need to be made in order to advocate for sexual minorities in the national curriculum.

9.2.2 Implication for teacher trainee programmes

It is clear from the findings that trainee teachers think there is a lack of training on how to tackle homophobia and how to address same-sex families in school spaces. The findings of the study also imply that there is a lack of understanding about gender stereotyping in the school context. In general, trainee teachers feel confident about creating inclusive practices in the school classroom. They are also aware of diverse identities that influence their school's practices such as pupils' ethnicity or spoken language. In this sense, the study has shown that trainee teachers expected that being a full-time teacher would give them confidence to address sexual diversity issues in the primary school classroom. Thus, based on these findings I recommend the following:

- These findings enhance our understanding of training programmes in order to advocate more positive inclusive school spaces. Thus, using feminist and queer pedagogical frameworks through the training programmes should contribute and give teachers the pedagogical tools to enable them to promote diverse identities discourses.
- These findings suggest that trainee teacher programmes should include gender and sexualities in the curriculum. I argue that these training programmes should work on the understanding of diverse identities, particularly those that are being oppressed or excluded on political, social and cultural grounds.
- These training programmes could be a first step to promoting more diverse and inclusive practices in schools. It would also enhance the trainee teachers' understanding of diversity and inclusion in the educational context.
- Finally, based on the findings I recommend that teachers enhance their understanding of gender and how social expectations of gender influence the behaviour of boys and girls in school spaces.

The study makes several noteworthy contributions in highlighting how feminist and queer pedagogical frameworks contribute to the understanding of how gender, sex and sexualities interact and influence pupils' narratives of discrimination, homophobia and non-binary gender discourses. I have argued that educational policies, guidelines and practices of pedagogical frameworks need to advocate diverse identities and to promote inclusive and equity practices in school spaces. In this sense, school practices have to be seen as academic, social and cultural frameworks that interact within the school communities.

9.2.3 Strengths and limitations of the study

This study has explored issues of gender, sex and sexualities; thus, one of its limitations is that the research involves sensitive topics, which posed challenges

to the collection of the data. For instance, some universities were quite cautious about aspects of the ethics procedures of this study. However, the online questionnaire was reviewed by the coordinators of the BA or PGCE programmes and it was positively received, so there was no misperception with respect to the different items asked or regarding any part of the questionnaire. Therefore, the questionnaire was consistent and appropriate for trainee teachers. During the design of the questionnaire, it was decided to ask limited personal questions as trainee teachers were considered to be sensitive subjects. Consequently, the participation of students in the online questionnaire and individual interviews was similarly limited.

Because the interviews were semi-structured, the interviewee was expected to contribute information which would lead to other relevant questions; this expectation was positive. The relationship between the researcher and the participants was a dynamic process depending on the contexts and the established relationships with the universities or even the participants. In this sense, Reynolds argues that “the interaction between race, class and gender suggest that power in social research is not a fixed and unitary construct exercised by the research over the research participant. Instead...power is multifaceted, relational and interactional” (cited by Doucet and Mauthner, 2008 p. 333). Thus, I was careful to ensure that the questions were not aggressive or out of place, or representing or asking about feminist or queer issues in a non-assertive way. In that instance, Fontana and Frey (2005) question, “if queering the interview denies its primary goal, what should be done?” (p. 695). This statement indicated the difficulties that queer research can find, and referred to obstacles to listening and to how the interview can be related to research experiences (Wengraf, 2001, p. 202-203).

9.3 Recommendations for future research

This study has explored and analysed trainee teachers’ awareness and perceptions of sexual diversity in primary schools. As discussed in the research design, this study does not claim to be representative of a broad population;

nonetheless, its aim is to contribute to the understanding of and explore the experiences of trainee teachers in respect of sexual diversity issues in school spaces. Through the analysis of this study it is possible to relate these trainee teachers' experiences to teachers' experiences discussed in previous studies. Future studies might explore different social and cultural contexts and provide a framework for other pedagogical directions. Thus, based on these findings I recommend the following:

- This research has showed a gap between educational policies such as the SRE guidance and the pedagogical practices that are needed in school spaces. Therefore, future research might explore how these gaps influence the school practices that are associated with the teaching of sexual diversity in the primary schools.
- Future research should be undertaken to explore how primary school pupils understand the use of these derogatory and discriminatory language in primary school spaces.
- Drawing on these findings, I recommend that a future study should discuss the pedagogies of gender, sex and sexualities in the primary school context. Theoretical and practice-based research might provide insights into how pedagogical practices could advocate and promote inclusiveness and equalities in school spaces.
- More research is needed into what trainee teacher programmes should promote as teaching practices that involve diversity and inclusive pedagogies. A participatory action research following the use of these strategies and how trainee teachers enhance these practices is needed.
- Future research should focus on determining what role education plays in addressing sexual diversity issues in school spaces, for instance, the implications of teaching about sexual diversity and inclusion and how these topics promote social and cultural discourses in primary school children.

9.4 Conclusion

My argument throughout the thesis has been to highlight the importance of sexual diversity discourses in the primary school context and how trainees see these discourses. The study has also focused on concern about the ways primary schools address the nature of gender, sex and sexualities. In this sense, sexual diversity in primary schools covers many issues such as gender stereotyping, homophobic bullying, same-sex families and LGBT pupils. In the literature review and context, the concepts of sex, gender and sexualities and pedagogical frameworks that address moral, equity and social justice educational frames were discussed. Similarly, educational policies and pedagogical practices towards sexual diversity in the primary schools were discussed. Overall, one hundred and ninety-eight trainee teachers responded to the on-line questionnaire from twenty-one different universities across the United Kingdom, and, a total of eleven trainee teachers and three educational officers were interviewed.

This study was exploratory and interpretative in nature. The analysis and interpretation of the data collected was done through interpretative phenomenological analysis and thematic analysis. A feminist and queer approach was used in the research design, data collection and data analysis. The findings from the study were presented in five chapters in this thesis. In Chapter Four, I argued that heteronormative discourses are invisible in teaching practices where gender expectations and stereotypes are constructed in everyday school spaces. There is also an association with non-conforming gender behaviour and sexualities discourses in primary school spaces. In Chapter Five, these non-conforming gender performances are compared with homophobic discourses. The findings highlighted homophobic language as derogatory and discriminatory acts towards sexual diversity issues in primary schools. Chapter Six focused on the discourses of same-sex families in primary schools which perceive same-sex families as (hetero) normative families who care for and love children (as their heterosexual counterparts do) and are not part of sexualities discourses. Chapter Seven presented trainee teachers'

perceptions of addressing sexual diversity in primary schools. The findings suggested that there is a need for training on the topics of gender and sexualities. Similarly, there is a lack of educational guidance about addressing sexual diversity in the primary school classroom. Lastly, Chapter Eight narrated the trainees' experiences, awareness of and perceptions of sexual diversity and the intersections with their own diverse identities and the teaching of sexual diversity in primary schools.

In this concluding chapter, I have highlighted the key findings following the main themes: gender stereotyping, homophobic language and bullying and same-sex families. In short, I have argued that there is an awareness of gender non-conforming pupils being victimized. Nonetheless, the use of derogatory homophobic language is undermined on the grounds of children's naivety and innocence in the early school years. In addition, although trainee teachers show a positive perception of same-sex families in the school context, there is a lack of training about how to address these sexual diversity issues in schools. Therefore, in general, trainee teachers highlighted the importance of training and of acknowledging the influence of concepts of gender, sex and sexualities in educational discourses. These findings enhance our understanding of gender and sexualities in primary schools and extend our knowledge of trainee teacher experiences in schools. The findings have implications for policy and teacher training programmes. The key strength of this study is the highlighting of the importance of the concept of gender and its social and cultural implications and challenges to sexual diversity discourses. For instance, the findings implied that hegemonic heteronormative discourses are embodied in primary school spaces. Future research work is needed to advocate more inclusive pedagogical practices towards sexual diversity issues. It would be interesting to compare the experiences of trainee teachers with the same identities and their challenges addressing gender and sexualities in primary schools. Trainee teachers' understanding of the implications of gender, sex and sexualities in the academic and social performances of primary school children would challenge not only sexual diversity discourses but would advocate frameworks of equity, inclusion and social justice in primary schools.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Information Data Sheet

Appendix 2: Questionnaire on Awareness and Perceptions of Sexual Diversity in Primary Trainees.

Appendix 3: Semi-structure Interview

Appendix 4: Children's story books

Appendix 5: Interview vignettes

Appendix 1: Information Data Sheet



Participant Information Sheet

Title of Project	Trainee teachers' awareness and perceptions of sexual diversity
Researcher (PhD Student) Supervisor	Manuel López-Pereyra Dr Vanita Sundaram Department of Education University of York YO10 5DD
Purpose of Study	Research about sexual diversity in primary schools has shown that children are aware of homophobic assaults, as homophobic language, in the playground, the classroom or even in the school corridors, (GLSEN, 2012; Atkinson, 2002; HRW, 2001). Also, there is a new challenge for the sexual diversity community on the school context, the homoparental and LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) families, where parents are both for the same-sex or include a LGBT parent. It is proposed that whilst teachers address diversity and inclusion in their classroom, sexual diversity is still a controversial issue in schools. The aim of this study is to explore the awareness and perceptions of trainee teachers about sexual diversity in primary schools.
About your participation	The study involves trainee teachers on the BAEd and PGCE programme. All trainee teachers have been contacted via email to invite them to participate in the study. You may withdraw your consent at any time without penalty by advising the researcher (mlp504@york.ac.uk). If you do so any information that you have provided, as part of the study will be destroyed.
Procedures to be followed	You will be asked to take part in an online questionnaire; this questionnaire takes 10-15 minutes to fill in. A second stage of this research involves a short interview (it is entirely up to you whether you participate in this second stage). If you decide to, you will be interviewed for 20-30 minutes in an online platform. Interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed.
Data Procedures	All information collected about individuals in the course of this study will be anonymised so that participants cannot be identified. Research records will be on a password-protected computer and only the research team will have access to the records. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you to the study will be included in any sort of

THE UNIVERSITY *of* York

Participant Information Sheet

report that might be published. It is the intention of the researchers to share the findings at national and international conferences, and in professional and academic literature (doctoral thesis, journals). Participation in the second stage is entirely voluntary; participants may choose to take part in the first stage and allow their data to be used for the purpose of the doctoral thesis, conference presentations and articles but decide not to take part in the second stage of the online interview. The data will be destroyed securely once the findings of the study are written up, after five years.

Statement of Confidentiality

All data will be confidential and the reporting will be anonymous, so the team hopes you can be as frank as possible. The subject matters of this interview are your own views and not those of your institutions or others, and no quotations will be attributed directly to their source such that individuals can be identified. In the event of any publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared. Audio recordings will be destroyed once the research period is over.

Right to Ask Questions

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about this study please email Manuel Lopez-Pereyra (mlp504@york.ac.uk) or Dr Vanita Sundaram (vanita.sundaram@york.ac.uk). Or please feel free to contact:

Manuel Lopez-Pereyra
RCSS/Doctoral Training Centre
Research Centre for Social Sciences
6 Innovation Close, Heslington
York, YO10 5ZF
Tel. 07557 760045

Voluntary Participation

Your decision to be included in this research is voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer.

Thank you for your time.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire on Awareness and Perceptions of Sexual Diversity in Primary Trainees.



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF DIVERSITY IN PRIMARY TRAINEES

INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR EDUCATION STUDENTS

I understand that the aim of this project is to gather information on my views on diversity in schools. I understand that I will be asked for my opinion about issues of diversity in primary schools, including diverse family forms; gender stereotypes; and sexual identity and orientation. I understand that if any of the topics in the questionnaire make me feel uncomfortable or distressed, I do not have to continue participating in the study.

I understand that my participation in this project is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from participation at any time. I understand that the information gathered from me will be confidential and anonymous (no one will be able to identify which responses I have given).

I accept that the results of this questionnaire will be used in academic and other literature about trainee teachers awareness and perceptions' of issues of diversity in primary schools. This project has been received ethics clearance through, the Research Ethics Procedures of the Department of Education at the University of York.

With full knowledge of all foregoing and of my own free will,

I agree to participate in this study

Yes

No

I. Background information

This questionnaire will take you approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and your participation is completely voluntary. Please provide one answer for each section:

- i. What is your year of study?
First year Second year Third year Further
- ii. What is your gender?
Female Male
- iii. What is your religious affiliation?
Christian Muslims Jewish Hindu Other No religious affiliation

II. Awareness and Perceptions of Sexual Diversity in Primary Trainees

There is no right or wrong answer. Please choose the response that best represents your opinion and the extent to which you agree or disagree with each item:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1 I think primary school children are aware of homophobic language such as 'that's so gay' or 'poof'.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Pupils are subjected to homophobic language or bullying in primary schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 There is no evidence that homophobic bullying and homophobic language happen in primary schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 I do not think homophobic language is tolerated in primary schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 I think it is necessary to teach about gay and lesbian families to primary school children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Primary school children with lesbian or gay parents may respond differently to classroom activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 I think teachers should consider gay or lesbian families when they celebrate Mother's Day or Father's Day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 I do not think that using 'pink' for girls or 'blue' for boys in classroom activities creates gender stereotypes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Girls are more academic than boys and boys are sportier than girls.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 I would prefer not to use children's stories that explicitly challenge homophobic language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF DIVERSITY IN PRIMARY TRAINEES

- | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 11 I would feel comfortable talking about race, ethnic, religious and sexual diversity in my classroom. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12 I would feel comfortable talking about race, ethnic, religious diversity but not about sexual diversity in my classroom. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13 I would feel nervous responding to a pupil's questions about gay or lesbian issues. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14 I would feel comfortable asking children about their understanding of gay or lesbian. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15 I would feel comfortable reading children's stories that explicitly challenge homophobic language. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16 I feel when I complete my trainee teacher program I will be able to address gay or lesbian issues in schools. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17 I believe children need to be of an appropriate age before they can learn about the meaning of sexual diversity. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18 I would prefer to talk about ethnic and religious diversity rather than sexual diversity in my classroom. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19 Seeing a gay couple with children does not bother me. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20 I would feel comfortable talking about lesbian and gay families as part of my curriculum program. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21 If one of my students has a gay or lesbian parent I will avoid talking to the parent(s). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22 I do not think inclusion in schools entails talking about gay or lesbian families. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF DIVERSITY IN PRIMARY TRAINEES

A second stage of this research involves a short interview; we would really like to know what do you think about teaching sexual diversity in primary schools. If you would like to participate please indicate by ticking the box below:

Yes

No

Thanks for your participation. Please provide your email (the information gathered from you will be confidential and anonymous):

III. Thanks

Thank you for contributing in this questionnaire. We very much appreciate the time you dedicated to participating in this study. If you have any questions regarding this study, please feel free to ask for more information:

Manuel Lopez-Pereyra
RCSS/Doctoral Training Centre
Research Centre for Social Sciences
6 Innovation Close, Heslington
York, YO10 5ZF
Tel. 07557 760045
E-mail: mlp504@york.ac.uk

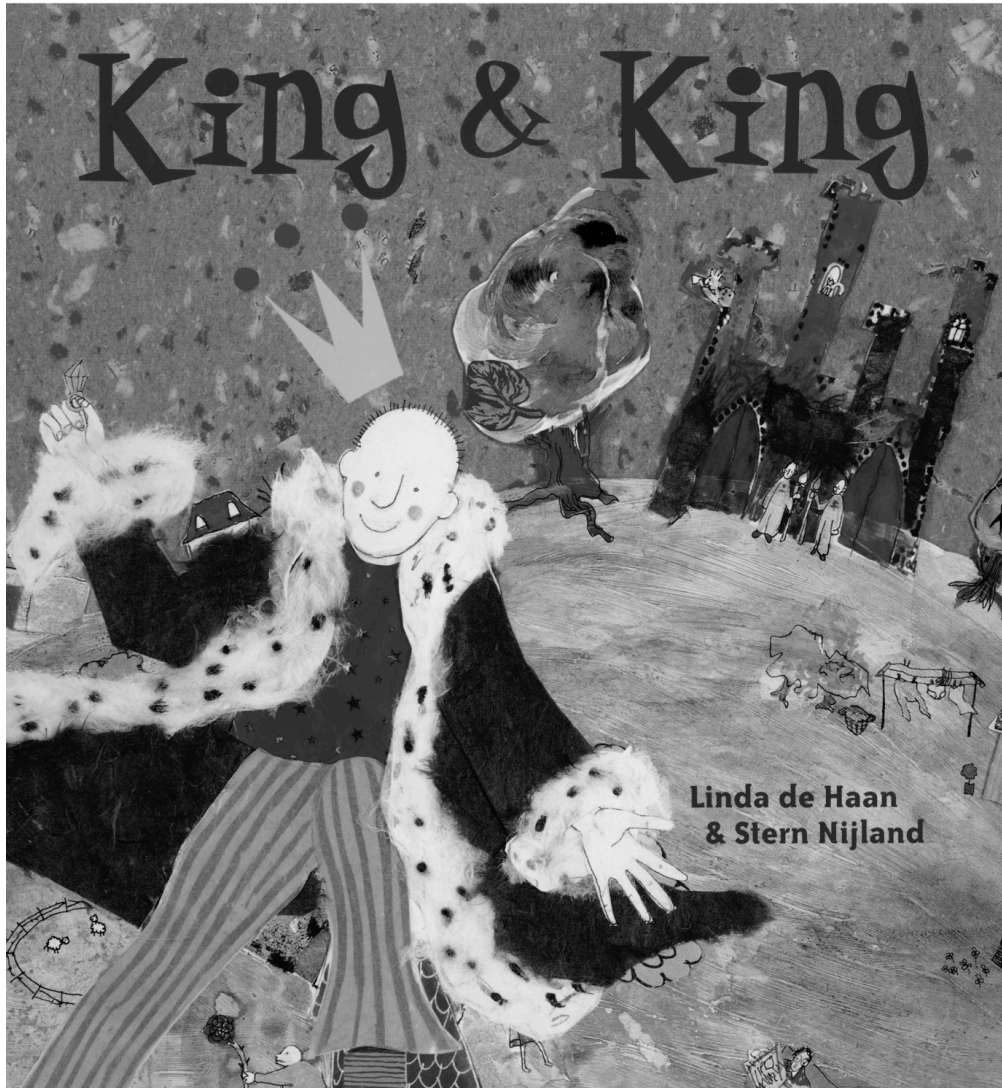
Appendix 3: Semi-structure Interview



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF DIVERSITY IN PRIMARY TRAINEES

Interview guide	
Questionnaire Feedback	
1	How were your first impressions about the questionnaire that you answered on line? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Do you have any thoughts or feelings about the questionnaire or about the research?</i>
Sexual Diversity in Primary Schools	
2	What are your thoughts or feelings when we talk about equality and inclusion in Education?
3	How would you describe a diverse family? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>What different aspects of diversity have to be addressed in primary schools?</i> ▪ <i>When we talk about teaching diversity in schools what is the first idea that comes to your mind?</i>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>If you have to talk about diversity or family in a primary classroom what comes to your mind when you have to talk about family in your classroom?</i>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Do you use any activities where you separate boys and girls?</i> ▪ <i>Which kind of stories about families do you tell to your students?</i> ▪ <i>Do you have any experience when they ask about discrimination or about a moral issue?</i> <p>Imagine that you are working in a primary school and you have to talk about families...can you give me some examples about the activities you might do or what you would say</p> <p>Do you think it is important to talk about diversity in primary schools?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Do you think citizenship or moral education lessons are important in primary schools?</i> <p>How would you describe a bullying experience in primary schools?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>What kind of preparation do you think Trainee Teachers need to address diversity and bullying in schools?</i>
Queer Teaching	
	Please read this short children's story King and King by Linda De Haan and Stern Nijland (Table 1):
6	What do you think about the story? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>How do you feel when you read this story?</i>
7	Do you think trainee teachers have to be prepared to address this can of stories (issues) in primary schools? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Why is important for trainee teachers to be aware of sexual diversity in schools?</i> <p>Would you like to share any experience about diversity or inclusion issues in primary schools or do you have any comments about the interview?</p>

Appendix 4: Children's storybooks



King and King by Linda De Haan and Stern Nijland. Illustrated by Linda De Haan and Stern Nijland. This material is reproduced for non-profit educational purposes only.

Appendix 5: Interview vignettes



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF DIVERSITY IN PRIMARY TRAINEES

Interview Vignettes
Scenario 1
<p>“One boy decides to dress up as a girl on Comic Relief day: the theme of the day was Dare to be Different. He changed his name to Nicola and wore a dress and hair clips all day”⁽¹⁾</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What do you think about the child decision? ▪ What do you think the teacher should do? ▪ What do you think would be the reaction of the parents?
Scenario 2
<p>“When I shared King and King, the Muslim parents were against the idea of their children being given the message that it was OK to be gay, because in their faith it was wrong. But they also said that they didn’t want their children to be homophobic and call others names”⁽²⁾</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What do you think the parents are feeling? ▪ What do you think the teacher is thinking? ▪ What do you think the teacher should do?
Scenario 3
<p>“The children in class are now aware of my partner, Martin, and know that I am married to a man and that I love him. We have since had discussions when the children want to talk about my ‘husband’. I refer to Martin regularly, especially when recounting weekend/holidays activities (Jon)”⁽³⁾</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What do you think about Jon discussions with his class? ▪ What do you think would be the reaction of the parents? ▪ What do you think Jon should do?
Scenario 4
<p>“I discussed our inclusion policy with families during induction, drawing attention to resources such as storybooks and posters that explore different families. The responses I received varied from very positive to very negative”⁽⁴⁾</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why do you think the teacher is discussing the inclusion policies with the parents? ▪ What do you think would be the reaction of the parents?
<p>All the quotations are teachers experiences from: Atkinson, E., DePalma, R., & No Outsiders Project Team. (2010). Undoing homophobia in primary schools. Stoke-on-Trent, UK: Trentham Books.</p> <p>(1) Talking about trans: learning from children’s responses Jo, Katie and Karen (p.66) (2) A whole school approach to equalities work Sue K (p.26) (3) Coming out at school Andrew (p.61) (4) No outsiders at Nursery Level Jade (p.21)</p>

List of references

- Allan, A., Atkinson, E., Brace, E., DePalma, R., and Hemingway, J. (August 01, 2008). Speaking the unspeakable in forbidden places: addressing lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality in the primary school. *Sex Education*, 8, 3, 315-328
- Arnot, M. (2002). *Reproducing Gender: Selected Critical Essays on Educational Theory and Feminist Politics* (1st ed.). United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis, Inc.
- Arnot, M., & Ghail, M. M. an. (2006). *The RoutledgeFalmer reader in gender and education*. (M. Arnot, Ed.). United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis, Inc.
- Arshad, R., Wrigley, T., & Pratt, L. (2012). *Social Justice Re-examined: Dilemmas and Solutions for the Classroom Teacher*. Institute of Education Press.
- Atkinson, E. (2002). Education for diversity in a Multisexual society: Negotiating the contradictions of contemporary discourse. *Sex Education*, 2(2), 119–132.
- Atkinson, E. (2009). *Interrogating Heteronormativity in Primary Schools: The No Outsiders Project*. (R. DePalma, Ed.). Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Atkinson, E. et al (2009). *No Outsiders: Researching approaches to sexualities equality in primary schools: Full Research Report ESRC End of Award Report, RES-062-23-0095*. Swindon: ESRC
- Atkinson, E., & DePalma, R. (2008). Imagining the homonormative: Performative subversion in education for social justice. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 29(1), 25-35.
- Benjamin,S.(2012) 'I'm not homophobic but I find this area difficult'. In Arshad, R.,Wrigley, T. & Pratt, L. (eds) *Social Justice Re-examined: Dilemmas and solutions forthe classroom teacher*, Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books Limited, p83-96
- Bernard, H. R., & Ryan, G. W. (2010). *Analyzing qualitative data: Systematic approaches*. Los Angeles, Calif.: SAGE.
- Bertely, B. M. (2004). *Conociendo nuestras escuelas: Un acercamiento etnográfico a la cultura escolar*. México: Paidós.
- Bickmore, K. (1999). Why discuss sexuality in elementary school? In W. J. Letts & J. T. Sears, *Queering elementary education:advancing the dialogue about sexualities and schooling* (pp. 15–26). USA: Rowman &Littlefield Publishers.

- Blaise, M. (2005). A feminist poststructuralist study of children “doing” gender in an urban kindergarten classroom. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 20(1), 85-108.
- Boaler, J., & Sengupta-Irving, T. (2006). Nature, Neglect and Nuance: Changing accounts of sex, gender and Mathematics. Christine Skelton, Becky Francis y Lisa Smulyan (edits.), *The Sage Handbook of Gender and Education*, Londres, Sage Publications, 207-219.
- Boas, E. M. (2015). Education in disguise: sanctioning sexuality in elementary school Halloween celebrations. *Sex Education*, (ahead-of-print), 1-14.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (April 01, 2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 2, 77-101.
- Bridger, K., & Shaw, J. (2012). Beyond ‘Inclusion’: Mainstreaming Equality Within the Curriculum. *Educational Diversity: The Subject of Difference and Different Subjects*, 120.
- Britzman, D. (2000). Precocious education. *Thinking queer: Sexuality, culture, and education*, 33-59.
- Bryan, J. (2012). From the dress-up corner to the senior prom: Navigating gender and sexuality diversity in preK-12 schools. *R&L Education*.
- Bryan, J. (2014). Tomboys, sissies, and ‘That’s so gay’: Exploring Gender and Sexuality Diversity in Early Childhood and Elementary Education. In E. J. Meyer & D. L. Carlson (Eds.), *Gender and Sexualities in Education: A Reader* (pp. 240–256). New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Bryman, A. (2008). The end of the paradigm wars. *The Sage handbook of social research methods*, 13-25.
- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods*. Oxford university press.
- Burridge, J. (August 01, 2004). ‘I am not Homophobic But...’: Disclaiming in Discourse Resisting Repeal of Section 28. *Sexualities*, 7, 3, 327-344.
- Butler, J. (2004). *Undoing gender* (1st ed.). United Kingdom: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Butler, J. (2006). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York [u.a.: Routledge.
- Butler, J., & Scott, J. (1992). *Feminists theorize the political* (1st ed.). United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis, Inc.

- Cabrera, P., (2004). Sexualidades Diversas. Aproximaciones para su Analisis. La diversidad y lo diferente, pp.145-157.
- Cahill, S., & Tobias, S. (2006). Policy Issues Affecting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Families. Ann Arbor, MI, USA: University of Michigan Press. Retrieved from <http://www.ebrary.com>
- Careaga, G. (2004). Orientaciones sexuales, alternativas e identidad. G. Careaga (Eds.), Sexualidades diversas. Aproximaciones para su análisis (pp.171-186). México: Porrúa
- Carrington, B. (2002). A quintessentially feminine domain? Student teachers' constructions of primary teaching as a career. *Educational Studies*, 28(3), 287-303.
- Cherney, I. D., & London, K. (2006). Gender-linked differences in the toys, television shows, computer games, and outdoor activities of 5-to 13-year-old children. *Sex Roles*, 54(9-10), 717-726.
- Cherney, I. D., Kelly-Vance, L., Glover, K. G., Ruane, A., & Ryalls, B. O. (2003). The effects of stereotyped toys and gender on play assessment in children aged 18-47 months. *Educational Psychology*, 23(1), 95-106.
- Chilisa, B. (2006). 'Sex' education: Subjugated discourses and adolescents' voices. In C. Skelton, B. Francis, & L. Smulyan (Eds.), *The sage handbook of gender and education*. (pp. 249-262). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Clarke, V. (2001, October). What about the children? Arguments against lesbian and gay parenting. In *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 24, No. 5, pp. 555-570). Pergamon.
- Clarke, V., Kitzinger, C., & Potter, J. (2004). 'Kids are just cruel anyway': Lesbian and gay parents' talk about homophobic bullying. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 43(4), 531-550.
- Cohen, S. (2011). *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*. Taylor & Francis.
- Connell, R. (2009). *Gender: in world perspective* (2nd ed.). United Kingdom: Wiley, John & Sons, Incorporated.
- Corbett, J. (1999). Inclusive education and school culture. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 3(1), 53-61.
- Corsaro, W. A., University, I., & Bloomington. (2014). *The Sociology of Childhood*. United States: SAGE Publications.

- Craft, A. (2010). *Creativity and Education Futures: Learning in a Digital Age*. Trentham Books Ltd. Westview House 734 London Road, Oakhill, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST4 5NP, UK.
- Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into practice*, 39(3), 124-130.
- Cullen, F. (2009). Seeking a queer(ying) pedagogical praxis: adventures in the classroom and participatory research. In R. DePalma & E. Atkinson (Eds.), *Interrogating Heteronormativity in Primary Schools: The No Outsiders Project* (pp. 17–34). United Kingdom: Stylus Publishing.
- Curra, J. (2013). *The relativity of deviance*. Sage Publications.
- Curran, G. (2002). *Young queers getting together: Moving beyond isolation and loneliness*.
- Curran, G., Chiarolli, S., and Pallotta-Chiarolli, M. (May 01, 2009). The C Words: Clitorises, Childhood and Challenging Compulsory Heterosexuality Discourses with Pre-Service Primary Teachers. *Sex Education: Sexuality, Society and Learning*, 9, 2, 155-168
- Dankmeijer, P. (2007). Starting global collaboration in education about sexual diversity. In van Dijk, L. and van Driel, B.(Eds.) *Challenging Homophobia: teaching about sexual diversity*. Stoke on Trent, UK.
- De Leeuw, E. (2008). Self-Administered Questionnaires and Standardized Interviews. In J. Brannen, L. B. Bickman, & P. Alasuutari (Eds.), *The sage handbook of social research methods: Social research methods* (pp. 313–327). United Kingdom: SAGE Publications.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). Strategies of inquiry. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2, 367-378.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks [etc.]: Sage.
- DePalma, R., & Atkinson, E. (2008). *Invisible boundaries: Addressing sexualities equality in children's worlds*. Stoke on Trent, UK: Trentham.
- DePalma, R., & Atkinson, E. (2006). The sound of silence: Talking about sexual orientation and schooling. *Sex Education: Sexuality, Society and Learning* 6, no. 4: 333–49.

- DePalma, R., & Atkinson, E. (2009). *Interrogating heteronormativity in primary schools: The work of the No Outsiders project*. Stoke on Trent, UK: Trentham Books.
- DePalma, R., & Jennett, M. (2007). *Deconstructing heteronormativity in primary schools in England: cultural approaches to a cultural phenomenon*. *Challenging Homophobia: teaching about Sexual Diversity*. London: Trentham Books.
- DePalma, R., & Jennett, M. (February 01, 2010). Homophobia, transphobia and culture: deconstructing heteronormativity in English primary schools. *Intercultural Education*, 21, 1, 15-26.
- Department for Education and Employment, (2000). "Sex and Relationships Education Guidance." Crown Copyright. DfEE 0116/2000 (Guidance updated 7th January 2014).
- Department for Education. (2013). *National Curriculum in England: Framework for key stages 1 to 4*. London: Department for Education.
- Dijk, L., & Driel, B. (2007). *Challenging homophobia: Teaching about sexual diversity*. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham.
- Donovan, C. (2008). Feeling at home: children of lesbian-headed families telling their family stories in primary school settings. In R. DePalma, E. Atkinson, & E.-R. DePalma (Eds.), *Invisible boundaries: Addressing Sexualities equality in children's worlds* (pp. 13-24). United Kingdom: Trentham Books.
- Doucet, A., & Mauthner, N. (2008). Qualitative interviewing and feminist research. *The Sage handbook of social research methods*, 328-343.
- Duron, L. (2013). *Raising my rainbow: Adventures in raising a fabulous, gender creative son*. New York: Broadway Books.
- Egan, R. D., & Hawkes, G. L. (2012). Sexuality, youth and the perils of endangered innocence: how history can help us get past the panic. *Gender and Education*, 24(3), 269-284.
- Ellis, S. J. (2008). Diversity and inclusivity at university: a survey of the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) students in the UK. *Higher Education*.
- Epstein, D. (1998). *Failing boys?: Issues in gender and achievement*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
- Epstein, D. (November 01, 2000). Sexualities and Education: Catch 28. *Sexualities*, 3, 4, 387-394.

- Epstein, D., & Johnson, R. (2008). Walking the talk: Young people making identities. *Invisible boundaries: Sexualities in primary schools*. Stoke-on-Trent, England: Trentham Books.
- Epstein, D., Hey, V., Maw, J., & Elwood, J. (1998). *Failing Boys?: Issues in Gender and Achievement*. United Kingdom: Open University Press.
- Epstein, D., Kehily, M., Mac An Ghail, M., & Redman, P. (2001). Boys and Girls Come Out to Play Making Masculinities and Femininities in School Playgrounds. *Men and masculinities*, 4(2), 158-172.
- Epstein, S. (2002). A Queer encounter. *Sexualities: Sexualities and their futures*, 4(2), 191.
- Evans, J. & Lunt, I. (2002). Inclusive education: are there limits?. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 17(1), 1-14.
- Fausto-Sterling, A. (2012). *Sex/gender: Biology in a social world*. Routledge.
- Field, A. (2013). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics*. Sage.
- Fielding, J. L., & Fielding, N. G. (2008). Synergy and synthesis: Integrating qualitative and quantitative data.
- Figueroa, M. (Junio de 2010). Acoso e Intimidación escolar. *Revista de Educación y Cultura*, 14-15.
- Flick, U. (2007). *An introduction to qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Flores-Crespo P (2007), Situating education in the human capabilities approach, in Walker, M. & Unterhalter, E. (eds.) *Amartya Sen Capability Approach and Social Justice in Education*. Great Britain, USA: Palgrave.
- Fonseca, C. y Quintero, M. (Enero-abril de 2009) La Teoría Queer: la deconstrucción de las sexualidades periféricas. *Sociológica*, año 24, número 63, 43-60.
- Fontana, A., & Frey, J. H. (2005). The interview: From neutral stance to political involvement. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, 3, 695-728.
- Francis, B. (1998). *Power Plays: Primary School Children's Constructions of Gender, Power and Adult Work*. United Kingdom: Trentham Books Ltd.

- Francis, B. (2001). Beyond postmodernism: feminist agency in educational research. *Investigating gender: contemporary perspectives in education*, 67-76.
- Francis, B. (2005). *Boys, Girls and Achievement: Addressing the Classroom Issues*. United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis, Inc.
- Francis, B. (2006). The nature of gender. *The Sage handbook of gender and education*, 7-17.
- Francis, B., & Skelton, C. (2002). *Investigating Gender: Contemporary Perspectives in Education* (1st ed.). United Kingdom: Buckingham : Open University Press, 2001.
- Francis, D. A. (January 01, 2012). Teacher positioning on the teaching of sexual diversity in South African schools. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 14, 597-611.
- Francis, D., & Le Roux, A. (2011). Teaching for social justice education: the intersection between identity, critical agency, and social justice education. *South African Journal of Education*, 31(3), 299-311.
- Galan, J. I. P., Puras, B. M., & Riley, R. (January 01, 2009). Achieving Real Equality: A Work in Progress for LGBT Youth in Spain. *Journal of Lgbt Youth*, 6, 2-3.
- García-Huidobro, J. (November 24, 2008) La Educación Inclusiva como incorporación a la Ciudadanía, 48th session of the International Conference on Education (ICE). Ginebra.
- García, C. (2007). Diversidad sexual en la escuela. Dinámicas pedagógicas para enfrentar la homofobia. Bogotá: Colombia Diversa.
- Garmon, M. A. (2004). Changing Preservice Teachers' Attitudes/Beliefs About Diversity What are the Critical Factors?. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 55(3), 201-213.
- Gerouki, M. (November 01, 2010). The boy who was drawing princesses: primary teachers' accounts of children's non-conforming behaviours. *Sex Education*, p. 335-348.
- Gibson, S. (2006). Beyond a 'culture of silence': inclusive education and the liberation of 'voice'. *Disability & Society*, 21(4), 315-329.
- Gill, H., & Chalmers, G. (September 01, 2007). Documenting Diversity: An Early Portrait of a Collaborative Teacher Education Initiative. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 11, 551-570.

- GLSEN and Harries Interactive (2012). *Playgrounds and Prejudice: Elementary School Climate in the United States, A Survey of Students and Teachers*. New York: GLSEN.
- Goldstein, T., Collins, A., & Halder, M. (January 01, 2007). Anti-Homophobia Education in Public Schooling: A Canadian Case Study of Policy Implementation. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services*, 19, 47-66.
- Golombok, S. (2015). *Modern Families: Parents and Children in New Family Forms*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Gottschalk, L. (2003). Same-sex sexuality and childhood gender non-conformity: A spurious connection. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 12(1), 35-50.
- Greene, J. C., Caracelli, V. J., & Graham, W. F. (1989). Toward a conceptual framework for mixed-method evaluation designs. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 11(3), 255.
- Guasp, A. (2009). *The teachers' report: Homophobic bullying in Britain's schools*. London: Stonewall.
- Guasp, A. (2010). *Different families: The experiences of children with lesbian and gay parents*. Stonewall. Centre for Family Research, University of Cambridge.
- Guasp, A. (2012). *The School Report. The experiences of gay young people in Britain's schools in 2012*. London: Stonewall.
- Guasp, A., Ellison, G., & Satara, T. (2014). *The teachers' report: Homophobic bullying in Britain's schools in 2014*. Stonewall.
- Halpin, D. (1999). *Democracy, inclusive schooling and the politics of education*.
- Harris, M. B., Nightengale, J., & Owen, N. (1995). Health care professionals' experience, knowledge, and attitudes concerning homosexuality. *Journal of gay & lesbian social services*, 2(2), 91-108.
- Herek, G. M. (1984). Attitudes toward lesbians and gay men: A factor analytic study. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 10(1/2), 39-51.
- Herek, G. M. (1988). Heterosexuals' attitudes toward lesbians and gay men: Correlates and gender differences. *Journal of Sex Research*, 25(4), 451-477.
- Herek, G. M. (1994). Assessing Heterosexuals' attitudes toward lesbians and gay men: A review of empirical research with the ATLG scale. *Lesbian and Gay Psychology: Theory, Research, and Clinical Applications*, 206-228.

- Hernandez, J.G., RMIE. Construir una Identidad, pp. 459-481.
- Hirst, J. (November 01, 2008). Developing Sexual Competence? Exploring Strategies for the Provision of Effective Sexualities and Relationships Education. *Sex Education: Sexuality, Society and Learning*, 8, 4, 399-413.
- Hodkinson, A. (Mayo 01, 2005). Conceptions and Misconceptions of Inclusive Education: A Critical Examination of Final-Year Teacher Trainees' Knowledge and Understanding of Inclusion. *Research in Education*, 73, 15-28.
- Horvath, M. A., Alys, L., Massey, K., Pina, A., Scally, M., & Adler, J. R. (2013). Basically... porn is everywhere: a rapid evidence assessment on the effects that access and exposure to pornography has on children and young people.
- HRW. (2001). Harassment of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth. Easy targets: violence against children worldwide. HRW: Author.
- Hulsebosch, P., Koerner, M. E., & Ryan, D. P. (1999). Supporting students/responding to gay and lesbian parents. *Queering elementary education*, 183-193.
- Hunt, R., & Jensen, J. (2007). *The School Report: The Experiences of Young Gay People in Britain's School*. Stonewall.
- International Planned Parenthood Federation. (2008). *Sexual rights: An IPPF declaration*. London, United Kingdom: International Planned Parenthood Federation.
- Ivankova, N. V., Creswell, J. W., & Stick, S. L. (2006). Using mixed-methods sequential explanatory design: From theory to practice. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 3-20.
- Ivinson, G., & Murphy, P. (2006). Boys don't write romance: the construction of knowledge and social gender identities in english classrooms. In M. Arnot & M. M. an Ghail (Eds.), *The RoutledgeFalmer Reader in Gender and Education* (163rd–177th ed.). New York: Routledge Falmer.
- Jackson, C. (2006). *Lads and Ladettes in School: Gender and a Fear of Failure*. United Kingdom: OPEN UNIVERSITY PRESS, United Kingdom.
- Jackson, C. (2010). 'I've been sort of laddish with them... one of the gang': teachers' perceptions of 'laddish' boys and how to deal with them. *Gender and Education*, 22(5), 505-519.

- Jackson, S., Scott, S., & Books, D. (2010). *Theorizing sexuality*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
- Jagose, A. (1996). *Destabilizing Gender Theory*. Australia: Melbourne University Press.
- Johnson, B., & Turner, L. A. (2003). Data collection strategies in mixed methods research. *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*, 297-319.
- Johnson, P., & Vanderbeck, R. (2014). *Law, Religion and Homosexuality*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.
- Jones, T. M. (January 01, 2011). Saving rhetorical children: sexuality education discourses from conservative to post-modern. *Sex Education*, 11, 4, 369-387.
- Kaeser, G. (1999). Love makes a family: Controversy in two Massachusetts towns. *Queering elementary education: Advancing the dialogue about sexualities and schooling*, 177-182.
- Kahn, M. (2007). Governing bodies in Texas: talking about LGBT issues in the Christian heterosexual matrix. In L. Van Dijk & B. Van Driel (Eds.), *Challenging homophobia: Teaching about sexual diversity* (pp. 111-126). United Kingdom: Stylus Publishing.
- Kehily, M. J., & Nayak, A. (2006). 'Lads and laughter': humour and the production of heterosexual hierarchies.
- Kelley, P., Buckingham, D., & Davies, H. (1999). TALKING DIRTY Children, sexual knowledge and television. *Childhood*, 6(2), 221-242.
- Kelly, D. M., & Brooks, M. (January 01, 2009). How Young Is Too Young? Exploring Beginning Teachers' Assumptions about Young Children and Teaching for Social Justice. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 42, 2, 202-216.
- Kincheloe, J. L., & McLaren, P. (2000). Rethink-ing critical theory and qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 279-314).
- King, J. R., & Schneider, J. (1999). Locating a place for gay and lesbian themes in elementary reading, writing, and talking. *Queering elementary education: Advancing the dialogue about sexualities and schooling*, 125-136.
- Kissen, R. M. (1999). Children of the future age: Lesbian and gay parents talk about school. *Queering elementary education: Advancing the dialogue about sexualities and schooling*, 165-175.

- Kissen, R. M. (2002). *Getting ready for Benjamin: preparing teachers for sexual diversity in the classroom*. (R. M. Kissen, Ed.) (280th ed.). United States: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Kjaran, J. I., & Jóhannesson, I. Á. (2015). Inclusion, exclusion and the queering of spaces in two Icelandic upper secondary schools. *Ethnography and Education*, 10(1), 42-59.
- Kluth, P., & Colleary, K. P. (2002). Talking about inclusion like it's for everyone: Sexual diversity and the inclusive schooling movement. In R. M. Kissen (Ed.), *Getting ready for Benjamin: preparing teachers for sexual diversity in the classroom* (pp. 105–118). United States: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Kumashiro, K. K. (1999). Reading queer Asian American masculinities and sexualities in elementary school. *Queering elementary education: Advancing the dialogue about sexualities and schooling*, 61-70.
- Kumashiro, K. K. (2003). Queer ideals in education. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 45(2-4), 365-367.
- Kumashiro, K. K. (June 06, 2000). Toward a Theory of Anti-Oppressive Education. *Review of Educational Research*, 70, 1.)
- Kyriacou, C. (2003). *Helping troubled pupils*. Nelson Thornes.
- Lambert, S. (2005). Gay and lesbian families: What we know and where to go from here. *The Family Journal*, 13(1), 43-51.
- Laorden, G.C., Prado, N.C., y Royo, G.P. (2006). *Revista de Educación. Hacia una educación inclusiva: el papel de educador social en los centros educativos*, pp. 77-93.
- Leavy, A. (2005). 'When I meet them I talk to them': the challenges of diversity for preservice teacher education. *Irish Educational Studies*, 24(2-3), 159-177.
- Leeman, Y. & Volman M. (2001). *Inclusive Education: recipe book or quest. ON diversity in the classroom and educational research*.
- Lesko, N. (August 01, 2010). Feeling Abstinent? Feeling Comprehensive? Touching the Affects of Sexuality Curricula. *Sex Education: Sexuality, Society and Learning*, 10, 3, 281-297.
- Letts, W. (2002). Revisiting Multiculturalism in teacher education: isn't it queer? In R. M. Kissen (Ed.), *Getting ready for Benjamin: preparing teachers for sexual diversity in the classroom* (pp. 119–132). United States: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

- Letts, W. J. (1999). How to make "boys" and "girls" in the classroom: The heteronormative nature of elementary-school science. *Queering elementary education: Advancing the dialogue about sexualities and schooling*, 97-110.
- Letts, W., & Sears, J. (1999). *Queering elementary education. Advancing the Dialogue about Sexualities and Schooling*, Lanham/Md.
- Lewis, M. M. (2012). Pedagogy and the sista'professor: Teaching black queer feminist studies through the self. *Sexualities in education: A reader*, 33-40.
- Lilley, C., & Ball, R. (2013). Younger children and social networking sites: a blind spot. *On-line experiences of 11-12 year olds and how to protect them*.
- Lindsay, J., Perlesz, A., Brown, R., McNair, R., De Vaus, D., & Pitts, M. (2006). Stigma or respect: Lesbian-parented families negotiating school settings. *Sociology*, 40(6), 1059-1077.
- Lipkin, A. (2002). The challenges of gay topics in teacher education: Politics, content, and pedagogy. *Getting ready for Benjamin: Preparing classroom teachers for sexual diversity in the classroom*, 13-27.
- Lira Ramos, H., & Ponce De León Leiva, R. (2006). Desafíos de la educación universitaria para atender la diversidad. *Horizontes Educativos*, 11(1), 1.
- López, M. (2009). ESDAI Educación, derechos humanos y política educativa en México, pp. 7-36.
- Lugg, C.A. (2012). The religious right and public education: The paranoid politics of homophobia, In E. Meiers & T. Quinn (Eds.), *Sexualities in education: A reader*. (pp. 61-72). New York: Peter Lang. Reprint of 1998 *Educational Policy* article.
- Luker, K. (2007). *When sex goes to school: warring views on sex--and sex education--since the sixties*. WW Norton & Company.
- MacNaughton, G. (2006). Constructing gender in early-years education. *The Sage handbook of gender and education*, 127-138.
- Maddux, J.A. 1988. The homophobic attitudes of preservice teachers. Doctoral thesis, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OK;. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 49(08A): 2091
- Mallon, G. P. (Enero 01, 2001). Lesbians and Lesbian Families: Reflections on Theory and Practice, edited by Joan Laird. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 21, 221-222. Maney, D. W., & Cain, R. E. (1997).

- Preservice elementary teachers' attitudes toward gay and lesbian parenting. *Journal of School Health*, 67(6), 236-241.
- Maney, D. W., & Cain, R. E. (1997). Preservice elementary teachers' attitudes toward gay and lesbian parenting. *Journal of School Health*, 67(6), 236-241.
- Marinoble, R. M. (1999). Lesbian mother and lesbian educator: An integrative view of affirming sexual diversity. *Queering elementary education*, 225-236.
- Mathison, C. (March 01, 1998). The Invisible Minority: Preparing Teachers to Meet the Needs of Gay and Lesbian Youth. *Journal of Teacher Education*, p. 151-55.
- McCormack, O., & Gleeson, J. (2010). Attitudes of parents of young men towards the inclusion of sexual orientation and homophobia on the Irish post-primary curriculum. *Gender and Education*, 22(4), 385-400.
- McCready, W. C. (2006). Applying sampling procedures. *The Psychology Research Handbook: A Guide for Graduate Students and Research Assistants*, 147-160.
- McInnes, D. (2004) Melancholy and the Productive Negotiations of Power in Sissy Boy Experience, in M. L. Rasmussen, E. Rofes and S. Talburt (eds.) *Youth and Sexualities: Pleasure, Subversion and Insubordination In and Out of Schools*, (Basingstoke, Palgrave).
- McRobbie, A. (2007). TOP GIRLS? Young women and the post-feminist sexual contract 1. *Cultural studies*, 21(4-5), 718-737.
- McRobbie, A., & Thornton, S. L. (1995). Rethinking'moral panic'for multi-mediated social worlds. *British journal of sociology*, 559-574.
- Mellor, D., and Epstein, D. (2006), Appropriate Behavior? Sexualities, Schooling and Hetero-gender. In Skelton, C., Francis, B., & Smulyan, L. (Eds.). *The Sage handbook of gender and education* (pp. 378-391). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Menter, I. (2012). Foreword. In R. Arshad, T. Wrigley, & L. Pratt (Eds.), *Social justice re-examined: Dilemmas and solutions for the classroom teacher*. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education. Revised and Expanded from " Case Study Research in Education."*. Jossey-Bass Publishers, 350 Sansome St, San Francisco, CA 94104.

- Meyer, E. J. (2010). *Gender and sexual diversity in schools*. Dordrecht: Springer Verlag.
- Meyer, E. J., & Carlson, D. (2014). *Gender and sexualities in education: A reader*.
- Mills, M. (2004). Male teachers, homophobia, misogyny and teacher education. *Teaching Education*, 15(1), 27-39.
- Milton, J. (January 01, 2003). Primary School Sex Education Programs: Views and experiences of teachers in four primary schools in Sydney, Australia. *Sex Education*, 3, 3, 241-256.
- Mitchell, L. (2012). 'Individual teachers making a difference in the classroom and school'. In Arshad, R., Wrigley, T. & Pratt, L. (eds) *Social Justice Re-examined: Dilemmas and solutions for the classroom teacher*, Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books Limited, p. 19-31.
- Monk, D. (September 01, 2001). New guidance/old problems: recent developments in sex education. *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law*, 23, 3, 271-291.
- Moran, D. (2000). *Introduction to phenomenology*. London: Routledge.
- Moran, J. (January 01, 2001). Childhood Sexuality and Education: The Case of Section 28. *Sexualities*, 4, 1, 73-89.
- Morris, M. (2005) El pie zurdo de Dante pone en marcha la teoría queer. Talburt, S. (Eds.). *Pensando Queer. Sexualidad, cultura y educación*. Barcelona: GRAÓ.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Sage Publications.
- Mudrey, R., & Medina-Adams, A. (2006). Attitudes, perceptions, and knowledge of Pre-Service teachers regarding the educational isolation of sexual minority youth. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 51(4), 63-90.
- Nixon, D., & East, S. (2010). Stirring it up or stirring it in? Perspectives on the development of sexualities equality in a faith-based primary school. *Educational Action Research*, 18(2), 151-166.
- Nixon, D., and Givens, N. (January 01, 2004). 'Miss, you're so gay.' Queer stories from trainee teachers. *Sex Education*, 4, 3, 217-237.
- Nixon, D., & Givens, N. (2007). An epitaph to Section 28? Telling tales out of school about changes and challenges to discourses of sexuality. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 20(4), 449-471.

- Office for National Statistics. (2012). Families and Households,. London. Retrieved from www.ons.gov.uk
- Ofsted. (2013a). Exploring the school's actions to prevent and tackle homophobic and transphobic bullying. September. London: Ofsted.
- Ollis, D. (2009). Sexualities and gender in the classroom: changing teacher practice. Lambert Academic Publishing
- Ollis, D. (2010). 'I haven't changed bigots but...': reflections on the impact of teacher professional learning in sexuality education. *Sex Education*, 10(2), 217-230.
- Ollis, D., Harrison, L., & Maharaj, C. (2013). Sexuality education matters: Preparing pre-service teachers to teach sexuality education.
- Ollis, D., Harrison, L., & Richardson, A. (2012). *Building capacity in sexuality education: The Northern Bay College experience: Report of the first phase of the sexuality education and community support (SECS) project*. Deakin University.
- Olweus, D. (1994). Bullying at school (pp. 97-130). Springer US.
- Ortiz-Díaz, N., (2009) Revista Educativa Digital. La riqueza de la diversidad, pp. 71-84.
- Paechter, C. (2001). Using poststructuralist ideas in gender theory and research. *Investigating gender: Contemporary perspectives in education*, 41-51.
- Page, J. A., & Liston, D. D. (2002). Homophobia in Schools: Student Teachers Perceptions and Preparation to Respond. *Getting Ready for Benjamin: Preparing Teachers for Sexual Diversity in the Classroom*, 71-80.
- Pallant, J. (2010). SPSS survival manual: A step by step guide to data analysis using the SPSS program, 4th edition. Crows Nest, N.S.W., Australia: Allen & Unwin.
- Pallotta-Chiarolli, M. (1999). My moving days": a child's negotiation of multiple lifeworlds in relation to gender, ethnicity, and sexuality. *Queering elementary education*, 71-82.
- Payne, E., & Smith, M. (January 01, 2014). The big freak out: educator fear in response to the presence of transgender elementary school students. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 61, 3, 399-418.

- Perlesz, A., & McNair, R. (2004). Lesbian parenting: Insiders' voices. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 25(3), 129-140.
- Pescitelli, A. (2011) *MySpace or yours? homophobic and transphobic bullying in cyberspace*. Vancouver: Simon Fraser University.
- Phillips, D. A. (2007). Punking and bullying strategies in middle school, high school, and beyond. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 22(2), 158-178.
- Piaget, J. (1999). *The construction of reality in the child*. London: Routledge.
- Pinar, W., *Curriculum Theorizing*, Mc Cutchan Publishing Corporation.1975
- Plummer, K. (2005). Critical humanism and queer theory. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, 3, 357-373.
- Pomerleau, A., Bolduc, D., Malcuit, G., & Cossette, L. (1990). Pink or blue: Environmental gender stereotypes in the first two years of life. *Sex Roles*, 22(5-6), 359-367.
- Pope, H. G., Olivardia, R., Gruber, A., & Borowiecki, J. (1999). Evolving ideals of male body image as seen through action toys. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, (26), 65-72.
- Poteat, V. P., & Rivers, I. (2010). The use of homophobic language across bullying roles during adolescence. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 31(2), 166-172.
- Raley, A. B., & Lucas, J. L. (2006). Stereotype or success? Prime-time television's portrayals of gay male, lesbian, and bisexual characters. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 51(2), 19-38.
- Ray, V., & Gregory, R. (2001). School Experiences of the Children of Lesbian and Gay Parents. *Family Matters*, 59, 28-34.
- Reay, D. (2001). 'Spice Girls','Nice Girls','Girlies', and'Tomboys': Gender discourses, girls' cultures and femininities in the primary classroom. *Gender and Education*, 13(2), 153-166.
- Reay, D. (2006). 'I'm not seen as one of the clever children': consulting primary school pupils about the social conditions of learning. *Educational review*, 58(2), 171-181.
- Renold, E. (2000). 'Coming out': Gender,(hetero) sexuality and the primary school. *Gender and Education*, 12(3), 309-326.

- Renold, E. (2002). Presumed innocence (Hetero) sexual, heterosexist and homophobic harassment among primary school girls and boys. *Childhood*, 9(4), 415-434.
- Renold, E. (2006). 'They won't let us play... unless you're going out with one of them': girls, boys and Butler's 'heterosexual matrix' in the primary years. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 27(4), 489-509.
- Renold, E. (2007). Primary School "Studs"(De) constructing Young Boys' Heterosexual Masculinities. *Men and masculinities*, 9(3), 275-297.
- Renold, E., & Ringrose, J. (2008). Regulation and rupture Mapping tween and teenage girls' resistance to the heterosexual matrix. *Feminist Theory*, 9(3), 313-338.
- RFSL Ungdom. (2009). Break the norm! Methods for studying norms in general and the heteronorm in particular. (E. Akesson, Ed., T. Hansson, Trans.). Sweden: RFSL Ungdom.
- Richardson, D., McLaughlin, J., & Casey, M. E. (2006). Intersections between feminist and queer theory.
- Ringrose, J., & Renold, E. (2012). Slut-shaming, girl power and 'sexualisation': Thinking through the politics of the international SlutWalks with teen girls. *Gender and Education*, 24(3), 333-343.
- Robinson, K. (2008). In the name of 'childhood innocence': A discursive exploration of the moral panic associated with childhood and sexuality. *Cultural Studies Review*, 14(2), 113-29.
- Robinson, K. H. (2002). Making the invisible visible: Gay and lesbian issues in early childhood education. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, (3).
- Robinson, K. H. (June 01, 2005). "Queering" Gender: Heteronormativity in Early Childhood Education. *Australian Journal of Early Childhood*, 30, 2, 19-28.
- Robinson, K. H., & Ferfolja, T. (May 01, 2008). Playing it up, playing it down, playing it safe: Queering teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24, 4, 846-858.
- Rodrigues, L. (2011, March). CURRENT status of Sex and Relationships Education. Sex education forum. Retrieved from http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/385195/current_status_of_sre.pdf
- Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Los Angeles [i.e. Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications.

- Sánchez, A., (2009). *Acoso escolar y convivencia en las aulas: Manual de prevención e intervención*. Jaén, España: Formación Alcalá.
- Sauntson, H. (2012). *Approaches to gender and spoken classroom discourse*. United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Savolainen, H. (2009). Responding to diversity and striving for excellence: The case of Finland. *Prospects*, 39(3), 281-292.
- Schneider, M. S., & Dimito, A. (2008). Educators' beliefs about raising lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues in the schools: The experience in Ontario, Canada. *Journal of LGBT Youth*, 5(4), 49-71.
- Sears, J. T. 1999. "Teaching queerly: some elementary propositions". In *Queering elementary education: advancing the dialogue about sexualities and schooling*, Edited by: Letts, W. J and Sears, J. T. 3-14. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Seidman, S., Fischer, N., & Meeks, C. (2006). *Handbook of the new sexuality studies*. (N. F. Seidman/Meeks/F, Ed.) (1st ed.). United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis, Inc.
- Seidman, S., Fischer, N., & Meeks, C. (2011). *Introducing the new sexuality studies*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) for the 21st Century. (2014). London: Brook, the PSHE. Association, and the Sex Education Forum.
- Skelton, C. (2001). *Schooling the boys: masculinities and primary education*. United Kingdom: Open University Press.
- Skelton, C. (2002). The 'feminisation of schooling' or 're-masculinising' primary education? [1]. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 12(1), 77-96.
- Skelton, C. (2003). Male primary teachers and perceptions of masculinity. *Educational Review*, 55(2), 195-209.
- Skelton, C. (2006). Boys and girls in the elementary school. ed. by C., Francis, B., & Smulyan, and L. (2006). *The SAGE Handbook of Gender and Education*, 139-151. United Kingdom: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Slee, R. (2001). Social justice and the changing directions in educational research: the case of inclusive education.
- Smith, J. A., & Eatough, V. (2007). *Analysing qualitative data in psychology*. Los Angeles, Calif: SAGE.

- Smith, J. A., & Osborn, M. (2007). Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. In P. J. A. Smith (Ed.), *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods* (pp. 53–80). United Kingdom: Sage Publications.
- Smith, P. (2004). Bullying: Recent developments. In *Child and Adolescent Mental Health* Volume 9, No. 3, 2004, pp. 98–103.
- Stockton, K. B. (2009). *The queer child, or growing sideways in the twentieth century*. Duke University Press.
- Stonewall. (2010). *A Guide for Gays Dads*. London. Retrieved from https://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/A_Guide_for_Gay_Dads_1_.pdf
- Storey L (2007) Doing interpretive phenomenological analysis. In E Lyons & A Coyle (eds) *Analysing qualitative data in psychology*. Sage pp51-64.
- Straut, D., & Sapon-Shevin, M. (2002). 'But no one in the class is gay': Countering invisibility and creating allies in teacher education programs.". In R. M. Kissen (Ed.), *Getting ready for Benjamin: preparing teachers for sexual diversity in the classroom* (pp. 29–41). United States: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Stubbs, S. (2008), *Inclusive Education. Where there are few resources*. Norway: The Atlas Alliance.
- Suarez,G., (2004). Sexualidades Diversas. Aproximaciones para su Analisis. Teorias Biológicas que intentan explicar el origen de la preferencia, pp. 129-144.
- Sundaram, V. (2007). *Violence victimisation as a gender-specific process* Copenhagen: National Institute of Public Health
- Sundaram, V., & Sauntson, H. (2015). Discursive silences: using critical linguistic and qualitative analysis to explore the continued absence of pleasure in sex and relationships education in England. *Sex Education*, (ahead-of-print), 1-15.
- Swann, J. (1992). *Girls, boys, and language*. United Kingdom: Oxford, UK; Blackwell Publishers, 1992.
- Szalacha, L. A. (2003) *American Journal of Education, Safer Sexual Diversity Climates: Lessons Learned from an Evaluation of Massachusetts Safe Schools*, p58-88.

- Szalacha, L. A. (January 01, 2004). Educating Teachers on LGBTQ Issues: A Review of Research and Program Evaluations. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Issues in Education*, 1, 4, 67-79.
- Szasz, Ivonne. "Sexualidad y género: Algunas experiencias de investigación en México". In *Debate Feminista*. Año 9, vol. 18, octubre, 1998, pp. 77-104.
- Talburt, S. (2000). Introduction: Some Contradictions and Possibilities of Thinking Queer. In S. Talburt & S. R. Steinberg (Eds.), *Thinking queer: Sexuality, culture, and education* (1st ed.). United States: Lang, Peter Publishing.
- Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2008). Quality of inferences in mixed methods research: Calling for an integrative framework. *Advances in mixed methods research*, 101-119.
- Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2010). *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Taylor, [edited by] Yvette. (2012). *Educational diversity: the subject of difference and different subjects*. (Y. Taylor, Ed.). Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Teddlie, Ch. & Tashakkori, A. (2006). A general typology of research designs featuring mixed methods. *Research in Schools*, 13 (1), 12-28.
- The Sex Education Forum, PSHE Association, & Brook. (2014). *Sex and relationships education (SRE) for the 21st century*. Sex Education Forum. Retrieved from <http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/media/17706/sreadvice.pdf>
- Thorne, B., & Luria, Z. (January 01, 2002). Sexuality and gender in children's daily worlds. *Sexuality and Gender*.
- Turner, W. B. (2000). *A genealogy of queer theory*. Temple University Press.
- UNESCO (2003). *Overcoming Exclusion through Inclusive Approaches in Education. A challenge and a vision. Conceptual paper*. Paris: UNESCO
- UNESCO & Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS., United Nations Population Fund., UNICEF., World Health Organization. (2009). *International technical guidance on sexuality education: An evidence-informed approach for schools, teachers and health educators*. Paris: UNESCO.

- Van Dijk, L., & Van Driel, B. (Eds.). (2007). *Challenging homophobia: Teaching about sexual diversity*. Trentham Books Limited.
- Vance, Carole S. "Social Construction Theory: Problems in the History of Sexuality." *Social perspectives in lesbian and gay studies: A reader*. Nardi, P. M., & Schneider, B. E. (1998). London: Routledge.
- Vanderbeck, R. M., & Johnson, P. (April 03, 2015). Homosexuality, religion and the contested legal framework governing sex education in England. *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law*, 37, 2, 161-179.
- Vavrus, M. (April 01, 2009). Sexuality, schooling, and teacher identity formation: A critical pedagogy for teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25, 3, 383-390.
- Villegas, A. M., and Lucas, T. (January 01, 2002). Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers: Rethinking the Curriculum. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 53, 1, 20-32
- Vogt, F. (2002). A caring teacher: Explorations into primary school teachers' professional identity and ethic of care. *Gender and education*, 14(3), 251-264.
- Waites, M. (July 01, 2001). Regulation of Sexuality: Age of Consent, Section 28 and Sex Education. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 54, 3, 495-508.
- Wallis, A., & VanEvery, J. (2000). Sexuality in the primary school. *Sexualities*, 3(4), 409-423.
- Watkins, M. (2009). "Inclusive education: The way of the future"—A rebuttal. *Prospects*, 39(3), 215-225.
- Weeks, J. (2003). *Sexuality* (2nd ed.). LONDON: ROUTLEDGE.
- Weeks, J. (2008). *The Languages of Sexuality* (1st ed.). London: Routledge.
- Weeks, J. (2011). *The languages of sexuality*. Routledge.
- Weems, L. (1999). Pestalozzi Perversity, and the Pedagogy of Love. *Queering Elementary Education: Advancing the Dialogue about Sexualities and Schooling*. Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 27-36.
- Weiner, G. (2006). Out of the ruins: feminist pedagogy in recovery. *The SAGE handbook of gender and education*, 79G92.
- Wellings, K., Parker, R., & Knerr, W. (2006). *Sexuality education in Europe: a reference guide to policies and practices*. International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).

- Wengraf, T. (2001). *Qualitative research interviews*. London: Sage Publications.
- Werner, E.C. (2008) Homofobia y convivencia en la escuela. Bogotá: Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. Promover Ciudadana.
- Whitlock, R. U. (2010). Getting Queer: Teacher Education, Gender Studies, and the Cross-Disciplinary Quest for Queer Pedagogies. *Issues in Teacher Education*, 19(2), 81-104.
- Whitlock, R. U. (2014). LGBT Families and Southern Schools: Thinking About People, Place, and Education. In E. J. Meyer & D. L. Carlson (Eds.), *Gender and Sexualities in Education: A Reader* (pp. 75–89). New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Wilkinson, S. (2011). Analysing Focus Group Data. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Theory, method and practice* (3rd ed., pp. 168–184). Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.
- William J. Letts IV and James T. Sears. (1999). *Queering elementary education: advancing the dialogue about sexualities and schooling*. (W. J. Letts & J. T. Sears, Eds.) (1st ed.). United States: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Williams, C. L., & Stein, A. (Eds.). (2002). *Sexuality and Gender (Blackwell Readers in Sociology (Paper))* (1st ed.). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Winkelmann, C., Bundeszentrale für Gesundheitliche Aufklärung, & World Health Organization. (2010). Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe: A framework for policy makers, educational and health authorities and specialists. Cologne: BZgA.
- Wood, L. E. (1997). Semi-structured interviewing for user-centered design. *Interactions*, 4(2), 48–61.
- World Health Organization. (2006). Defining sexual health: Report of a technical consultation on sexual health, 28-31 January 2002, Geneva. Geneva: World Health Organization.
- World Health Organization. (2015). Defining sexual health. Retrieved from http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/sexual_health/s_h_definitions/en/
- Wright, Jr., L. W., Adams, H. E., & Bernat, J. (1999). *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment*, 21(4), 337–347.
- Youdell, D. (2009). *School trouble: Identity, power and politics in education*. London [u.a.: Routledge.

Youdell, D. (January 01, 2010). Queer Outings: Uncomfortable Stories about the Subjects of Post-Structural School Ethnography. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* (qse), 23, 1, 87-100.

Younger, M., and M. Warrington, (2005), *Raising Boys' Achievement*. University of Cambridge Faculty of Education. Interim Report to the Department for Education and Skills.