



Gender Identity Guidance for Schools

Inclusion and support for transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming or questioning children and young people in schools



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Acknowledgements

The following guidance documents for transgender students in school have inspired the creation of this guidance document:

- Cornwall Schools Transgender Guidance, The Intercom Trust, 2012.
- Guidance for Schools, EOTAS Centres and Youth Service on Supporting Transgender Young People, Northern Ireland, 2019.
- Mermaids UK Charity, https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/.
- NHS Delivering same-sex accommodation guidance, NHS England and NHS Improvement, 2019.
- Trans Inclusion Schools Toolkit, Brighton & Hove City Council and Allsorts Youth Project, second edition, 2017.
- Trans Toolkit for Schools, Oxfordshire County Council, 2017.

The following resources have been referenced in this guidance and may be useful for schools in developing these practices:

- "A Guide for Young Trans People in the UK", Mermaids UK, https://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk/assets/media/17-15-02-A-Guide-For-Young-People.pdf
- International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, https://ilga.org/.
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans History Month, https://lgbthistorymonth.org.uk/.
- UK Deed Poll Service, http://www.deedpoll.org.uk/.

This guidance has been written cooperatively by Liberate, SHARE, Youth Commission, the Education Service PSHE Advisor and Children and Young People's Plan Support Officer, with feedback from transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming or questioning community.

1.2 Purpose

The increasingly recognised diversity in expression being explored in schools means the understanding of gender identity can be complex. The aim of this guidance is to provide information and advice to schools in order to support transgender, non-binary, and gender non-conforming or questioning students. The document offers guidance on inclusive practises for a whole school approach, creating a welcoming environment in which students feel comfortable to explore their gender identity. It also provides guidance for individual cases and day-to-day situations. However, the bespoke nature of each transition means different procedures will need be taken depending on the needs and best interests of each

individual student. The guidance aims to increase the confidence of staff in supporting students and challenging transphobic bullying by developing their understanding of gender identity. By providing a consistent approach, and by teaching students to understand gender identity, transphobia and transphobic bullying can be prevented. Similarly, this will create a safe environment in which students feel safe to explore their gender identity. All students should be provided with an equal chance of success in an environment where they will thrive and are not hindered by any changes to their gender identity.

1.3 The Guernsey Young People's Survey

The Guernsey Young People's Survey 2019 provided self-reflective responses regarding various aspects of the lives of young people in school. Of those students in Year 8 and Year 10 who took part in the survey, 5.86% identified as neither male nor female. The report can be broken down to compare the results of these students with those who identified as male or female. Whilst most results were similar, there was a significant difference in responses between these two groups regarding pride in the school, with significantly more students who do not identify as male or female responding they are 'not at all' proud to be a member of their school or college. This lack of consistency between all students suggests that these students feel a lack of belong and inclusion within the school community.

(Findings of the Guernsey Young People's Survey 2019)

2.0 Context

2.1 The Children's and Young People's Plan

The States of Guernsey has developed The Children's and Young People's Plan (CYPP) with partners supporting and creating cross service practices to realise the States 6 Core Commitments:

- Listen to the voices of all children and young people
- Focus on early help and prevention
- Tackle inequality and disadvantage and actively promote inclusion
- Work in partnership with each other and families
- Collate and use data, evidence and information effectively
- Communicate the plan with the community

The fourth priority of the CYPP, to "be included and respected" details, "we want to ensure that children and young people have help to overcome inequalities and are valued members of their communities. This means having a voice in decisions that affect them and being supported to play an active and responsible role in all aspects of their lives."

Furthermore, the Inclusion and Equality Review (2019) details the commitment from Education Services that schools and partners will:

- Create an environment where children and young people feel valued and listened to
- Have a curriculum that meets the needs of all whilst exploring and celebrating diversity
- Promote an inclusive environment that meets the needs of all pupils, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (Bailiwick of Guernsey School inspection Ofsted 2019)

This commitment from the States of Guernsey means transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming and questioning students must feel included and safe. It is essential students are not excluded or made to feel unequal to their peers. Discussion with students and their parents or carers will prevent isolation and allow the student to be instrumental in the decisions made regarding their school experiences.

2.2 The United Nations Convention of the Rights of a Child

The United Nations Convention of the Rights of a Child (UNCRC) provides legal protection for children and young people. The following articles apply to gender identity:

- Article 2: The convention applies to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, sex, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.
- Article 3: The Best interest of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.
- Article 8: Every child has the right to an identity.
- Article 12: Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.

Articles covering non-discrimination, the best interests and respecting the views of the child provide protection over identity and any changes made to identity. Article 8 indicates that it would be a violation of rights to deprive elements of a child's identity and their internal sense of self. All elements of a child's identity should be protected, and their identity should be taken seriously and respected.

3.0 Developing Understanding

3.1 Definitions

Gender identity is more complicated than a simple binary of male and female, and an understanding of the terminology and language of gender identity is fundamental in providing the correct support to students.

There is a difference between sex, gender identity and sexuality these are often confused and it is important to distinguish the three terms. Sex is assigned at birth and refers to

physical anatomy, biological make-up, chromosomes, and hormones. Gender identity refers to the internal sense of self, which can differ from the sex assigned at birth. Sexuality, on the other hand, refers to sexual orientation and attraction. Both gender identity and sexuality are not necessarily fixed, they are diverse and may change throughout an individual's life.

Trans: an umbrella term which describes people who may identify as follows:

Gender fluid: a term used to describe a person who moves between two or more different gender identities. They may not identify within the binary of male or female.

Gender variant: a term used to describe those who do not conform to gender roles and behaviour of the sex they were assigned at birth. It is important to note that gender variance does not always evolve into a transgender identity.

Non-binary: an umbrella term for a person who does not identify as male or female singularly. They may identify as both, neither, or as another gender identity. This group may not consider themselves transgender but are included under the "trans" umbrella.

Transsexual person: A term used to describe someone who has been through a medicalized transition to live as the opposite gender identity to that which they were assigned at birth. This is an outdated term and "transgender" is preferred.

3.2 A Whole School Approach

A whole school approach which celebrates diversity in every form is needed to create a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone is treated equally. Children spend most of their time in educational settings, and therefore school life plays an important part in the development of a child's identity. The school should make it clear transgender people exist in the whole community, and acknowledging this may help negate feelings of difference regarding gender identity. An effective approach will create an environment where students feel safe to question their gender identity or "come out" as transgender. The curriculum can be adapted to implement more awareness of gender identity in lessons. Participating in events such as LGBT History Month, Transgender Awareness month or Pride Month will promote a united whole school approach. Resources can be found at https://lgbthistorymonth.org.uk/.

Gender stereotypes and binary notions of gender can exclude students. In order to prevent the isolation, particularly of non-binary students, language such as "ladies and gents" and "girls and boys" should be reflected on. Instead, using the collective terms "pupils", "students" or "children" promotes a sense of belonging and removes the notion of gender as binary. Students are often separated by gender identity for seating plans or certain lessons, and staff should consider whether this process is vital or whether an alternative approach could be used. Staff should discuss any gender segregation with the student before this occurs and should allow students to group with those of the same gender identity.

For subjects such as relationship and sex education, or where gendered groups are essential, students should still be separated according to their gender identity. Apart from where puberty or cancer awareness is being taught. In both these cases students need to attend the relevant session, according to their biological sex, or they can choose to be taught separately. Care in these lessons can be taken to be inclusive of all gender identities, and an effort can be made to explain the difference between sex and gender identity.

Some in-school vaccinations may require students to be separated by gender. If transgender students feel uncomfortable by this, areas of increased privacy should be set up. Otherwise, if they feel uncomfortable receiving vaccinations in the school setting, students can receive their vaccinations from their GP separately.

It may be appropriate to have a specific member of staff designated to be the "go-to" person for individual transgender students in order to ensure there is an adult the students trust and can seek support from. This staff member may be the first point of contact for those questioning their gender identity or wanting to "come out" in school.

3.3 Supporting individuals

Each student will be different and therefore support for each individual will be bespoke. Before, during and following transition, staff should engage regularly with students in order to work collaboratively, and offer appropriate support. The aims of their transition may change over time, and it is important this is vocalised with school in order for the school to cater to their needs as they change. Early intervention and discussion with the student will allow them to voice their concerns and these can be dealt with promptly. The internal practises detailed in this guidance, including; change of names and pronoun, SIMs and exam certificates, uniform, physical education, toilets and changing facilities, day and residential trips, and work experience, should be covered in these meetings. There may be other aspects of the school environment which the student may want to discuss and make arrangements for.

The range of transgender identities and experiences means individuals will require different levels of support. A social transition is usually the first step and constitutes a change of name, pronoun, dress etc. A medical transition usually happens after a social transition and may start with hormone blockers, however no young people under the age of 18 are given hormone therapy or surgery. Transgender students are likely to have started a social transition. If necessary, staff should work with gender fluid students to establish a strategy, suggestions include a badge or lanyard which indicates their gender identity. Despite the stage in their transition, communication between staff and students is key for the school to provide inclusive and supportive practices.

3.4 Transphobia and Transphobic bullying

Transphobia is the irrational fear, hatred and abuse of someone who identifies as, or is perceived as, transgender. Transphobia can also be aimed at people who do not conform to traditional gender stereotypes.

Transgender students are often subject to prejudice and bullying in school. This may involve verbal taunts, personal questions and name calling. Transphobic incidents must be recorded and dealt with in the same way as other bullying, prejudice and hate incidents. The school setting should ensure this behaviour is challenged. Bullying may be internal, from students and staff, however may also come from outside the school, or from family members, parents and carers. It can take place online, both in and outside the school environment. Likewise, transphobia is not always targeted at the individual, but can be targeted at family members, friends and supporters. All incidents must be investigated and dealt with consistently. At no point should the rights of a transgender person be compromised due to concerns from peers, staff or parents. Those who have aired concerns should be reminded of the school's inclusive policies and practises. An effort should be made to make that person more comfortable, but this should not be at the expense of the targeted transgender person.

Strategies to tackle bullying should be adapted to include transphobic bullying. A standpoint against inappropriate behaviour can be implemented through the school rules, curriculum, assemblies and the aims and ethos of the school. An awareness of gender identity and teaching inclusivity should prevent transphobia developing and the consequent bullying. See *Whole School Approach* for details on creating an inclusive environment. Training for staff, on best practise, should increase their confidence in dealing with transphobic bullying. This will promote a consistent and united approach from the school. Staff training may involve using scenario situations.

4.0 Internal Practises

4.1 Changing names and pronouns

Changing names and pronouns to match their gender identity is a pivotal point in the student's transition, and this should be supported by their school. A legal change in name and gender identity is not required for the school to adopt the new name and pronoun, and staff should be guided by the language the student is using to describe themselves. Where a name has not been legally changed, the student's new name can be placed under the "preferred forename" option in SIMS. This should create consistency from the staff and protect the student's confidentiality by not outing them. Staff should engage with the student and their parents or carers regarding the change in name and pronoun, how this information should will be relayed to staff and students and how the student will be addressed on the school system in terms of the register, letters home and reports. Data being shared with third parties should be correct.

4.2 SIMS and Exam results

On SIMS, a student's forename can only differ from that on the birth certificate if it has been legally changed. If a student has not changed their name legally, but wants to be known by a different name at school, administrators can place the student's new name under the "preferred forename" option in SIMS, as detailed above. Similarly, the gender section should not differ from that on the student's birth certificate as details for examinations are taken from SIMS (see below for more information on Exams). Despite this, staff and peers should refer to the student using the pronoun they identify with. School administrators can establish how a student identifies in the "Quick Note" field on the Student Record.

Presently, the name and gender identity used for exams and exam certificates should match that on their official identification papers, such as a birth certificate, driver's license or passport. Once a result is accredited, it will be linked with a Unique Pupil Number or Unique Learner Number, which are only linked with legal names, not preferred names. The students will need to fill in their legal name and gender identity when sitting exams. Therefore, a student will need to have legally changed their name before it can be used on an exam document. The school should discuss this with the student and their parent or carer to ensure they are clear about the process. The examination officer can agree a strategy with the various exam boards before the course begins. It may be possible to change the name on an exam certificate following a change of name by Deed Poll, and this should be followed up with the relevant Examination Board.

4.3 Uniform

Clothing is an important part of expressing identity. Uniform is often gendered in the binary "girls" or "boys", but even if this is not directly stated, students often wear the uniform that correlates with their gender identity. Transgender students should be allowed to dress in the uniform which correlates with their gender identity, or in which they feel most comfortable. They are expected to follow the school uniform policy like all other students, however the school should adopt a flexible approach for individual requests for changes. Making uniform non-gendered would prevent excluding students. This same advice applies for the PE kit.

Consideration must be given to swimwear options for transgender students. Students should be allowed to request changes to their swimwear items in the same manner students from certain faith backgrounds can do. Due to the revealing nature of swimwear, students should be allowed to wear rash vests, shorts, or wetsuits if this would make them more comfortable and encourage their participation.

Changing uniform during gender identity transition can be daunting, and students should be supported through this process. Staff should discuss uniform with student in order to establish exactly what clothing they will wear and when they will change their uniform. Having a plan established with staff should give them more confidence in their physical appearance.

4.4 Physical Education

At primary level, physical education lessons are often mixed gender, and there are very few cases where students are separated by their gender identity. Where students are separated, students should group with those of their gender identity. As is best practice in all P.E. lessons, physical differences between pupils should be considered to ensure all pupils are safe. Physical safety in contact sport does not pose an immediate problem as physical differences between primary-aged pupils are not overly varied, however a discussion with the pupil prior to this will establish what they feel comfortable with.

At secondary level, physical education lessons are often split by gender, and similarly transgender students should group with those of their gender identity. Concerns may arise regarding the emotional and physical wellbeing of students where transgender students participate alongside cisgender students, particularly following puberty due to the differences in build and ability. Similarly, there are concerns over the advantage male-to-female students will have over their peers in competitive lessons. Transgender students should not be excluded from certain lessons, instead it is important staff adapt lessons as with other students' needs so that potential risks are assessed and prevented. Consistency is important for transgender students to feel supported, and discussion with students and their parent or carer is important to ensure they are comfortable participating.

These concerns will be similar for competitions and sports days. Each case should be considered on an individual basis with close discussion with the transgender student in question. Sporting bodies will have their own processes on the participation of transgender students in sporting competitions, and schools should ascertain this information in advance of the competition. Students should be allowed to compete alongside the gender they identify with, and excluding them is discriminatory.

4.5 Toilets and Changing Facilities

Transgender students are likely to have concerns such as unwanted attention and bullying regarding toilets and changing facilities, so support from staff is essential. Students should use the facilities which are consistent with their gender identity, or where they feel most comfortable. For this reason, bins which can also be used for sanitary products should be available in all bathrooms.

Students may be uncomfortable using single gender toilets and changing facilities. Similarly, single gender areas may cause an issue for non-binary students. Regardless of the reason why, if a student desires increased privacy, they should be provided with access to a single stall toilet which is gender neutral. It may be appropriate to change the name of "accessible" facilities to "all-access toilets" and "unisex toilets" to simply "toilets". Although changing facilities can be communal, private cubicles within the changing rooms offer the student more privacy. Students who are binding their chests, for instance, may desire this increased privacy when changing.

Both the privacy of transgender and cisgender students need to be considered when establishing which facilities should be used. If any concerns arise from parents or carers regarding the safety of students sharing facilities with transgender students, the school should not compromise the rights of the transgender person, and instead should focus on making the students who are concerned feel safe.

4.6 Day and Residential Trips

Day trips to another venue may be quite daunting for transgender students, so a discussion regarding any concerns with the student is essential in advance of the trip. If concerned, staff should check the policy at the venue. If risk assessments are deemed appropriate, staff should ensure there are appropriate facilities for all students at all locations.

Similarly, sleeping arrangements for residential trips can cause anxiety for transgender students. The Considerations for Children and Young People in the NHS Delivering Same-Sex Accommodation Guidance, states that "where segregation is deemed necessary, it should be in accordance with dress, preferred name and/or stated gender identity of the child or young person". In order to be inclusive, staff need to ensure that students feel comfortable with any arrangements made. Students should be able to sleep in dorms appropriate to their gender identity, if they wish. They may not feel comfortable sleeping in a dorm with other students of the same gender identity, and in this case alternative sleeping arrangements should be made. This might mean making a space of increased privacy for students. Staff should engage with parents and students to establish sleeping arrangements.

Staying with a host family may cause the young person some concern. Completing a risk assessment is essential to cover any issues which may arise. To ensure the safety of students, measures should be taken to ensure host families are inclusive. Personal information provided to the host family regarding the student should be at the student's discretion, and it is important information is kept confidential and not shared with the host family unless the student feels this is necessary.

When considering trips overseas, the school should investigate the country being considered and their laws and views regarding transgender communities. The Trans Legal Mapping Report by the ILGA explains the diversity of legal processes, and details the progression being made across the world. It is paramount schools research the country they are planning to travel to as there are countries where it is illegal to identify as or promote LGBTQ. If a student is planning to travel with hormone treatment (i.e blockers), for instance, the school needs to ensure it is legal and safe to do so. Excluding transgender students from trips in order to visit certain countries would be discriminatory. For further information, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (https://ilga.org/) publish the Trans Legal Mapping Report, and also detail sexual orientation laws around the world.

Travelling itself can be difficult for transgender students as their preferred name and gender identity may differ to the details on their passport. This may cause worries about being

"outed" to their peers. Extra privacy and support for transgender students may be required at borders to prevent then being "outed". Contacting the relevant border agency prior to travel will ensure that everyone is prepared.

It is paramount that a discussion with the students and their parent or carer occurs before travelling away from the school site, in order to ensure both the school and student are fully prepared.

4.7 Work Experience

Work experience is an important opportunity, however going into a new place without the same support network can be intimidating. An assessment of the placement provider will establish the safety and potential risks to transgender students. All potential work places should be asked for their relevant policies on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and these should be LGBTQ inclusive. Where work places do not have these, staff should discuss equality, inclusion and accessibility with all employers at Employer Visit reviews. Careers Guernsey may find it appropriate to use the Liberate DIFERA fact sheets with employers, or may suggest an Employer seeks training from Liberate. It would not be appropriate to "out" a student to a potential work place and any information about a student's gender identity should only be disclosed at the student's discretion. It is important that this information is kept confidential.

The student can apply for work experience using their preferred name and pronouns. Engagement with the student regarding the work experience, and if necessary their parents or carers, before and during their placement will allow any concerns to be voiced and dealt with. Ensuring students feel confident will increase their chances of being successful at their placement.

Work experience may be the first opportunity for a transgender student to truly be themselves and not be known as "the trans student".

Appendix 1: Terminology and more definitions

It should be noted that the terminology for gender identity changes over time. For instance, the term "queer" has been considered derogatory for the LGBT community in the past, but has recently been reclaimed by the community and has changed meaning. Despite the change in meaning, is still considered derogatory by some.

Labels used to describe identity such as "transgender" are adjectives and are not nouns, and therefore the correct phrasing when talking about someone is "a transgender person", not "a transgender".

More terms under the "transgender" umbrella include:

Agender: a term used to describe someone who does not feel the traditional concepts of man or woman apply to them. They may identify as gender neutral or genderless.

Cisgender: when the sex assigned at birth matches gender identity. This is a term used for non-trans people. The majority of people are cisgender.

Cross Dresser: a term which refers to a person who enjoys dressing in clothing which is usually associated with the clothing of the opposite sex. They only dress this way occasionally, and do not what to permanently identify as a different gender identity. "Transvestite" was a previous term used for this, but is now outdated.

Gender dysphoria: a term used to describe someone whose discrepancy between their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity causes them discomfort and distress. This is also a clinical diagnosis for someone who may go on to receive hormone blockers, although not all transgender people require a diagnosis.

Gender reassignment: a term usually used to describe when a person has gone through a medicalized transition.

Intersex: a term used to describe a person with the biological and physical characteristics of either, both sexes or, that differ from the "typical" male or female patterns. Intersex people can identify as male, female, or non-binary. Information for transgender people does not always match the needs of an intersex individual.

LGBT: an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.

Outed: a term used to describe when, usually without their consent, a person's sexual orientation or gender identity is disclosed to someone else.

Passing: to "pass" is to be perceived as the gender someone identifies with due to their physical presentation. This is usually in compliance with cultural expectations and norms of gender.

Personal Pronouns: words used as a substitute for a person's name and instead refer to people's gender in conversation. This includes, "he", "him", "his", "himself", "she", "her(s)", "herself". Gender neutral pronouns include "they", "them", "their", "ze" and "zir".

Queer: a term used to identify differently in response to social norms, used particularly by those who do not identify to the "traditional" categories of cisgender.

Transgender boy or man: someone who is assigned female at birth and who identifies as a boy or man. They will often use the male pronoun "he". FTM meaning female-to-male is often used as a written abbreviation.

Transgender girl or woman: someone who is assigned male at birth who identifies as a girl or woman. They will often use the female pronoun "she". MTF meaning male-to-female is often used as a written abbreviation.

Transitioning: the changes made by a transgender person to live as the gender with which they identify. This will involve different stages for different people, potentially involving

medical transition after the age of 18. A social transition involves differences in dress and presentation, changing name and pronouns and changing official documents.

Appendix 2: Top Tips

The "Guide for Young Trans People in the UK" may be useful for transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming or questioning, and can be found on this link: https://www.mermaidsuk.org.uk/assets/media/17-15-02-A-Guide-For-Young-People.pdf

- Make sure you use the name and pronoun the individual asks you to use, and if you're unsure, ask.
- Don't worry if you make a mistake when referring to someone's name or pronouns, correct yourself, apologise briefly and continue with the conversation.
- Do not assume someone's gender identity, try to look past appearances. Use a "don't judge a book by its cover" approach.
- Allow students to self-identify, rather than trying to label them. They know who they are more than you.
- A transgender person's previous name or gender assigned at birth is private information and should not be shared without the individual's consent. Similarly, do not ask. Respect their boundaries.

Appendix 3: Youth Commission Referral Form

Where a student would benefit from further support, they can be referred to the Youth Commission by filling out the Referral Form.



Youth Commission Referral Form

Child/ Young Person's Name	Gender
Date of Birth	Disability
//	
School	Ethnicity
Address	Mobile Number
Parent/ Carer's Name	Parent / Carer's Contact Details
Is the Parent/ Carer aware of the referral? Yes No	Please ensure that the young person and parent / carer are aware of this referral. If not, please call or email Grace Lindsay (arace.lindsay@youthcommission.qa) to discuss.

Which service are you referring this child to?

One to one emotional support for young people 11 – 18 years	6 weekly sessions with a volunteer mentor
Bereavement support	Serious illness in the family
Advice for parent/ carer	Advice for parent/ carer
One to one support	One to one support
Relationship of the child to the deceased:	Relationship to person with a serious illness:
Targeted group work	Other
Bounce	
Indigo 🗆	Please specify the need:

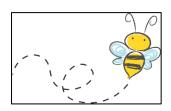
Please note we run bespoke groups throughout the year, which we will advertise as and when they are available.

The Sunflower Project aims to run a group annually for bereaved children aged 8-16 who have had a parent or sibling die. We would welcome referrals but the criteria for attending are very specific and we would recommend referrers speak to Denise Ozanne or Grace Lindsay before offering this to a family.

Appendix 4: Local Help and Advice

Further help, training and advice regarding Transgender guidance can be found through the following local agencies:









Liberate

https://liberate.gg/ Tel: 07839 202201

Email: hello@liberate.gg

SHARE (Sexual Health and Relationship Educators)

Les Ozouets Campus, St Peter Port, GY1 2UB.

https://www.gov.gg/SHARE

Tel: 733072

Email: share@education.gov.gg

Youth Commission

Les Ozouets Campus, St Peter Port, GY1 2UB.

https://www.youthcommission.gg/

Tel: 756099

Email: info@youthcommission.gg

School Nursing Service

Lukis House, Grange Road, St Peter Port, GY1 2QG.

https://www.gov.gg/schoolnurses

Tel: 725241

Email: HSSD-SchoolNurses@gov.gg