

United Against Bullying School Case Study: Celebrating diversity

How Fountains High School celebrated diversity

Context of our anti-bullying work

As a special needs school, we have a diverse school population that all have the unique differences. We wanted to be at the forefront of promoting, supporting and celebrating diversity in our school. We have also recently had more students being open about their sexuality and gender and were keen to make sure as a school we supported this in every aspect.

What we hoped to achieve

We wanted to have a day celebrating diversity in every aspect as well as nurture an environment that was willing and open to talk about and celebrate our high school community. To promote to our students and parents that we support all diversities and continue to create a school culture that supports diversity rather than it become something that could be used as a vulnerability for a student to be bullied on.

The action we took

How we could best do this was discussed in school council, they wanted a day of celebration and also suggested creating or posting displays in the school.

Some of our students who are part of the LGBTQ community asked for a group to be created where they could have a chance to discuss and celebrate each other by having some time to feel part of their own community. This group was created for lunchtimes where the students have space to do activities and discuss with each other any initiatives or ways to promote diversity and pride as well as a chance to be themselves and to feel less isolated.

We had a diversity day in conjunction with just like us, where students and staff could come dressed in bright colours in support of being unique. Students had the opportunity to learn all about diversity and it was implemented in lessons throughout the week.

Staff were able to also purchase rainbow badges for the charity just like us, to actively show their support to students by promoting diversity and raising money for the cause.

Impact and outcomes of the work

The students had the opportunity to express themselves and have a day where they knew that they were celebrated, many students expressed how they learnt a lot about other diverse people including celebrities.

One class had a student who often spoke about how they hated having a disability how it made them different and they didn't want to be. So the class staff created a board of celebrities from different diverse background based on disabilities, gender, sexuality race included themselves in the display and they are so proud that they will show you themselves on the display as you walk in to the classroom. It has helped teach our pupils to respect and celebrate others but to also have pride in themselves and who they are.

The LGBTQ group has given our students from this community a place to feel safe and a like minded group that they feel open sharing with which in turn has made them feel stronger to share with others and had input in what we could do for our diversity day, the students said it made them feel as though they could make a difference.

Staff also felt pride in supporting our students and representing the "adult community in a way which felt important to our students actively teaching them that is ok to be diverse and is something to be proud of not used against others.

This is something we want to continue to build on and hope is embedded in our school setting an example to our diverse school population.

What we have learned

The day was a great success however, we would like the students to have more involvement in the planning and leading of the day as they are the future generation of diversity. We are also aware that this something that needs to be embedded and not just one day in a school year so ideas to keep this momentum throughout the year is something we are still work shopping.