# Government will not rush gender identity guidance for schools following Supreme Court ruling



The UK Government has announced it will not rush the publication of updated guidance for schools on supporting children who are questioning their gender identity, following a recent Supreme Court ruling on the legal definition of a woman. The Education Secretary, Bridget Phillipson, emphasised the importance of providing accurate and carefully considered information to schools, rejecting calls for immediate action from opposition figures.

The draft guidance, originally published in December 2023 by the former Conservative government and subjected to public consultation until March last year, has remained on hold since the Labour Party took office. It addresses how schools and colleges should support pupils wishing to socially transition — including changes to names, pronouns, and clothing. It also advises that parents should generally be involved in such decisions, unless this involvement presents a significant risk of harm to the child. The draft further specifies that schools must maintain single-sex spaces for toilets, showers, and changing rooms.

During Education Questions in the House of Commons on Monday, Conservative shadow education secretary Laura Trott challenged the current administration for not having published the guidance yet. She said, “Despite the Education Secretary’s best attempts to rewrite history, on this side of the House we didn’t need a court to tell us biological sex was real.” Trott pressed Ms Phillipson on why the guidance had not been released, linking the delay to protecting women and girls.

Responding, Ms Phillipson accused Trott of “shameless opportunism” and underlined the sensitivity of the issue, noting the importance of supporting vulnerable children who may be experiencing distress. She highlighted her own background, including her work running a women’s refuge, to affirm her commitment to protecting the rights of women and girls.

“It is right that we take stock following the full and final review from Dr Cass, which we accept and should be the basis of how we take things forward,” Ms Phillipson said, referring to the comprehensive review that informs the forthcoming guidance. She added that the Conservative Party had already published draft guidance just months before the last general election.

The Supreme Court ruling clarified that the 2010 Equality Act, introduced under the Labour government, forms the legal basis for recognising biological sex in the context of single-sex services while upholding protections and dignity for all individuals, including transgender people.

Following the ruling, teaching unions expressed concerns regarding potential implications for their pupils. The NASUWT union passed an emergency motion cautioning against “knee-jerk policy changes” in response to the judgment.

In her exchange with Ms Trott, Ms Phillipson also dismissed calls for an apology to women holding “gender-critical” views over legal challenges and associated costs. She said, “From that question, I don’t think you would really know who was in government for the last 14 years,” pointing to the Conservative Party’s previous opportunities to clarify the issue.

As it stands, the Government plans to issue the finalised guidance later this year, aiming to balance the need for clarity in schools with the well-being of children navigating complex aspects of identity. The Irish News is reporting this latest development in the ongoing discussion surrounding gender identity and education policy in the UK.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://consult.education.gov.uk/equalities-political-impartiality-anti-bullying-team/gender-questioning-children-proposed-guidance/> - This URL supports the claim about the consultation on guidance for schools regarding gender-questioning children, which aims to help schools make lawful decisions in this context.
2. <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/dfe-commits-to-trans-guidance-this-year-after-supreme-court-ruling/> - This URL corroborates the information that the government plans to publish revised guidance for schools this year following a Supreme Court ruling.
3. <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9078/> - This briefing provides an overview of the support in place for gender-questioning children in schools and mentions the recent consultation on new guidance.
4. <https://www.edapt.org.uk/blog/2025/04/supreme-court-ruling-schools-sex-definition/> - This URL explains the implications of the Supreme Court ruling on the definition of 'sex' in schools, emphasizing that single-sex spaces must be based on biological sex.
5. <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2024/05/new-rshe-guidance-what-it-means-for-sex-education-lessons-in-schools/> - This guidance addresses changes in how sex education is taught in schools, including the treatment of gender identity in the curriculum.
6. <https://www.gov.uk/government/acts-of-parliament/equality-act-2010> - While not directly mentioned in the search results, this URL provides information about the Equality Act 2010, which forms the legal basis for recognizing biological sex in single-sex services.
7. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/government-will-not-be-hurried-on-school-guidance-after-gender-ruling-minister-TEEQEZAB7NKJFHJCPLDL5KCSZ4/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data