SEVENOAKS PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Coming Out Support

What is Sexual Orientation?

What is sexual orientation? - How sexual orientation is defined can be different for every person. Some people think of it as who we are sexually and romantically attracted to and who we have relationships with. Others may see it as describing the people we want to have sexual relationships with, but we may not have a romantic connection, or vice versa.

The more we unpick what it might mean to us as individuals, the more it becomes easier to sort through. Working out sexual orientation can be a confusing time, particularly if the people around us assume who we might be attracted to. This sometimes happens when people look at our gender expression and think we might be attracted to a certain gender when in fact these are separate things.

Sexual orientation is a spectrum or a colour wheel with lots of different ways of feeling attraction. This means that there aren't the two assumed choices - gay or straight. It shows that there are many ways we can explain and explore sexual orientation and that it can be something fluid.

There are lots of different words that we could use to describe our sexual orientation and it might feel a bit mind boggling and overwhelming! Lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, straight, fluid and queer, to name a few.

Ideas for Support/Conversations

There is no rush to decide who you are yet. - Feeling unsure about who you are is a normal part of growing up. There is no rush to announce who you are attracted to even if everyone else seems to be doing it. Take your time, breathe, and go easy on yourself.

- Find someone or a group of people you feel comfortable talking with and sharing your feelings.
- Talk to other LGB+ young people about their experiences.
- Find LGB+ role models whether that be celebrities or people in your community.
- Make a plan with trusted people about who you can talk to if coming out doesn't go how you anticipated.
- Prepare for questions from other people.
- Use the language and terms that feel most appropriate to you.
- Don't feel pressured to use a particular label for your sexual orientation.
- Don't Come out if you don't feel ready, safe to or are feeling pressured.
- Don't Panic! It is okay to be figuring this stuff out in your own time.

HELPFUL LINKS:

Allsortsyouth.org.uk https://www.thetrevorproject.org/ https://mermaidsuk.org.uk/