



"Live life in all its fullness"  
John 10:10

## **Guide for parents and carers - What is No Outsiders?**

What is an outsider? Someone who feels left out; who feels like they don't belong and is not welcome. We want schools to be teaching that there are no outsiders because everyone is welcome. A four year old understands what it feels like to be left out and no one wants to feel left out, so if a school is teaching that no one is left out, children feel safe.

As children grow up, they can sometimes learn that difference is a barrier to friendship. Our aim is to remove that barrier; to quote the Ofsted handbook (2019), we want children to see "difference is a positive, not a negative". After all, we are all different; none of us is exactly the same; we are all unique. As they move through school, we want children to explore their differences so that they feel comfortable in their own skin. Children should know who they are and feel proud to be who they are while also knowing that they are accepted without judgement. No child should feel they have to change who they are in order to fit in.

So how do we do this? We have an ethos that is backed up by language and behaviour. All children are taught from their first year in school that we are all different and we like that. Wouldn't the world be boring if we were all the same? In Reception and Year 1 we use picture books where characters are different, and we show that they are also friends and they play together. We make sure there are characters that look different and the hope is children will see themselves reflected in those books; "I am different too and that's ok"

As the children get older and move in to Key Stage 2 we explore reasons why some people might feel left out; after all, it is a fact that prejudice and discrimination exists, and children are going to experience it at some point. We need to prepare them, give them confidence to disagree when they hear prejudice and show them that they are not alone.



No Outsiders language gives children a way to challenge prejudice and show acceptance. Not only will they feel safe knowing they belong, they can show others they too are safe; “I will be your friend; you belong here. You don’t have to change, there are no outsiders.”

### **The Equality Act 2010: British law**

Difference is protected under British law; there are very clear aims in the Equality Act that provide guidance for schools. As public bodies, we need to:

- Have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

And who are those different people? The Equality Act references nine ‘protected characteristics’; these are groups of people. No one should face discrimination because of:

- Race
- Religion
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Age
- Disabilities
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage of civil partnership

So how do we talk about these different groups in an age appropriate way to young primary school children? We use picture books that show different people in stories and we make sure children understand no matter who you are, you are welcome in our school.

This is why No Outsiders works so well in a primary school setting. The lesson plans do not explore the individual protected characteristics; there is not a lesson on race, a different lesson on religion and another on sexual orientation. In Key Stage 1 there are no discussions about how to be gay or lesbian and what those words mean; there is no discussion about gender identity or how to be transgender; there is no discussion about what race means or what it means to be black, white or brown, and no discussion about the religion a five or six year old may follow.

What *is* discussed in all the lessons, through the picture books used, is difference. All the characters we see in the books are different and they all play together. There are no discussions about what sexual orientation means but there is a story that shows two mummies playing with their daughter. There is no discussion about what race means but there is a book where a black family celebrate their different hair and there are other stories where children who are different race are seen playing and working together. There is no discussion about gender identity but there are stories where boys and girls play and work together and where gender stereotypes are challenged (two boys are best friends, one loves playing trucks, the other loves playing dolls. This is not explained, questioned or challenged, it’s just who they are).



As children get older, we do talk about ways we might be different or ways others might be different to us and within those discussions we encourage children to be proud of who they are. We are not encouraging any child to question their race, religion or gender identity; rather we are encouraging children to know and accept the person they are, and we will show they are welcome without judgement in school.



## **Picture books used in No Outsiders**

Here is a brief explanation of why each book was chosen and how it can be used to support a No Outsiders ethos. Of course, each of the books can also be used as a standalone story book, and much pleasure can be derived from reading it with a child.

### **EYFS**

The aims in EYFS is to introduce the No Outsiders ethos using very simplistic language; we are all different and we are all friends. There is nothing more complicated in the EYFS plans than the message that it's ok to be you and you may be different to me, but that's ok too.

**"You choose"** encourages children to choose their favourite place to live, favourite transport, favourite food etc and shows that we all like different things. This is explored further in **"Red Rockets and Rainbow jelly"** where characters Nick and Sue are shown liking different things throughout the book, but conclude by saying they like each other. **"Hello Hello"** shows different animals with a range of shape and colour who all say 'hello' and no one is left out. **The Family Book** shows children that there are many types of family and then we draw our own family (an exercise which has been done in Reception for years- it's nothing new!) and **"Mommy Mamma and Me"** allows children to understand some families have two mums (or two Dads) ; we talk about the things Mommy and Mamma do with their child and ask if our own families do similar things (go to the park, drink juice, kiss goodnight). Finally, **"Blue Chameleon"** shows a lonely chameleon trying to make friends by changing shape and colour; he thinks you have to look like someone to be friends. At the end Chameleon realises you can be yourself and you don't have to change.

### **Year 1**

In Year One we develop the understanding of difference to consider ways in which we might be different and how that can sometimes make you feel. The classic story of **"Elmer"** shows an elephant who decides to hide his difference but realises at the end he should celebrate it. **"Going to the volcano"** takes the children on a joyful expedition to an erupting volcano, and the is chosen for its perfect call-and-response narrative and obvious role play opportunity. The images show a huge range of different characters working together so that no one is left out. **"Want to play trucks"** focuses on conversations between Jack and Alex, one of whom likes to play with dolls and the other with trucks; "You can't wear a tutu and drive a crane," argues Jack, and his reasoning is that, "it wouldn't fit in the driver's seat." A compromise is made where the doll wears dungarees instead and then Jack and Alex go for an ice cream, This lesson teaches children to find solutions to conflict and subtly explores gender expectations at the same time. **"Hair it's a family affair"** encourages children to celebrate their family and ways their family might be different; the family in the story (who happen to be African Caribbean) have different hair and the character is proud to belong. **"My world your world"** explores ways two children are different before finding a way they are similar. There is a wonderful film clip posted by a school on twitter showing children doing exactly this in response to this book; "I like peas, he likes carrots but we both like pizza!" Finally **"Errol's garden"** is a simple celebration of team work, It has been chosen for no other reason than the main character knocking on his very diverse set of neighbours' doors asking for help and everyone joins in!



## Year Two

**“Can I join your club”** explores how Duck feels when animals exclude him from their clubs for not being like them. Duck sets up his own club and everyone is welcome, regardless of the animal noises they make. **“How to be a lion”** shows children that not all lions behave in the same way, Leo is gentle and makes friends with a duck. This book is the first in the scheme to explore peer pressure to behave in a certain way as the other lions tell Leo be ‘more lion’ the children are encouraged to empathise with Leo and find a solution. **“The great big book of families”** is a celebration of diversity in the UK today; there are families represented but there are also houses, schools, jobs, festivals; it’s a great way to introduce the word and meaning of diversity. **“Amazing”** is a snapshot of friendship where the main character uses a wheelchair but the disability is never mentioned allowing us to demonstrate it’s not an issue. **“What the Jackdaw saw”** is a subtle way to promote awareness of communication needs; to ensure all the animals can understand him, the Jackdaw learns to sign with his wings. Finally, **“We are all welcome”** feels like it was written for a No Outsiders lesson; the text shows us a diverse class of children who come to school with diverse families, where everyone is welcome.

## Year 3

**“This is our house”** is a perfect story to introduce a No Outsiders ethos to a school. In the story, George shuts people out and gives reasons why; because they wear glasses, because they are girls, because they like tunnels. When it is pointed out to George that he has red hair and could also face discrimination, the penny drops; “This house is for everyone!” he says. This story can be referenced if we talk about a terrorist attacks; for example if asked by a child why terrorists kill people; “Because they didn’t understand,” might be the response. In the story, George doesn’t understand, but once it is explained, he changes his mind; anyone can change their mind. **“We are all wonders”** is a beautiful story about a boy with facial disfigurement; he is bullied and he dreams of running away; ‘What would happen in our school?’, the children are asked to consider, ‘What would we say if we heard someone being unkind?’ We talk about people choosing to be a bystander. **“The bad seed”** is the first text in the scheme to overtly explore mental health and consequence of actions; the seed character is “bad” but clearly, the character is also very unhappy and we find out why as the story unfolds. By talking about his feelings, the bad seed decides to make a change in his life; it’s not easy but he takes it ‘one day at a time’. In the lesson we talk about recognising feelings and finding strategies when we feel overpowered by them. Stereotypes are explored in **“The truth about old people”**; what is a stereotype, how do we recognise a stereotype and what can we do if we hear someone being discriminatory? In **“The Hueys and the new jumper”**, the Hueys are all the same but one day Rupert knits an orange jumper; this causes much consternation and Rupert is treated as an outsider until Gillespi also wears an orange jumper. Gradually the Hueys learn it’s ok to be different. The final Year 3 book is **“Planet Omar Accidental trouble magnet”** provides opportunities for discussion after each chapter about stereotypes, racism, Islamophobia and bullying. Mental health is also referenced as the central character has an imaginary friend.



## Year 4

**“Along came a different”** provides opportunity to discuss attitudes towards race and racism; the red shapes don’t like the blue shapes who in turn don’t like the yellow shapes or the red shapes. At the key point of the story, the shapes draw up a set of segregation rules which provides a basis to work from; what do we think of these rules? How can we rewrite them? **“Dogs don’t do ballet”** teaches children to go for their dreams; everyone tells a dog that he can’t be a ballerina, but he proves in the end you can be what you want to be. In **“Red: a crayon’s story”**, a crayon who looks red can only colour in blue. This is very distressing for him as he knows he should be red, but he cannot get it “right”. For us this tale is a fantastic stimulus for discussion about identity and expectations and for teaching children to be who you are. **“Aalfred and Aalbert”** gently shows how two aardvarks get together, helped by a small blue bird. Some children may realise the aardvarks in the story are two males, but that is not the focus of the lesson, rather the focus is recognising loneliness, choosing to help others, finding common ground and understanding how companionship affects mental health. **“When sadness comes to call”** picks up from “The bad seed” used in Year 3 and explores further how to recognise feelings of sadness and their impact. The lesson focuses on good mental health and how it can be achieved. **“Julian is a mermaid”** tells the story of a small boy wanting to be a mermaid. The key to the story is Nan’s attitude to her grandson; the reader is led to believe she is going to tell him off for dressing up, but instead she supports and helps him. It is a heartwarming story of difference and acceptance.

## Year 5

**“Kenny lives with Erica and Martina”** is a book that focuses on attitudes towards LGBT people and homophobia to tell a story of a family who are literally made into outsiders when a wall is built to block them from the street. The ending is thought provoking and enables a class to ask questions about discrimination and form responses. **“The suitcase”** is a beautiful exploration of what it might feel like to be a refugee; during the story, negative attitudes towards refugees are highlighted but the positive ending encourages us to teach about those attitudes changing. **“Mixed”** leads on from “Along came a different” in Year 4, but this time rather than just writing a set of rules to segregate, the colours construct physical walls and fences to separate people of different race. When two different colours fall in love their example serves as a force to alter perceptions. **“How to heal a broken wing”** is an Amnesty International book that shows a boy choosing to help a fallen bird; he is the only one to stop and help. We return to the concept first raised in Year 3 of choosing to be (or not to be) a bystander. **“The girls”** has a focus on positive representation of different genders, but also provides a stimulus for discussing friendship and recognising the importance of companionship. The story therefore provides another mental health reference and there is also a subtle LGBT moment. **“And Tango makes three”** is a story about a loving family of penguins adopting a chick, and the family happens to consist of two males. Children consider why this book has been banned in some territories (Hong Kong; Singapore). In doing this, children begin to recognise that there are differences of opinion in the world about LGBT equality and children are encouraged to make up their own mind about the situation.



## Year 6

The Year 6 books have a theme of acceptance. “**King of the sky**” beautifully explores feelings of being an outsider from the perspective of a young refugee boy. He forms a friendship with an elderly man who teaches the boy to work with homing pigeons; through the pigeons, the boy learns to feel a sense of belonging. “**The only way is badger**” tells of a badger who builds a wall across the forest and instructs the other animals to be “more badger”. If they fail, they are thrown over the wall. The ending of the story provides much material for discussions about conciliatory behaviour and consequences of actions. “**Leaf**” describes fears about the unknown and lack of confidence to find out. A polar bear arrives on an island and rather than talking to him, the other animals hide and talk about him. This theme is revisited in “**The Island**” which is a powerful study of the power one group of people has over another and the dire consequences of unchecked prejudice. “**Introducing Teddy**” is a wonderful tale of a teddy bear who comes out as trans half way through the story. All of teddy’s friends accept her as Tilly, no-one questions, and this is the focus of the lesson. The final book in the scheme, “**A day in the life of Marlon Bundo**” provides a fantastic opportunity to talk about democracy, prejudice and LGBT equality. A rabbit in the white house wants to marry another male bunny and while all the other animals celebrate the wedding, the leader of the animals says two male bunnies marrying is against the law. The animals have a vote to see if the law should be changed. The focus of the lesson is how democracy works.

## **Making sure children feel safe: how to talk about the world around us**

The world can be a scary place for a young child. Our children are not wrapped in cotton wool, nor are they cocooned from the world around them. As they grow they make judgements and form reasoning about everything they see and hear; adult and older sibling conversations, TV and radio news, YouTube videos and social media content... every day our children are exploring and making sense of the world around them.

So how do we show children the good that exists around the world? We cannot shield our children from all the negative things, but we can counter it by filling their world with stories of community cohesion, acts of kindness, empathy, hope and confidence in a world filled with diversity and difference, where they belong. Our aim is for children to leave school confident that they have a contribution make to that world.

So how do we do it? We simply find stories children can relate to and demonstrate the world is full of great stories where different people get along and help each other.

The picture books are a great start; they build a foundation where an understanding of difference is accepted. But we also need real life stories to demonstrate those positive stories aren’t just in books. Here is where the assembly pictures come in. Each class will have a No Outsiders assembly, once every fortnight, where we focus on a photo. The aim of the pictures is to show No Outsiders is everywhere!

We can also use No Outsiders assemblies to navigate challenging and difficult conversations around tragic events such as terrorist attacks. Children hear about terrorism, some may be directly or



indirectly affected, so how do we explain to a child the reasons behind an attack while retaining hope and a confidence in the child that 'It will be ok'?

A child in a school assembly once asked, "Why do the terrorists kill? Why do they want to hurt us?" The reply was, "Because not everyone understands about No Outsiders yet. Not everyone agrees with us, they don't understand yet that it's ok to be different; they weren't lucky enough to go to a school like ours where we talk about being different and we love being different. Some people think that we should all be the same – same skin, same religion, the same kind of person. That's the opposite to us; we know it's great to have different skin, different religion, be different kinds of people, but the person who carried out the attack hasn't heard that yet – they don't understand.

So what do we do about that? This is why it's really important that we tell everyone we meet about how we love difference and we're not scared of it. And if we hear someone say, "You can't be friends with them because they are different," or, "You don't belong here because you are different," we stand up and say that that's not true! We tell them about our school and it's brilliant because we are all different and we all get along.

But in the end, it's important to remember that one person caused the attack; just one person didn't understand. But there are thousands, millions of people who do understand and who are with us. Millions of people who would love our school and our No Outsider's ethos. Those are the people we need to remember, not the one person who didn't understand. There are many, many more people who are with us."

Here are some examples of assembly pictures used by schools and the lesson plans with discussion points that go with them. These make great family discussions and it's wonderful for children to be able to talk at home about what they have discussed in school.

Masai Mara National Reserve in Kenya has lots of animals including zebras. A baby zebra has been born who is a bit different to other zebras; this zebra has spots instead of stripes. The picture shows the baby zebra walking with its mother.



The zebra is making national news. It is not the first time this has happened but it is very rare. Life might be a little more difficult for the zebra, for example it may attract more flies as they don't like stripes but won't be put off by this spotted skin. Also the zebra will stand out from other zebras, making it more noticeable to predators.

However, research in South Africa found that in other cases where zebra's looked different, they were accepted and they lived happily with the herds.

What do you see in the picture?

Where is it taken?

What is similar about the two animals, what is different?



Explain the story

- what does a zebra usually look like?
- what is different about this baby zebra?
- has the mother abandoned her baby because it is different? why not?
- what does this show us about the mother zebra?
- do you think the other zebras will accept this different zebra?
- should the zebra try and grow some stripes?
- what would you say to the zebra?
- what can we learn from the zebra herd in this reserve?
- what can we learn from this zebra?
- why is this story about No Outsiders?



A doll maker has started making dolls that look different, for children who also look different. The doll maker works in a hospital with children who have cancer and uses dolls in her work with the children. But she noticed that the dolls had thick hair and looked healthy, in comparison to many of the children she was working with.

The doll maker wants children to understand they are beautiful, but she feels it is difficult to make a child understand they are beautiful when "they can't see themselves in anything that's supposed to look like them."

She raised money to fund her dolls and she has been inundated with requests from parents who want their children to have dolls that look like them. The story went viral and lots of messages of support came in. One person on twitter wrote, "It allows the children to realise it's ok to be different."

What do you see in the picture?

What do you notice about the children and their dolls?

Why do you think the dolls look different?

Explain the story

- what is a doll for?
- why do children like playing with dolls?
- why do you think this doll maker decided to make dolls that looked different?
- look at the faces of the children in the picture, how do you think they feel about their dolls?
- why do you think the children love their new dolls?
- why is the doll maker trying to make children who look different understand they are beautiful?
- "They can't see themselves in anything that's supposed to look like them." What does this mean?



How do we fix this?

- what can we learn from the doll maker?
- why is this story about No Outsiders?

A mural celebrating diversity in the NHS has been painted in East London. Members of the public were invited to create different flowers to represent all the different nationalities that are working in the NHS. There are 200 flowers in the mural.



The artist, Atma, says in the video, "Every single flower tells a story. It has been created by all sorts of people; old people, young people, artists, non-artists, families, schools, and I put the artwork together. What makes this piece very special is that every flower is different and it's a strong metaphor to say that what makes the NHS really rich is the diversity of people who work for it."

A doctor interviewed in the link above says, "it's important for our patients to be able to see themselves in the people who care for them."

- What is the NHS, who is it for?
- Has anyone been to a hospital? Did all the nurses and doctors look exactly the same or were they different?
- What is diversity?
- There are 200 flowers in this display, what does this show us about the NHS?
- Why do you think Atma wanted so many different people to contribute to the mural?
- Why do you think Atma asked people to create flowers instead of their faces or instead of a big map or different objects? What is it about a flower?
- Why do you think the mural shows a person holding a sign that reads, "One NHS"?
- "It's important for our patients to be able to see themselves in the people who care for them." What does the doctor mean by this?
- What can we learn from the artist, Atma? Why is this a story about No Outsiders?



## **Answering difficult questions from children**

Children are often very matter of fact about diversity and difference. Children have an innate sense of justice that shines through when they talk about being different and being left out. As adults we can complicate issues by over thinking where actually the answer to what we perceive as difficult or embarrassing questions is a very simple one. The following are questions you may be asked by children about issues covered in No Outsiders, with suggested answers.

### **Why does he have different skin colour to me?**

Because we are all different; isn't that great! Imagine how boring the world would be if we all looked the same. We all have differences; freckles, hair, skin colour is just another brilliant way we are different.

### **Why can't she walk, why does she have to have a wheel chair?**

Because her body works in a different way; we are all different and that's great – we can still be friends.

### **What does gay / lesbian mean?**

Gay is where two men love each other and lesbian is where two women love each other.

### **I love my dad, we are both male, does that mean we are gay?**

No, that's different. Gay means when two men love each other like a mum and dad.

### **Why does she have two mummies? Why doesn't she have a mum and dad?**

Because all families are different. Some families have a mum and dad, some have just a mum or just a dad, some children are looked after by their grandparents, some families have two mums or two dads.

### **How can two men have a baby?**

There are lots of different ways of having children; for example some babies are adopted or fostered. All families are different. The most important thing in a family is love. It doesn't matter who the parents are.

### **Alicia used to be a boy but now he says he's Alicia. Can you change from a boy to a girl?**

Fantastic! Good for Alicia that she can finally be herself. Alicia hasn't changed, she used to think she had to try to be a boy but now she knows she can be Alicia. I'm really please for her. We're all different aren't we; we just need to make sure Alicia knows we accept her now she's being true to herself.

For more information on No Outsiders go to [www.no-outsiders.com](http://www.no-outsiders.com)