



LGBT+ Teachers In Ireland Experiences In Primary School

Dr. Trevor O' Brien

Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, Ireland

Abstract

While legislation has been introduced in recent years to protect the rights of LGBT+ teachers in Ireland, teachers' perspectives on the current reality are mixed and challenges still exist. Some teachers are comfortable stating their sexuality in schools, while others are not. This paper focuses on the views of seven primary school teachers, who discussed their experiences as LGBT+ employees in Irish schools during semi-structured interviews. The findings point to the importance of effective leadership as a means to make schools truly inclusive for all. The teachers also reported the wider school context being important including colleagues' attitudes towards inclusion and, in particular, LGBT+ issues. The need for school-wide professional learning was seen as central to becoming a truly inclusive school, whereby teachers are equipped with the skills and knowledge to combat discrimination in all its forms. Finally, the study highlights the issue of LGBT+ teacher well-being and how this can be affected by the level of support shown to teachers in schools.

Keywords: Inclusion; Irish Education; Leadership; LGBT+ teachers; Professional Learning;