just like us
THE LGBT+ YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHARITY



2024 Impact report

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Foreword

Over the past few years, our research has shown consistent struggles for LGBT+ young people in schools and as they transition into early adulthood, including increased rates of bullying, depression and panic attacks.

Whatsmore, our brand new research report (*LGBT+ Parents report, 2024)* has highlighted the stigma faced by LGBT+ parents and the ongoing struggles for children growing up in LGBT+ families today.

LGBT+ young people and those in LGBT+ families need schools to be inclusive places where they feel safe and accepted. Unfortunately schools across the UK are facing reduced funding, increased workloads and intense scrutiny over LGBT+ education. It is therefore unsuprising that at the start of this year, teachers reported being just as uncomfortable discussing LGBT+ topics with pupils as they were two years ago.

Just Like Us are here to help - as the LGBT+ young peoples charity we are providing support to schools and young people across the UK.

I'm thrilled to report that 2023-24 has been our best year yet. We've supported more young people than ever before, and have seen a tremendous growth in the number of schools engaging with us. 7,400+ schools are now working with Just Like Us to provide strong, positive, LGBT+ messaging for their pupils, ensuring every child knows that being LGBT+ is something to be celebrated.

Our 2024 Impact Report allows us to take stock on the 2023-24 academic year, reflect on our successes, and be inspired to keep pushing forward in the year ahead. Together, we will make sure every LGBT+ young person is able to thrive.

Laura Mackay,
CEO of
Just Like Us



2024 highlights

7,468

schools celebrated LGBT+ inclusion through School Diversity Week

55,584

students heard positive LGBT+ messaging from a Just Like Us school talk

443

young people were supported to thrive through our Ambassador Programme

410

schools benefitted from community, training and resources on our Pride Groups programme

1

groundbreaking research report on the experience of LGBT+ parents and their young people in schools



2

brand new patrons. Actor Jonathan Bailey received the JustGiving Celebrity Fundraiser of the Year award for raising £33,452 by running a half marathon for Just Like Us. And triple Paralympic Gold medallist Lauren Rowles gave a talk to primary pupils during School Diversity Week, speaking about being a disabled LGBT+ athlete and parent, which featured on Sky Sports News.

“If even one member of the community is made to feel safer, and that they belong, that is more valuable than anything you can do for that individual.”

- Hannah Semple, a teacher at Roundwood Park School



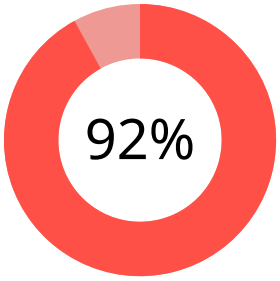
Supporting 18 to 25 year olds

443 young ambassadors supported to thrive

This year, more 18 to 25 year olds took part in our Ambassador Programme than ever before; they:

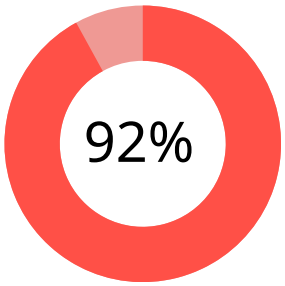
- Wrote 52 articles for national and local press, championing LGBT+ equality
- Spoke on panels 33 times, ensuring young LGBT+ people's voices are heard in UK workplaces
- Attended skills workshops 249 times including interview skills, public speaking & anti-racism training
- Took charge of their careers; 67 ambassadors joined our mentoring scheme to be matched with LGBT+ mentors in fields of interest to them, spanning arts, science, engineering and more

Empowered to lead change



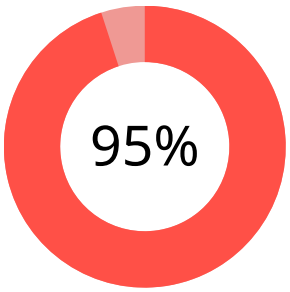
feel more empowered to do something for themselves or others as a result of being an ambassador

Equipped with key skills



feel more employable as a result of being an ambassador

Part of a community



know more LGBT+ young people as a result of being an ambassador

“Having an LGBT+ mentor has been invaluable to openly discuss ideas for my career with someone that understands the nuances of being a queer neurodivergent person in my chosen industry. My mentor has consistently uplifted me, supported my ideas, given brilliant constructive criticism and provided opportunities I would not have had access to otherwise.”

- Nat, a Just Like Us ambassador



Bringing representation to our communities



An additional 227 LGBT+ young people aged 18 to 25 joined our Ambassador Programme for the first time this year.

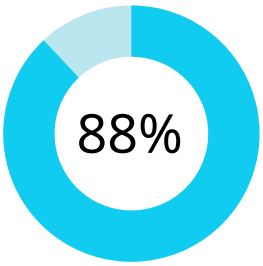
We delivered ambassador training in London, Manchester, Cardiff, Birmingham and Newcastle as well as three online training sessions.

Our training sessions enable these young people to become positive role models in school communities. They then headed into secondary schools across the UK, virtually and in person, to show every pupil that being LGBT+ is something to be celebrated.

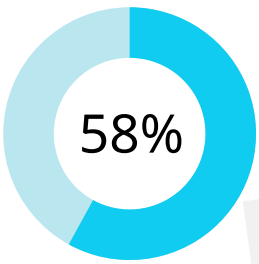
Sharing their personal stories of growing up LGBT+, their school talks inspired allyship and busted myths.

55,554 pupils heard positive LGBT+ stories

- Our young ambassadors delivered 375 talks to 232 schools
- 15,000 pupils met an LGBT+ person for the first time (knowingly) at one of our school talks, our estimations show
- 48% of pupils and 50% of teachers said personal stories were their favourite part of the talk



of teachers said the talk had increased pupils' understanding of LGBT+ people and their lives



of talks were virtual, bringing vital LGBT+ representation to remote schools



“In my story, one thing I talk about is the effect Catholicism has had on my journey as a young queer woman.

Recently, I was able to do a talk at a school with a widely religious population, and afterward, the teacher who organised the talk with Just Like Us told us that some students were facing issues with acceptance of LGBT+ people because of religion.

By just sharing my experience and speaking about how allyship and faith can coexist and support one another, I was reaching an audience who may have never seen that point of view before.”

- Victoria, a Just Like Us Ambassador



"I planned a Pride celebration and I wanted the pupils to have a guest speaker on LGBTQ+ in order to make real life links.

Our young people thought that the speakers were very brave for talking about how they had been bullied due to their identities and how they had overcome this to deliver talks to other young people.

Our students really enjoyed the workshop and we had lots of questions afterwards.

I feel that we have already seen a reduction in negativity."

- Lee-Ann, a teacher in Durham

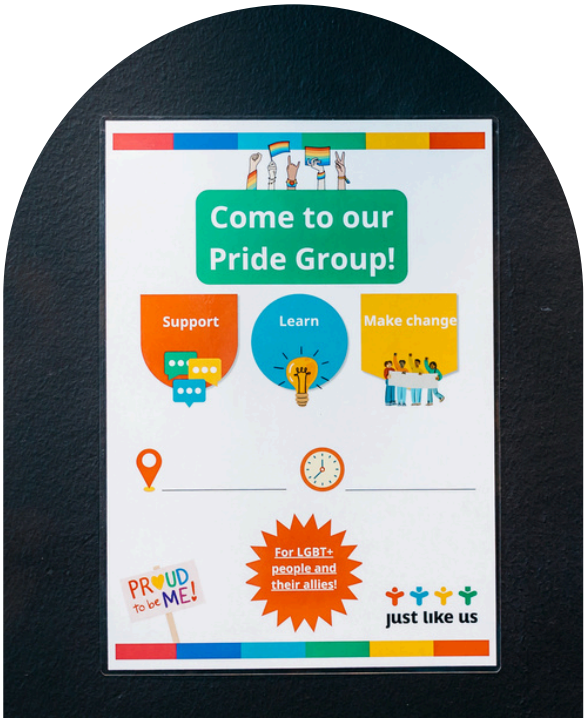


Fostering community in schools

Pride Groups are Just Like Us' LGBT+ and ally clubs in schools across the UK, led by pupils for pupils.

We help schools to build community and support pupil wellbeing, empowering LGBT+ young people to lead the changes they want to see in their schools.

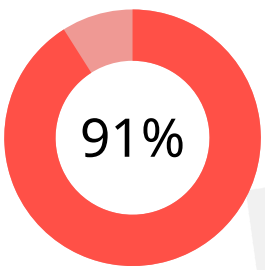
- 410 schools had a Just Like Us Pride Group this year; 128 of them were new this year
- 347 Staff Champions registered to support their LGBT+ pupils
- 86 new pupil leaders were trained to take charge of the changes they want to see in their schools
- 62 faith schools took part in the programme, showing that LGBT+ inclusion belongs in every school



of Pride Group pupils said they are able to take part in activities that make things better for the LGBT+ community

We launched Allies Week

We launched the first Allies Week in January 2024, empowering pupils to become active allies for their LGBT+ peers.



of teachers said that having the group had changed wider school policy and practice

“Since starting the group, we have had a number of students who wear pride badges. Then they asked for a variety of pride flags on badges which I ordered - including ally badges.

Over 10% of our school pupil population now wear badges and most of our teaching staff have a pride badge on their lanyard. Queer students know they are safe with those members of staff and other students and like the visibility of other members around school.”

- *Sam, a teacher at Dallam School*

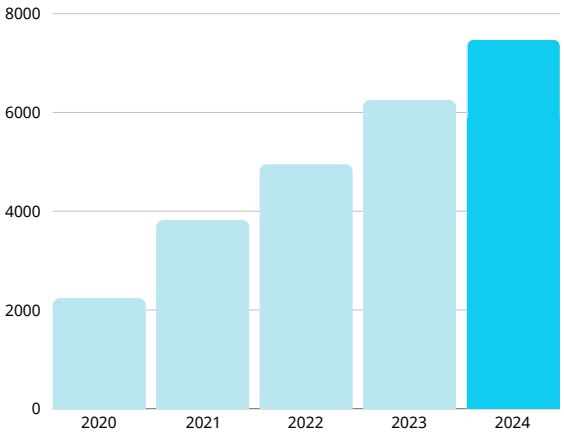


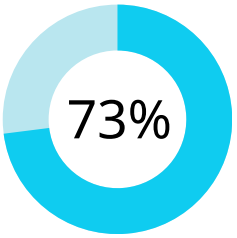
“I used to have trouble with my identity and I thought I was alone in my school, but when the pride group started, I was shocked to see so many people.”

a Pride Group member

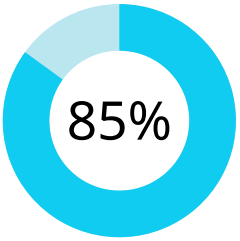
Reaching all corners of the UK

7,468 schools signed up





of UK secondary schools and 12% of UK primary schools are now signed up to School Diversity Week



of teachers feel better able to support LGBT+ pupils and families in their school as a result of School Diversity Week

This year has been our biggest-ever School Diversity Week. Our campaign reached 7,468 primary and secondary schools, from Cornwall to the Scottish Highlands.

Our online school resource portal now hosts more than 150 free and inclusive educational resources, including:

- LGBT+ reading lists for all ages
- Fun and fabulous poster packs
- Assemblies highlighting the importance of allyship
- Curriculum resources from LGBT+ poetry to LGBT+ history

We also partnered with Elmer the Patchwork Elephant, releasing new Elmer-themed resources to bring School Diversity Week to 2,454 primary schools; more than ever before



“School Diversity Week has promoted inclusivity and acceptance, reduced prejudice and allowed us to celebrate differences in our school community. It has educated both students and staff about different cultures, identities, and backgrounds, promoting understanding and acceptance.

Encouraging the celebration of various cultures and identities fosters an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued.

School Diversity Week provides students with global competence – preparing them for a global society. In an increasingly interconnected world, understanding and appreciating diversity is crucial for personal and professional success.”

- Niamh Sloan, a teacher at St. Paul's CE Primary School



Thank you

We know that growing up LGBT+ can still be unimaginably tough.

Fortunately, our programmes are changing the landscape in the UK, ensuring that every child can grow up feeling safe and proud to be who they are.

We couldn't do this without the generous help of all of our supporters.

Every supporter, volunteer and teacher who has supported Just Like Us across the last year has had an enormous impact on the lives of young LGBT+ people, and we can't thank you enough.



Want to help every LGBT+ young person thrive?

We've had an incredible year, but there's still so much to do.

Together, we can make sure that every child grows up knowing that being LGBT+ is something to be celebrated.

Donate now

Volunteer

18-25 and LGBT+? Sign up now to become a volunteer ambassador, and use your voice to lead change, develop skills and find community.

Get your school involved

Sign up for School Diversity Week and Pride Groups for free and bring LGBT+ inclusion to your school.

just like us

THE LGBT+ YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHARITY

Just Like Us is a registered charity (CIO) in England and Wales #1165194