

Tackling Gender Stereotypes and Sexism

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"Some of the boys make comments on a lot of the girls in our year bodies and the girls just have to ignore it because no one thinks it's a big deal. The boys also slap the girls butts and touch their breasts without any consent." - Female student "I was in a French lesson in year 8 and a boy sitting next to me kept groping my bum and tried moving his hand to my breast." - Female student "Boys often lift skirts up and whistle and treat girls in a sexual manner and nothing gets done about it." - Female student "A boy touched my bum and try to touch my boob. I felt uncomfortable and I didn't tell him because I was scared but I tried to ignore him." - Female student "Some of the boys in my primary would all bump behind girls when they weren't looking." - Male student "Some of the boys in my primary would all bump behind girls when they weren't looking." - Male student "A female pupil disclosed a classmate had groped her at lunch time. She was disciplined when she retaliated but did not want to tell a male colleague about the incident." - Secondary school teacher "Boys touch girls' breasts in corridors and at lunch break times, they all seem to find this normal." - Secondary school teacher "I have seen this occurring in school when a teacher has told somebody else to 'man up', this is really sexist as girls (female) can also become braver than boys (male). Boys have also told girls that they are not allowed to play sports such as football because it's a 'boys sport'." - Male student "Often comes over with homophobic boys being called 'gay' if they like things seen as girly or show emotion." - Secondary school teacher "Teaching a subject with classes dominated in number by boys I am often trying to stay conversations about girls that are degrading, sexualised and offensive." - Secondary school teacher "I have heard a male member of staff saying to another member of staff 'Don't be such a girl' in a derogative manner, which is particularly strange because we work in a girls school." - Secondary school teacher "In a staff briefing, staff as a whole were told to take 'Man Up Pills' in regards to high levels of staff sickness and staff feeling tired." - Secondary school teacher "Frequent sexist and misogynistic language used by a number of boys about and towards female staff and pupils. Very worrying sense of entitlement to belittle and make sexually unacceptable/breasting comments to females." - Teacher at Pupil Referral Unit "I thought I was going to fail maths and science but the teacher told me it's okay because girls tend to be better at expressive lessons." - Female student "I wanted to play football but because I'm a girl they said the I'm not as good as the boys and how I'm too 'weak' to play. This happened in primary school." - Female student "All my secondary school girls were not allowed to play rugby or other stereotypically male sports like football instead we had to do dance and gymnastics which are sports the boys never had to do." - Female student "I love to play football with the boys as I did this on a weekend and played to their standard, but in a PE lesson I had to go with the girls group." - Female student "I was told not to bring the table in from the other classroom for me to use and rather the teacher asked a boy to lift it for me. Even though I was perfectly capable of doing it myself." - Female student "In things like PE it was always girls play one sport boys play another. I always liked sport until I moved up in secondary school." - Female student "I didn't like playing football and preferred spending time with girls or was teased because of that." - Male student "Was constantly bullied for being in the choir and enjoying drama. As a result of this I lost my passion for the arts." - Male student "A group of boys was bullying a kid in a lower year because of his love for drama. He said a lot of his friends put a stop to it fairly quickly but the school couldn't do anything about it." - Male student "I was in a PE lesson and a boy put the books back in the cupboard but the teacher said 'No, you're a girl'." - Male student "Once during an observation, I was told that a boy was 'washing' 'books' in the water tray. I should have put knights to engage the boys. Because of this one of the boys will grow up to be fathers who might be his own children. An childcare centres females only." - Teacher "I teach design and technology. Every day I see sexist slurs toward mockery being only for girls and engineering for boys and that's coming from other teachers." - Secondary school teacher "Assumption as a male I want to become SLT (Senior Leadership Team)." - Primary school teacher

“It’s just everywhere”

A study on sexism in schools – and how we tackle it



Report:

“It’s just everywhere”: A study on sexism in schools and how we tackle it

UK Feminista and the National Education Union
2017

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Gender stereotyping

- A quarter of all secondary school teachers say they witness gender stereotyping and discrimination in their school on a daily basis, and a **further quarter** say they witness it on a weekly basis.

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“Teachers painting children’s nails at the Christmas fair commented negatively / implying in a humorous way how this was a strange thing to do when a boy asked for his nails to be painted.”

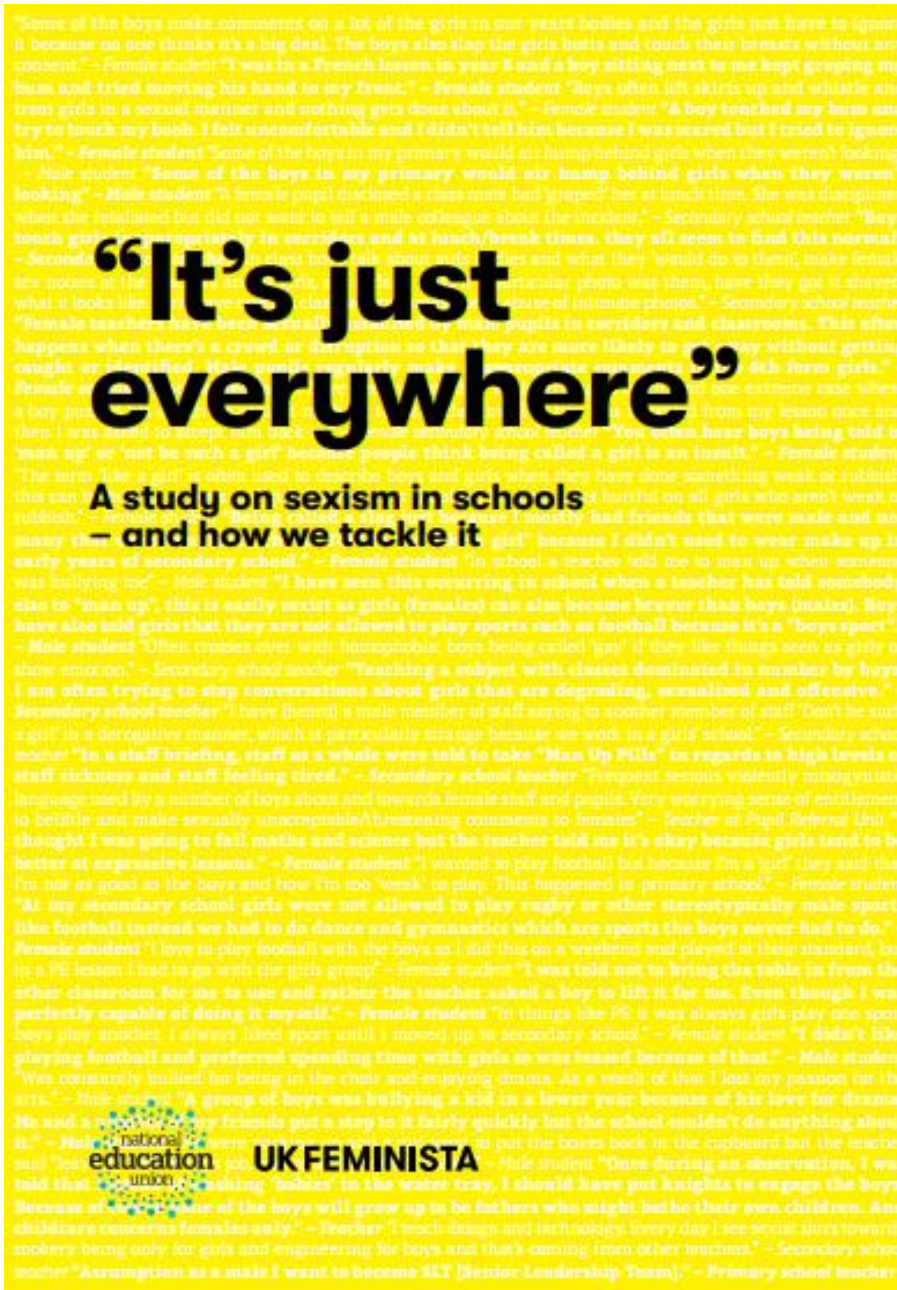
– Primary school teacher



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Sexist language

- **66%** of female students and **37%** of male students in mixed-sex sixth forms have experienced or witnessed the use of **sexist language** in school
- **64%** of teachers in mixed-sex schools hear **sexist language** in school on at least a weekly basis.

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“You often hear boys being told to ‘man up’ or ‘not be such a girl’ because people think being called a girl is an insult.”

– Female student

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“Boys often lift skirts up and whistle and treat girls in a sexual manner and nothing gets done about it.”

– Female student

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Resources for Teachers



How to take a whole school approach

The 'gold standard' approach to tackling sexism in schools.



Tips for secondary school teachers

Here's how you can tackle sexism in the classroom.



Tips for primary school teachers

Ideas for action to challenge sexism in the primary classroom.



Email: kat@ukfeminista.org.uk

Web: www.ukfeminista.org.uk

Twitter: [@UK_Feminista](https://twitter.com/UK_Feminista)

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