

Tips for primary school teachers

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

1. Tackle gender stereotyping

Gender stereotypes can be challenged through the resources students use, the activities they do, the visual environment they see each day and the conversations they have with teachers and peers. For example, when you see or hear gender stereotyping in the classroom, use it as a 'teachable moment' – an opportunity to have a discussion with students on the issue. Encourage inclusive language (e.g. 'firefighter' rather than 'fireman'), and use display boards to counter stereotypical images and provide a diverse range of role models.

2. Challenge sexist language

Ensure you are familiar with your school's policy and procedures relating to sexist language. Consistently challenge sexist language when you hear it and, where appropriate, use incidents as 'teachable moments' by having a discussion with the class about the language and the impact it has.

3. Promote equal participation

Monitor students' participation in activities and group discussions. If group discussions, play areas or resources are dominated by or associated more with boys or girls, look for ways to challenge barriers to participation and open up involvement. For instance, you could select students to speak or participate in activities, rather than waiting for volunteers, and establish ground-rules to facilitate a respectful environment.

4. Champion a whole school approach

Embedding comprehensive, long-term change requires a 'whole school approach'. This means that action to promote equality between girls and boys is guided by an over-arching framework and involves all members of the school community. Propose the whole school approach to your senior leadership team. Use UK Feminista's resources to highlight why this approach is necessary and how it can be implemented. UK Feminista can provide additional training, advice and resources to schools wanting to develop a whole school approach to tackling sexism.

For classroom activities and resources on how to tackle sexism in schools visit:

ukfeminista.org.uk/resources-hub/