

Protect and Teach Template Letter/E-mail - Northern Ireland:
**Confirmation of Single-Sex Toilet Provision & Legal
Compliance (Post-For Women Scotland)**

[Your address if a letter]

[Date]

Dear [Headteacher / Governing Body / School name],

I am writing as a parent/carer of a [Year X] pupil at [school name] to request confirmation of the school's current arrangements for pupil toilets and changing facilities, and the basis on which those facilities are provided and accessed.

I am making this request in order to understand how the school is meeting its legal duties and safeguarding responsibilities in relation to pupils' privacy, dignity, safety and welfare.

The UK Supreme Court judgment in **For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers [2025] UKSC 16** clarified the meaning of "sex" in the Equality Act 2010 as biological sex. Although the Equality Act 2010 does not apply in Northern Ireland, the judgment has direct implications for the interpretation and application of sex-based provisions across the United Kingdom.

Following the judgment, the Northern Ireland Education Minister announced on **8 September 2025** that he had sought legal advice on its implications for education in Northern Ireland and concluded that the Education Authority's existing 2019 transgender guidance was inconsistent with the law in Northern Ireland. The Minister specifically identified the use of toilets and changing facilities as matters affected by the legal position and stated that education policy and practice must be grounded in the law and the best interests of children. ([Department of Education NI](#))

The relevant equality legislation in Northern Ireland is principally the **Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976**, as amended. The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland confirms that schools and other educational establishments are subject to protection against sex discrimination, including in relation to pupils' access to benefits, facilities and services. ([Equality Commission for Northern Ireland](#))

There are also specific statutory requirements concerning school sanitary provision. **Regulation 10(2) of the School Premises (Standards) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1973** provides that separate sanitary fittings must be provided for boys and girls above the age of 6. The regulation also prescribes minimum levels of sanitary provision and washbasins according to pupil numbers. The continued relevance of this requirement was expressly confirmed by the Northern Ireland Education Minister in the Assembly in September 2025. ([Northern Ireland Assembly](#))

In light of these requirements, I would be grateful if you could provide written confirmation of the following:

1. Toilet provision

Please confirm the school's current arrangements for toilet and sanitary provision, including:

- the number and location of toilet facilities designated for boys and for girls;
- the number of sanitary fittings provided for each sex;
- how access to those facilities is determined;
- the age at which separate boys' and girls' sanitary provision is provided;
- whether any additional single-user or gender-neutral facilities are provided; and
- whether any multi-occupancy facilities are operated as mixed-sex or gender-neutral facilities.

2. Compliance with the School Premises (Standards) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1973

Please confirm that the school considers its current sanitary provision to comply with **regulation 10 of the School Premises (Standards) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1973**, including the requirement for separate sanitary fittings for boys and girls above the age of 6.

Please also confirm the number of sanitary fittings and washbasins provided for boys and girls and the basis on which the school has determined that the provision is sufficient for the number of pupils using the school.

3. Access to toilet facilities

Please confirm the school's current policy and practice concerning access to toilet facilities where a pupil identifies as transgender or otherwise requests to use facilities designated for the opposite sex.

In particular, please confirm whether a pupil is permitted to use a multi-occupancy toilet facility designated for the opposite sex and, if so, the legal and policy basis upon which that decision is made.

Where alternative or additional provision is offered, please explain how the school ensures that the statutory provision of separate sanitary fittings for boys and girls is maintained.

4. Additional or gender-neutral provision

Where gender-neutral or other additional facilities are provided, please confirm:

- whether these facilities are additional to the separate boys' and girls' provision;
- whether any existing boys' or girls' facilities have been converted, redesignated or repurposed;

- whether the facilities are single-user facilities and, if so, whether they can be secured from the inside;
- whether the toilet and handwashing facilities are contained within the same individual room;
- how privacy is secured for users; and
- what consideration has been given to the privacy, dignity, safety and welfare of both boys and girls.

5. Changes to existing facilities

Please confirm whether any existing boys' or girls' sanitary facilities have been, or are planned to be, converted, redesignated or otherwise changed so that they are available for use by both sexes.

If so, please provide details of:

- the nature and date of the change;
- the reason for the change;
- any equality impact assessment or equality analysis undertaken;
- any safeguarding or risk assessment undertaken;
- any legal advice obtained;
- any consultation undertaken with pupils, parents/carers or staff; and
- how the school has established that the change does not undermine the statutory requirement for separate sanitary fittings for boys and girls.

6. Privacy, dignity and safeguarding

Please explain what safeguarding arrangements are in place to protect the privacy, dignity and safety of both boys and girls when using the toilet and changing facilities.

Please also explain how the school monitors and responds to any evidence that pupils may be avoiding toilet use, restricting fluid intake, missing lessons or experiencing distress or other welfare difficulties because of the school's arrangements.

Particular consideration should be given to the privacy and sanitary needs of female pupils, including during menstruation, while recognising that boys also have a right to appropriate privacy, dignity and safeguarding.

7. Sanitary provision and menstrual needs

Please confirm how the school provides for the sanitary and hygiene needs of female pupils, including suitable facilities for the disposal of sanitary products.

Please also explain how the school ensures that girls have appropriate access to toilet and washing facilities to manage menstruation with privacy and dignity.

8. Changing facilities

Please provide details of the school's current arrangements for changing facilities and showers used by pupils, including arrangements for physical education and school sport.

Please explain the legal and policy basis upon which the school determines access to changing facilities and showers, including the implications of the Department of Education's position following the Supreme Court judgment.

Please also explain what consideration has been given to:

- privacy and dignity;
- the sex of pupils sharing changing accommodation;
- safeguarding risks;
- the needs of pupils requiring additional privacy; and
- any alternative arrangements provided for individual pupils.

Where the school's arrangements have changed following the Supreme Court judgment or the Department of Education's subsequent position, please provide details of the changes and any assessment or legal advice undertaken.

9. External advice

Please identify any external organisation, consultancy, charity, training provider, Education Authority service or other third party that has advised the school on its toilet, changing-room or sex/gender-related facilities policy since **[date, if applicable]**.

Please also provide copies of, or links to, any relevant advice or guidance relied upon by the school, subject to any applicable legal privilege or data protection restrictions.

10. Residential and overnight accommodation

Where the school provides residential trips, boarding or other overnight accommodation, please provide the school's current policy concerning the allocation of sleeping accommodation and associated washing and changing facilities.

Please explain how the school assesses privacy, dignity and safeguarding when allocating such accommodation, including how the needs of both boys and girls are considered.

Where communal or shared sleeping accommodation is provided, please also explain how the school determines who may share such accommodation and the legal and safeguarding considerations applied.

11. Relevant policies and assessments

I would be grateful for copies of, or links to, the current versions of any relevant:

- pupil toilet and sanitary facilities policy;
- toilet or changing-room arrangements or guidance;
- safeguarding or risk assessment relating to toilet or changing facilities;

- equality analysis or assessment;
- policy or guidance concerning transgender pupils insofar as it relates to access to toilet or changing facilities; and
- residential or overnight accommodation policy, where applicable.

I would appreciate a written response within **21 days** of receipt of this letter.

The purpose of this request is to establish whether the school's current arrangements comply with the statutory requirements governing separate sanitary provision for boys and girls, and whether those arrangements adequately protect the privacy, dignity, safety and welfare of pupils.

Boys and girls are each entitled to appropriate privacy, dignity and safeguarding in facilities where they may need to use the toilet, change clothes or attend to personal and biological needs. I would therefore like confirmation that the school maintains the required separate provision for both sexes and that any additional or individual arrangements do not undermine that provision.

I would also like confirmation that the school has considered the particular practical and biological needs of both boys and girls, including the privacy and sanitary needs of menstruating pupils, and has appropriately assessed any safeguarding or welfare implications arising from its current arrangements.

I look forward to receiving a substantive response addressing each of the points above, together with copies of the relevant policies and assessments requested.

Yours sincerely,

[Parent/Carer name]

Parent/Carer of **[child's name / Year]**

[Contact details]

Protect and Teach

GUARDIANS AT THE GATE