



Heartful Learning Conference

Creating gender equality in society through education

Friday 8th November, 8.45am – 4.30pm
The University of Chester, Warrington Campus, WA2 0DB

Background

Research shows that our gender identity and aspirations are already becoming fixed by the age of 7. Whilst seeing and hearing action on gender equality is increasingly common in the workplace, much of society's response to address inequality happens too late in life, when many of the complex issues of gender identity and inequality are already well set within us.

Whilst the issue of gender inequality is multi-faceted, we believe that current diminished and partial views of masculinity and femininity contribute to two huge social issues, which impact all of us:

- Unacceptable levels of all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG) - from everyday sexism to abuse and exploitation
- Poor mental health and wellbeing, particularly in men.

The BBC programme '**No More Boys and Girls – Can Our Schools Go Gender Free?**' (Aug 2017) clearly illustrated the opportunity schools have to shape the society we live in by incorporating a proactive and holistic approach to gender equality through our education system.

Alongside this, the power of the arts to help us understand the experiences of others and effect social change is now being used to make dramatic shifts in understanding gender equality. The arts have been used to promote gender equality, make the case for gender equality as a human right and to improve the health and wellbeing of all members of our communities. However, more can and must be done. The societal impact of gender inequality is something we can no longer ignore.

Change is desirable and we believe it is possible. What might happen if we could bring gender equality, schools and the arts together? What impact might integrated arts practice and embedded gender equality make if they were central to teaching practice and culture?

So, what do we need to do to, individually and collectively, to make this step change and what can we learn from and share with each other to change the social conversation on equality?



The Conference

The **HeARTful Learning Conference**, lasting a full day, is **free to attend** and of particular interest to anyone wanting to create substantive equality in society: from school leaders and teachers, to organisations and individuals working in arts and education. Our focus is on Early Years and primary education.

This event presents inspiring speakers, creative workshops and an opportunity for those working in the arts and education to share insights, questions and learning around gender equality. We want to give participants a toolkit and the inspiration to transform our society into a gender equal experience for all, as well as tackle the widespread issues of violence against women and girls (VAWG) and poor mental health for boys and men.

Join us as we share innovative approaches and articulate both practice and research into how education and the arts, together, can and should be a vehicle for creating greater gender equality in society.

This conference includes:

- Key note speeches from **Graham Andre** (a primary teacher most recently seen in the BAFTA nominated BBC documentary 'No More Boys and Girls: Can Our Kids Go Gender Free'), **Helen Griffin** (primary teacher, trainer and author of 'Gender Equality in Primary Schools – A Guide for Teachers'), and **Tatiana Chemi** (Associate Professor at Aalborg University, Denmark; exploring the outcomes of gender equal arts-based learning in education.)
- Learn new ways to integrate gender equality into education and the arts with a range of workshops delivered by experienced practitioners in the field.
- Inspire each other through creative conversations during the day about the ways you can help transform our society into a fully inclusive one for people identifying as any gender.

"The kind of conversation I'm interested in is one which you start with a willingness to emerge a slightly different person. It is always an experiment, whose results are never guaranteed. It involves risk. It's an adventure in which we agree to cook the world together and make it taste less bitter."

- **Dr Theodore Zeldin CBE, scholar and philosopher**

For more information:

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