



Gender Positive Alliance
Filling the GAPS
to find
safe spaces for
people who are
Transgender, Gender
Questioning, Gender
Non-Conforming, and
Gender Queer.

learn more at
www.mygpa.org

Gender Positive Alliance

Factsheet – all about pronouns

Learn more about pronouns here:

www.stonewall.org.uk/workplace-trans-inclusion-hub/beginner%E2%80%99s-guide-pronouns-and-using-pronouns-workplace

What are pronouns?

We have put all of the pronouns in this factsheet in purple, to highlight them

Pronouns are simply a way of referring to people without using **their** names all of the time. For example in “**I** like chocolate” – the “**i**” is a pronoun. **We** all use pronouns in conversation to help **us** refer to ourselves and others.

Our pronouns can also indicate the gender **we** identify as, or the gender people think **we** are.

Traditionally this has meant a binary of male and female – binary means having two options.

The traditional pronouns for people who identify as male are **he, him, his, himself** (as in “**he** went for **his** break and took **his** dinner with **him**”)

The traditional pronouns for people who identify as female are **she, her, hers, herself** (as in “**she** went for **her** break and took **her** dinner with **her**”)

The traditional pronouns for more than one person, or if **we** don’t know a person’s gender are **they, them, theirs, themselves** (as in “**they** went for **their** break and took **their** dinner with **them**”)

Nowadays people tend to recognise that there are more than two options for gender.

Some people do not feel **they** are male or female, and may consider themselves non-binary. **They** are most likely to use **they, them** pronouns.

Some people may be non-binary with a leaning towards male, in which case **they** may use **he/they** pronouns. That means **you** can use male, or non-binary pronouns for **them**. (eg “**he** went for **his** break and took **their** dinner with **them**”)

Some people may be non-binary with a leaning towards female, in which case **they** may use **she/they** pronouns. That means **you** can use female, or non-binary pronouns for **them**. (eg “**she** went for **her** break and took **their** dinner with **them**”)

You may also find that some people’s pronouns vary and **they** may use male or female pronouns one day, but non-binary the next – just check with **them** to see what **they** prefer.

Other people use what are called neo-pronouns, which don’t use traditional language at all, such as **xe/xim, ze/zem**.

We won’t list all the possible pronoun combinations here – just remember to ask people their pronouns, or tell them yours!

We know it can be scary to think **you** might offend someone by getting **their** pronouns wrong, and some people find it intimidating or complicated to remember when someone has non-traditional pronouns. It is OK to make mistakes if your intentions are good and you are trying to get it right. Just apologise and use their correct pronouns next time.

Why does it matter?

There have always been people who did not identify with the gender **they** were assigned at birth.

As society grows to allow people to be **their** true selves, so **our** language and etiquette changes. A common truth however is that if **you** can be kind, do.

Telling people **your** pronouns when **you** meet **them**, or including it on **your** email signature, allows openness about gender identity to become normalised.

This is important because isolation and exclusion are toxic to mental health and peaceful society.

On an individual level, respecting and using a person’s pronouns shows **them** that **you** have heard **them**, and listened, and that **you** see **them** as a person. That **you** accept that **they** know who **they** are, including **their** own gender, better than **you** do.

The GPA are a multi-generational team of people of diverse gender identities, and are trying to keep the information we present as current as possible. Language around gender identity is continually evolving as new generations of people try to find terminology that works for them. We apologise in advance for any errors on this worksheet, either now or as accepted terms change.