

# SELF ID IN SECURE CHILDRENS HOMES

## Background

**The Ministry of Justice Youth Custody Service (YCS) confirms it will introduce a policy in the autumn that would allow children aged 10 to 18 in secure children's homes and secure training centres to declare themselves transgender and be placed in the "unit of acquired gender" so that they can "feel more comfortable expressing their transgender identity in a mixed environment rather than in a secure setting where they are only mixing with one gender."**

Boys aged 16 or 17 could declare themselves "transgender girls" and be placed on the same units as girls aged 13 and over.

Concerned members of the public have written to their MPs explaining why this presents a particular risk to children known to be especially troubled, impulsive and vulnerable – especially girls.

Girls entering the children and young people's secure estate already tend to have multiple and complex difficulties, including high levels of mental health difficulties (generally resulting from prolonged and/or pervasive experiences of sexual abuse/adversity), significant self-harm risks and many are neuro-diverse.

The Ministry of Justice is not listening.

## Take Action Today!

**Time is of the essence. Parliament recesses on 21 July 2022.**

If you share our concerns:

- Please [meet with or write to your MP](#). Ask your MP to lobby the Health Secretary, the Children's Minister and the Justice Secretary.
- Alert the [Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza](#)
- If you can **write your own letter**, it will be more powerful than a reprinted letter. If you can speak about your own knowledge of the secure care system, that is more powerful still.
- Download and adapt our **template letter**: [Download Word Version](#) | [Download PDF Version](#)

## Send this Email To Your MP

Dear [Your MP's Name],

I am writing to raise serious concerns about the Ministry of Justice Youth Custody Service's decision to introduce a transgender policy for children aged 10-18yrs held in secure children's homes and secure training centres.

The proposed policy would allow boys aged 16 or 17yrs (normally held in a young offenders' unit) to self-identify themselves as a "transgender girl" and be placed in the "unit of acquired gender" which would be in with girls aged 13yrs+ so that they (i.e. the boys) can "feel more comfortable expressing their transgender identity in a mixed environment rather than in a secure setting where they are only mixing with one gender."

The risks for girls held in secure accommodation are obvious but do not appear to have been contemplated pursuant to the protected category of sex in the Equality Act 2010 or risk-assessed under any relevant duties or laws. Girls entering the children and young people's secure estate already tend to have multiple and complex difficulties, including high levels of mental health difficulties (generally resulting from prolonged and/or pervasive experiences of sexual abuse/adversity), significant self-harm risks and many are neuro-diverse.

There is no benefit to girls in this policy. Quite the opposite as the risk of harm is considerable. Why are girls expected to make room for older boys who claim to have a different gender identity? Shouldn't girls' wholly justifiable and legally protected need for safety, privacy and dignity on the basis of the protected characteristic of sex outweigh the mere desire of males to "feel more comfortable expressing their transgender identity in a mixed environment"? Girls in secure homes are among the most troubled, impulsive and vulnerable in the country. They do not have the benefit of a loving family to keep them grounded in truth and reality and they do not seem to have been considered in this transgender policy.

The policy also allows – and appears to put significant stock in – social transitioning. The [Interim Cass Report](#) acknowledges that social transitioning carries significant risk for children. It is specifically noted as "an active intervention...It is not a neutral action" (at 5.19) and it warns that taking this step could set vulnerable children on a pathway to more serious and irreversible treatments. The Report is very clear that "In discussion with social workers we had concerns about how looked-after children are supported in getting the help and support they need (at 4.23).

If you share my concerns about the obvious risks this policy presents to an especially troubled, impulsive and vulnerable group of children, please raise the matter with the Health Secretary, the Right Hon. Sajid Javid, the Children's Minister, the Hon. Will Quince, and the Justice Secretary, the Right Hon. Dominic Raab.

I look forward to hearing your views.

Yours sincerely,

[Your Name]  
[Your Address]

**This campaign has now closed – thank you for taking part.**