NEU LGBT+ Conference 2019

I would like to thank the NEU Derbyshire for sending me as a representative to the LGBT+ conference in Blackpool from 30th November to 1st December 2019. There were 350 LGBT+ Educators at the event which was a diverse, safe and supportive environment for all. This was the third conference that I have attend so I volunteered to take a supportive role as a listener to support any first time attendees or listen to anyone who needed to talk after visiting the workshops or listening to the speakers especially if any issues or trauma were triggered. There were some horrific stories that I heard from fellow educators of harassment, abuse and invisibilising some people were facing in their schools. There was a lot of time and activities to encourage people to network within their region and the whole country. We all had a very busy timetable with the events, workshop, networking and even a film so it was very tiring although extremely rewarding. There were lots of stalls promoting education support, inclusive texts especially linking in with the new RSE curriculum.

The keynote speaker this year was Andrew Moffatt detailing the work that he has been doing with No Outsiders – his RSE project that he has written and is teaching in his school Anderton Park. It was horrific to hear about the abuse he and his school have suffered from the protests about the teaching about LGBT+ people within the curriculum. But it was heart-warming to hear the support from some of the parents and children from his school and local community. It brought home how important the changes to the RSE curriculum are and how LGBT+ people need to be represented through the whole curriculum.

I attended the following workshops –

Many Colours of One Rainbow – this celebrated gender diversity.

Becoming an LGBT+ Primary School delivered by Claire Patterson from Educate and Celebrate. This was a really useful workshop I had attended talks from Claire before. She is a Year 6 teacher who has included LGBT+ people in her lessons to educate children so to prevent bullying and homophobic language. Educate and Celebrate run training for schools and provide a booklist that you can buy from them. I have ordered this for our school to use in assemblies and book week. This workshop gave lots of ideas to put LGBT+ people into the curriculum.

Tales From The Chalkface delivered by Jonathan Glazzard and Samuel Stones from Leeds Beckett University. This looked at micro-aggressions LGBT+ people face in the workplace, heteronormativity of society in particular schools., and internalized homophobia. People were able to discuss homophobia and micro aggression they have faced at school. I was surprised about some of the homophobia people still face on a daily basis.

I found the conference very rewarding and have made some good contacts within the NEU. I feel confident to answer any questions that any Southern Derbyshire schools may have about making their school LBGT+ inclusive or supporting any members who want support coming out at work or are experiences homo, bi or transphobia.

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