

Primary school toilets review sees new signs installed

Children in two primary schools in East Lothian will be directed to use separate toilets in the future after recent court rulings on gender facilities.

Education bosses said the two schools, both built in the last six years, are the only ones in the county with fully gender neutral toilets – all others offer a range of access to pupils.

The changes come after the Supreme Court ruled earlier this month that a woman is defined by biological sex under the Equalities Act, leading to the European Court of Human Rights to issue interim guidance that trans women should not be permitted to use women's facilities.

And it follows a Court of Session ruling against Scottish Borders Council which was ordered to provide single sex toilets at a school where it had switched to gender neutral facilities only after a challenge by parents.

Wallyford Primary School, which opened in 2019 and Letham Mains Primary School, in Haddington, which opened in 2021, in East Lothian will now have signs put in place identifying the toilets as boys and girls, with disabled loos offering a third option.

The council confirmed the move as elected members met to agree to fund the upgrade of toilets at East Linton Primary School,

which already has gender specific facilities which will not need to be changed.

The funding is required to allow the village school to meet demand for a growing pupil roll after the local authority lost out on Scottish Government financial support to build a new school.

Other schools already under construction in East Lothian which has one of the fastest growing populations in the country, will not need any review as they are all already compliant in offering gendered provision, the council said.

A council spokesperson said the changes needed at Wallyford and Letham Mains Primary Schools were straightforward as the design of the facilities allowed for them to be easily re-designated.

And they said work was ongoing to review the impact of the court rulings on schools and policies moving forward.

A spokesperson said: "Our education team will be engaging with school leaders in light of the Court of Session declarator and the Supreme Court ruling to determine if any changes will be required to our policies."

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter