



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on November 14, 2017

U.K. Teacher Faces Discipline for “Misgendering” Student

A math teacher in Oxfordshire, U.K., has been suspended from his position, and could be fired after he “misgendered” a female student who wishes to be a male.

Twenty-seven-year-old Joshua Sutcliffe (shown, left), who also serves as a Christian pastor in Oxford, spotted a group of students at his secondary school working diligently on an assignment, and blurted out, “Well done, girls!” Among the group of students was a girl who identifies as a boy, and while Sutcliffe apologized when corrected by the pupil, six weeks later he found himself suspended from his job and accused of “misgendering” after the girl’s mother filed a complaint against him.



Even though Sutcliffe believes that an individual’s gender is defined at birth, he insisted that what happened was a “slip of the tongue” and not an intentional challenge to the student’s gender choice. Nonetheless, a week-long investigation by the school found that Sutcliffe had “misgendered” the confused female student, which led to his suspension.

Among the charges against Sutcliffe was his admitted avoidance of the use of male pronouns when referring to the transgender student. He explained that he made every effort to balance his Christian convictions with his duties as a teacher “by using the pupil’s chosen name, and although I did not intentionally refer to the pupil as a ‘girl,’ I do not believe it is unreasonable to call someone a girl if they were born a girl.” The school’s investigation found that Sutcliffe’s “avoidance of gendered pronouns” constituted a breach of “the school’s code of conduct with regard to demonstrating an awareness of sexual and cultural diversity of students.”

The U.K.’s Christian Legal Centre, which is advising Sutcliffe in the matter, noted that while the school had not provided him with any training on how to refer to “transgender” students, school officials charged Sutcliffe with “demonstrating discriminatory behaviors” and “contravening the school’s equality policy.” Officials recommended that Sutcliffe’s “misconduct” be dealt with under the school’s disciplinary policy.

“I have been shocked and saddened by the actions of the school, which, in my opinion, reflect an increasing trend of seeing Christians, people like me, being marginalized in the public square, and our beliefs punished and silenced,” said Sutcliffe in a statement.

He explained that although he is both a Christian and a pastor, “I recognize my responsibility as a teacher and Christian to treat each of my pupils with respect and dignity. I have never looked to impose my convictions on others, I just try to earnestly live out the gospel of peace.”

Sutcliffe added that the school’s “aggressive” imposition of “transgender ideology ... is undermining my freedom of belief and conscience, as well as the conscience of many people throughout our nation who



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believe that gender is assigned at birth.”

Andrea Williams (shown, right), chief executive of the Christian Legal Centre, said Sutcliffe’s case is just one of a number in the U.K. in which “teachers are finding themselves silenced or punished if they refuse to fall in line with the current transgender fad. We all know how much we change during our teenage years. It is vital that during those years we help our children to live in the biological sex they were born [as] rather than encouraging them to change ‘gender.’ If we encourage them to change gender it is not kind and compassionate; it is cruel.”

Williams added that what is needed throughout the U.K. “is a culture in our schools which gives emotional support to children through puberty without encouraging them to make life-long decisions against their natural born biological sex. If we collude in the transgender delusion we do not serve our children well, we harm them.”

Commenting on the case, former U.K. Conservative Party chairman Lord Tebbit said, “It seems to me this is a mad world when someone is disciplined for stating a biological fact.”

Sutcliffe was set to answer the charges before school officials on November 15, and although he is a well-liked and respected instructor at the school, he could ultimately face termination for “misgendering” the student.

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