
Curriculum for Excellence: health and wellbeing, relationships, sexual health and parenthood education policy

Notes of Guidance

These should be read in conjunction with
Standard Circular GSE 1, 2011.



Guidance



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Legal Context

Further Legal Advice

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 requires that parents take responsibility for young people up to the age of sixteen. Parents are expected to:

- safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
- provide direction to the child;
- maintain regular contact with the child;
- act as legal representative;
- provide guidance up to the age of eighteen.

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 sets a framework within which local authorities are required to devise a Children's Service Plan. The Act sets out a number of key principles:

- parents have responsibilities as well as rights in respect of their children;
- the welfare on the child should be the paramount concern in the determination of any matters affecting them;
- due regard should be given to a child's religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background;
- due regard should be given to the children's views, in line with the child's age and maturity.

This last point is particularly significant in that the Act requires the parental role to change at the age of sixteen. Parents cease to give direction, instead they offer guidance. This point of transition has to be borne in mind when schools and local authorities are considering provision for young people aged sixteen and over.

Age of Legal Capacity (Scotland) Act 1991

The Act describes the circumstances under which a child is considered to have reached the age of legal capacity to consent to medical treatment on his or her own behalf. This is determined according to the child's capacity to understand the nature and possible consequences of the treatment concerned.

Under age sexual activity

- The age of consent is 16 (18 in the case of vulnerable young people)
- If sexual activity involves a young child, ie under the age of 13, this should automatically be a serious child protection concern. Sexual intercourse with a young child - male or female - is rape and is therefore a criminal offence.
- Consensual sex between older children, ie 13 to 15 years of age, is unlawful but "it does not follow that every case presents child protection concerns and it is important that a proportionate response is made (National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2010), p148). Consideration should be given to whether the activity is consensual, abusive or exploitative and a professional judgement made regarding action

to be taken and support to be given.

- Sexual relationships between a young person and an adult (over 16) and particularly an adult in a position of trust, should be regarded as both an offence and a child protection issue.

(See National Guidance – Under-age Sexual Activity: Meeting the needs of children and young people and identifying child protection concerns (Scottish Government 2010))

Rights and Responsibilities

Rights and responsibilities of parents, carers, children and young people might be summarised as:

- the right of the child to education;
- the right of the child or young person to have his or her views increasingly taken in account as she/he matures;
- the right of pupils to have their views taken into account when the school is preparing its Improvement Plan;
- the right of parents to have religious or philosophical convictions taken into account, within specified limits;
- the responsibility of parents to provide their child with efficient education;
- the responsibility of local authorities to secure provision of education that takes into account the development of the personality, talents and full potential of the child. (There is a statutory duty to look beyond general provision to the development of the individual child.);
- the responsibility of schools to consult with parents on programmes for sex and relationships education.

Education is required to ensure that all education establishments have access to updated and relevant information around relationships, sexual health and parenthood education e.g. Rape and Sexual Offences Bill and that there is a commitment to update policy as required.

United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The Convention came into force in the United Kingdom on 15 January 1992. It lists a number of agreed articles that relate to the protection, well-being and development of children and young people up to the age of eighteen.

These include:

- Article 3: All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child.
- Article 12: Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.
- Article 17: Children have the right to reliable information from the media. Television, radio and newspapers should provide information that children can understand, and should not promote materials that could harm

The Human Rights Act 1998

This Act which came into force on 2 October 2000, aims to make more directly accessible the rights conferred by the European Convention on Human Rights by allowing the enforcement of Convention rights and freedoms through domestic courts in the United Kingdom. These rights include a right to education.

As indicated previously there may be some tension between the rights of parents to have their children educated according to their own religious and philosophical convictions and the right of a child to education.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality Issues

There are obviously opportunities to increase school involvement by health and other contributing professionals through the Health and Wellbeing Framework. This higher profile and increasing availability of health professionals has significant implications, particularly in relation to confidential counselling and advice. There may be occasions when the professional ethics of health staff lead them in a somewhat different direction from the school. In these situations, the absence of any agreed procedure leaves everyone vulnerable. In the past education, health, voluntary and statutory organisations have worked in accordance with their own guidelines on confidentiality but with partnership working developing in schools there is a need to clarify each one's role and responsibility. Young people receive conflicting messages about what confidentiality means in the school setting, depending on whom they talk to. The same applies to professionals.

There are basic steps that can be taken to avoid conflict of interest when delivering sex and relationships education within a multi-agency approach, these include:

- As a teacher ensure you are clear on the school's policy regarding confidentiality and child protection.
- Arrange a meeting prior to the teaching session with the external agency to discuss and agree a joint approach.
- Ensure young people to whom you are delivering relationship, sexual health and parenthood education have a clear understanding what confidentiality means in and outside school.

The handling of potentially sensitive issues ultimately has to rely on the professional judgement of individual teachers.

There is an obvious and immediate need to draw up protocols to ensure that everyone, including parents, is fully aware of the implications of partnership activity.

Support for Individuals

There may well be occasions, particularly at the secondary stage when an individual pupil confides in a member of staff or seeks counselling for a particular issue or concern.

Staff should be well equipped to deal with a great many issues, but the following points may help clarify matters or reassure staff working with young people:

- the nature of the support to young people requires to be carefully considered and should be in line with agreements with external agencies; each case should be considered on its own merits.
- supporting a young person with concerns about their sexuality should not be

considered to be promoting homosexuality;

- pupils should be made aware that teaching staff cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality in relation to any disclosures that they may make to them. All schools should incorporate a statement in relation to confidentiality in the school handbook;
- any suspicion of child abuse should be dealt with in accordance with the Fife multi-agency child protection procedures;
- any suspicion of bullying relating to sexual orientation, minority beliefs or racial origin should be referred to a member of the schools' senior management team and dealt with in accordance with school's policies.

Sexual Health Services for Young People in Fife

Information on services for young people can be accessed on Fife Young Peoples Website www.urhealthfife.co.uk

Management, Organisation and Planning

Coordination of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education

Co-ordination of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education programmes in school is vital.

Curriculum for Excellence places a significant emphasis on the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Experiences and Outcomes. It is the responsibility of all schools to ensure agencies supporting health and wellbeing know who the link person is for the school. This will improve the quality of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education for pupils and can help avoid repetition and gaps in learning opportunities.

A member of staff will have responsibility for the coordination of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education. In some schools this will be a member of the Senior Management Team, Head teacher or the School Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator.

A member of staff with responsibility for coordination is required to:

- assess the current situation in school and assist in reviewing school policy with regard to relationships, sexual health and parenthood education;
- develop an action plan and set targets for change or development;
- identify staff training needs;
- create a framework for consulting pupils and parents;
- support and resource staff;
- decide how the programme will be monitored and evaluated.

Inclusion and Diversity

Scotland is a diverse society. Within that society, there is a range of different family relationships. The most common relationship is that of marriage. This is supported by churches, religious groups and others in Scottish society. They see marriage as the ideal to which they aspire. However others in Scottish society have different styles of relationships and family life which they regard as equally valid.

Teachers will be aware that each class will contain pupils from a variety of family backgrounds. Teachers should ensure that they treat all children with respect and sensitivity when covering these areas of the curriculum. Lack of awareness of diversity

can lead to prejudice and discrimination which may lead to bullying. Bullying of any type affects self-esteem and can impact on educational achievement.

School relationships, sexual health and parenthood education has a role to play at the appropriate age and stage in discussing the myths and stereotypes around gender, sexuality and sexual orientation issues, both as a means of preventing harassment and bullying and as an opportunity to engender a respect for and understanding of diversity.

Faith communities have beliefs, attitudes and values concerning relationships and sexuality. All the major faiths in Scottish society agree that marriage is the proper setting for sexual intercourse and bringing up children but they may have differing views on such matters as divorce, homosexuality, contraception and abortion.

Young people in developing their own beliefs, attitudes and values will be influenced by the beliefs, attitudes and values of their homes and of the faith communities to which they belong. Teachers have to take account of the range of the beliefs, attitudes and values in the backgrounds of their pupils.

For many young people the teenage years are a period characterised by personal search and reflection. Young people are often concerned with who they are, how they are seen and what they believe in. They often demonstrate a willingness to take a moral stance and are generally interested in different faiths or beliefs or feel strongly on humanitarian issues. The wider faith community is a valuable resource which schools should use to help young people explore their personal beliefs and value systems.

Vulnerable Young People

For sex and relationships education to be effective, schools and support agencies have to acknowledge the diverse nature of cohort groups within schools, and where possible, respond to the individual circumstances of pupils. There are a number of groups who require particular consideration.

These include young people:

- with special education needs;
- who are looked after by local authorities;
- who would be considered to be vulnerable or at risk;
- who have concerns regarding their sexuality;
- who are or believed to have different levels of maturity within their peer group
- whose circumstances might expose them to taunting
- who do not have access to family support.

Young People with Additional Support Needs

Many young people with additional support needs can now benefit from a supported placement in a mainstream setting, but those who are educated separately have the same right to information and support as their peers. However attention must be given that these young people, who are attending mainstream classes, are given the opportunity to clarify their understanding of the lesson. It is important that all staff supporting these pupils are trained in relationship, sexual health and parenthood education and are sensitive to the individual needs of the young person.

The provision of sex and relationships education for some pupils in special schools may have some distinctive features:

- the programme will have similarities to mainstream schooling in terms of age but there is an added consideration of the extent of their additional support needs and the effect on their understanding;
- there is a greater likelihood that the social and emotional impact of the additional support need may mean that some young people with additional support needs have fewer opportunities to make and develop relationships;
- teachers and support staff working in sex and relationships education with people who have additional support needs must be prepared to deal with questions and engage in discussion on the impact of those needs on physical and emotional aspects of relationships.

There are also specific considerations:

- some young people with additional support needs are less likely to learn incidentally about sexual development;
- young people with significant learning difficulties may struggle to understand society's conventions and expectations regarding sexual behaviour;
- young people develop the same feelings and needs as others but may find expressing them more difficult;
- intimate care for young people with additional support needs, ie areas of personal care that cannot be carried out by the young person alone, has to respect the rights of everyone involved and in particular, respect the dignity of the young person concerned.

Sensitive Issues in Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood

As young people mature, they experience a range of feelings which affect their attitudes, behaviours and personal relationships.

As they enter adolescence, most begin to develop feelings of a sexual nature towards members of the opposite sex. Some develop similar feelings towards members of their own sex. Some young people become aware of their sexual orientation at a relatively early age while others take longer. For a number, the process is fraught with uncertainty, confusion and anxiety. It is important that teachers show understanding of these issues and are sensitive to protecting and supporting vulnerable young people as they come to terms with their feelings and work out how best to deal with them.

School relationships, sexual health and parenthood education needs to be sensitive to the fact that young people may find it particularly difficult to speak openly with their parents or carers about their sex, sexuality and sexual orientation matters. It is therefore important that school sex and relationships education provides accurate and factual information about sexuality and sexual orientation matters as well as developing a strong anti-bullying stance on this matter.

All young people should be helped to understand, at an appropriate age, that different people can have different sexual orientations. Teachers have an important role to play in enabling young people to consider such issues and to discuss them in an open, sensitive and non-discriminatory way in order that all young people may develop understanding of these differences. The central purpose should be to promote understanding and mutual respect for one another, regardless of orientation. This approach is considered an important way of encouraging respect for and valuing the diversity of, human life.

Opportunities for discussion may arise- within class through a planned session on relationships or sexual development; through a response to a specific incident or as a result of an incidental question or comment by a pupil. Teachers may be approached by an individual pupil regarding concern about the pupil's sexual orientation; teachers

should respond in a similar manner, i.e. sensitive and non-judgemental and, where appropriate, indicate sources of support either within the school or external to the school.

Parental Consultation

Consulting Parents

Schools should adopt the practice of consulting parents when they are developing or reviewing their programme of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education. It should have in place simple direct procedures for parents to raise concerns. Schools and authorities have to be sensitive to the rare cases when a parent has a conscientious objection to particular programmes in relationships, sexual health and parenthood education. There are significant negative academic, social and emotional consequences for the child in such a situation. The child will be isolated from peers and this separation may well adversely affect the child's confidence and self-esteem. In practice, there are significant management implications to schools around this issue. It will not always be a simple and straightforward matter to make suitable alternative arrangements because relationships, sexual health and parenthood education is ideally integrated into teaching across a number of curriculum areas. It would seem prudent that schools make every effort to consult parents in advance on the programme and ensure that all parents understand the relevance and appropriateness of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education. In the event of a parent seeking to withdraw a child from the programme, it would be important for headteachers to ensure that the parent and child are fully aware of the available withdrawal arrangements.

Schools may wish to investigate the possibility of parents, in liaison with their faith group, providing alternative, positive educational material for this part of the programme.

The best arrangements are found in effective partnerships which are often exemplified by early consultation and good communications between school and home.

Teaching Approaches

Who Should Deliver the Programme?

All teachers should be familiar with the contents of any programme of sex and relationships education and ideally have attended sexual health training. The handling of potentially sensitive issues ultimately has to rely on the professional judgement of individual teachers. It is acknowledged that the teaching profession has exercised sound judgement with the result that schools currently enjoy the confidence of the overwhelming majority of parents in teaching relationships, sexual health and parenthood education.

It is very important that teachers involved in relationships, sexual health and parenthood education are familiar with the young people's needs. Headteachers therefore need to be alert to the potential difficulties arising from teacher absence. A supply teacher, or teacher who is unfamiliar with the class should not be left to cover the more sensitive parts of the programme. Even when the regular teacher is taking the class, there may be occasions when a second adult would be of benefit.

Teachers are in a unique position to develop and progress relationships, sexual health and parenthood education through the establishment of trust and understanding with learners over a period of time. They have teaching skills that will allow learners to research and discuss the complexity of issues linked to relationships, sexual health and parenthood education and sexuality. Apart from the skills of trying to interest and motivate learners, particularly valuable skills in teaching relationships, sexual health and parenthood education include:

- listening
- empathising
- valuing
- encouraging
- flexibility - being flexible
- sensitivity - being sensitive
- respecting privacy
- facilitating and processing learning
- building trust with a group
- being non judgemental
- allowing choice
- involving learners in their own learning.

Integrated relationships, sexual health and parenthood education programmes, led primarily by teachers, avoids sensationalising issues and allows progression of discussions that would not be possible with outside agencies. Staff who are confident and can work with learners in calm, unprejudiced ways on issues of human sexuality and relationships will assist the acceptance and success of sex and relationships education programmes.

Schools can access specialist sexual health services to enhance their programmes by accessing Fife Young Peoples Website www.urhealth.co.uk

Effective Programmes

There is evidence that young people want better quality relationships, sexual health and parenthood education at school. Young people often state that what they do get is 'too little, too late'. Evidence of this desire for information comes from 'Sex Education in Fife Schools: A Survey of Pupils' Views and Experiences', MacNeil et al (2001).

Given the fundamental links between expression of sexuality and well-being, education needs to include emotional as well as physical aspects of sexuality. Further, education about relationships, which young people suggest is often the weakest part of their school sex education experience, is important because sex is experienced within relationships and social structures.

Although some parents may be concerned that providing education about relationships, sexual health and parenthood education only serves to encourage young people to engage in sexual activity, research evidence does not support this view. In fact there is some evidence that effective relationships, sexual health and parenthood education can actually delay the onset of sexual activity. Further, providing an open and positive environment for young people to discuss sexual health issues will be beneficial in their developing sexuality.

While acquiring knowledge is important for informed decision-making, skills development and attitude and values clarification remains an integral part of that process. Therefore, effective relationships, sexual health and parenthood education requires to develop and explore these three interrelated elements.

Knowledge and Understanding

Up-to-date, accurate information that is appropriate to the age and maturity level of the young person; it should encompass how bodies develop and work, sexuality, reproduction, sexual behaviour, sexual health, the law, access to services, emotions and relationships.

Beliefs, Attitudes and Values

Young people need the opportunity to explore values and attitudes. This will help them clarify what they believe in and why they believe in it. Sharing these can promote an awareness of, and respect for others' views. There are fundamental values that will be common to all aspects of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education; these relate to trust, respect, love, care, empathy and responsibility.

Skills

There is a range of personal and interpersonal skills that are essential to help young people make informed choices and decisions, develop and maintain relationships and manage emotions. Assertiveness, communication and decision-making skills are particularly relevant to social and emotional well being.

Teaching Approaches

Inter-active learning, where young people are engaged in structured activities or tasks that encourages interaction, provide opportunities to generate and share ideas, challenge one another constructively and explore a range of issues relevant to their lives. Structured use of a combination of class and group work allows teachers to take sensitive account of the range of maturity and experience in any class. However, this requires the teacher to use a more informal approach whereby pupils take more responsibility for their learning and the teacher facilitates the learning rather than leads it. Discussion and debate needs to be open and honest, with individual contributions taking account of the feelings and sensitivities of other members of the class.

It is important that boys and girls have the opportunity to work together in order to foster understanding about one another. However, there may be times where it is more appropriate to work in single gender groups because it is more productive or there is a need to explore an issue in some detail. For some young people, it will be culturally inappropriate to discuss some issues in mixed gender groups.

Climate for Teaching and Learning

It is important that the teacher feels comfortable and secure in their role in the classroom when teaching any aspect of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education. The following skills and qualities are helpful:

- a good relationship with pupils;
- secure in the use of participatory methodology;
- knowledgeable about issues that are relevant to young people;
- ability to encourage reflection on beliefs, attitudes and values;
- recognition of the influences of sexuality on the individual and on society;
- ability to provide an open and supportive environment for discussion;
- skills to encourage discussion and handle controversy;
- ability to contribute to young people's thinking without imposing own values;
- awareness and respect for one's own attitudes and values in relation to gender, sexuality and sexual orientation.

Establishing a Supportive Climate for Learning

The quality of interactions between teachers and learners is the critically important feature of effective learning. The environment within which relationships, sexual health and parenthood education takes place will contribute to the success or otherwise of the learning process. Central to this are the relationships established between the teacher and pupils; relationships that enhance a sense of well-being and a disposition to learn, and foster mutual respect, empathy and genuineness. Where young people feel valued and respected, their confidence and self esteem increases and they are more likely to become fully involved in the challenges of learning.

Key elements of a supportive climate for teaching relationships, sexual health and parenthood education to all pupils include:

- consultation with pupils – talking to young people, establishing what their needs are and ensuring that needs are met through a programme that has true relevance for them;
- setting and agreeing ground rules including appropriate language – this promotes a shared responsibility and encourages a level of autonomy on the part of the learner;
- agreement on personal revelations – establishing an agreement whereby both teacher and pupils are confident that they will not have to answer personal questions nor enter any discussion which they may feel uncomfortable about;
- participatory approaches – using methodologies that encourage interaction and a sharing of views, while at the same time, allow distancing so that young people do not reveal their own concerns within a group unless they wish to do so;
- addressing discrimination – ensuring that gender, sexuality and sexual orientation issues are addressed appropriately and that harassment or bullying in the classroom or elsewhere is challenged;
- reflecting on learning – providing opportunities to consider the implications of their learning experiences and how they may impact on their lives and lives of others.

It is important to establish agreement on the language used in the classroom. Young

people may have their own words for sexual development or sexual activity. The teacher may feel uncomfortable with certain words or phrases used by young people but at the same time, wish the young people to use words they know and understand. Young people should also understand how different types of language can be considered appropriate in different situations. As indicated earlier agreement on the type of language to be used can be made as part of the ground rules.

Responding to Questions and Requests for Advice

The importance of managing the class dynamic and the notion that the teacher sets ground rules to ensure that classroom discussion does not embarrass or upset any members of the group must be emphasised. Teachers should not avoid controversial issues, nor should they lead discussion by advancing their own personal views on controversial issues. If an issue is considered by society to be controversial, they should explain why it is considered to be so, rehearse the different perspectives and allow pupils to determine their own beliefs.

When asked questions or asked for advice there are a few issues to consider. Are questions being asked out of curiosity, out of a need to know or simply mischief making. Whatever the reason, it may not be necessary to give a response to the whole class. There may be different levels of maturity within the class and some pupils may not be ready to deal with certain issues.

If a request for information arises with an individual pupil, then the teacher should speak to the pupil after the class session. There is a need to be cautious in giving advice as the teacher cannot guarantee confidentiality. However, where it is appropriate to refer to an external agency such as a health professional, the school's policy of referral should be followed.

Teaching Methods

While individual learning through reading and listening is appropriate at times, working in groups provides opportunities for meaningful discussion. This has a number of benefits including:

- the development of personal and interpersonal skills;
- acceptance of and respect for individual differences;
- the fostering of a sense of belonging and concern for one another;
- shared responsibility;
- a supportive and inclusive environment.

There is a range of methodologies that can be used within the group setting; a number of them encourage objectivity where the focus is on a fictional character or situation, thus allowing open discussion that does not become personalized, but at the same time provides strategies and ideas that can be used in the real life situation. Video scenarios can be excellent material to stimulate discussion.

Methods to deliver relationships, sexual health and parenthood education should include:

- thought showers
- working in groups – activities and discussions
- games and quizzes
- case studies
- theatre, drama and role play
- peer led education
- audio-visual presentations
- learners presentations
- visits.

How to involve young people in relationships, sexual health and parenthood education

There are no hard and fast rules about how to involve young people in the delivery and design of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education. However, tokenism should be avoided at all cost; young people will be quick to see through any superficial involvement. The focus on the delivery of sexual health within the school setting should be based on the needs of the young people; starting with where they are at, their expressed needs and needs identified by health professionals and educationalists.

- Involve young people in the planning process of delivering relationships, sexual health and parenthood education by finding out what they have already covered
- Focus teaching methods on participatory activities such as debate, role-play, simulations and group work
- Encourage the pupils to evaluate the session
- Have a multi-agency approach to delivering relationships, sexual health and parenthood education – know your limitations
- Negotiate topics to be covered with older pupils (S5/S6).

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment Activities

The process of assessment should be set in a context of effective planning, learning and teaching. It should take account of the five key activities of:

- planning
- teaching
- recording
- reporting
- evaluating.

which are set out in more detail in Curriculum for Excellence.

Examples of assessment activities that can provide evidence of pupil attainment in relationships, sexual health and parenthood education include:

- teacher's notes about a group discussion;
- teacher assessment and evaluation of class/group progress in relation to the short-term plan;
- listening to pupil discussion;
- listening to a pupil's report to the class/group;
- observation of pupils' skills in a task;
- observation of role-play;
- a completed topic folder or folio of work;
- the product of a group task;
- a class test;

- a piece of extended writing;
- pupils' answers to questions (written or oral);
- self-assessment tasks;
- peer-assessment tasks.

Involvement of External Agencies

How should schools use the support and contributions from external agencies and speakers?

Teachers will be one of the main source of expertise for delivering any programme of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education.

It is possible that in relationships, sexual health and parenthood education, as in other aspects of education, teachers may find it valuable to invite another person or agency to contribute to particular aspects of work with pupils. The expertise which such groups provide can prove valuable in complementing the efforts of the school. Carefully chosen individuals or agencies are able to provide additional knowledge and the benefit of experience which might prove difficult for many teachers to provide without extensive research and training. With careful planning these groups can be used by schools to benefit the experience of pupils in a meaningful way. On some occasions, external agencies can also be used as a means of staff development for teachers who themselves will implement the sex and relationships education programme.

How can external speakers or agencies be used to support relationships, sexual health and parenthood education?

Visitors should be viewed as complementing the curriculum already in place. They should not be seen as a substitute for the school's mainline provision as outlined in the school's sex and relationships education programme.

Should class teachers be present during contributions by external agencies or speakers?

The class teacher should always be present for a variety of reasons:

- the teacher has planned this aspect of the curriculum;
- the teacher cannot ensure continuity of the relationships, sexual health and parenthood education programme if absent;
- the teacher may gain additional information that may enhance the programme further;
- the teacher can ensure proper presentation of previously agreed material;
- the teacher can supervise and oversee class behaviour;
- the teacher is legally responsible for the class.

How should schools select appropriate agencies or speakers?

External speakers or agencies should be from credible, acceptable organisations. Individuals should be agreeable to vetting or checking by the headteacher.

Good indicators of such organisations are:

- staff should be subject to Disclosure Scotland checks before being employed by the agency;

- good links with statutory bodies, such as the local Health Service, the local Education Service, Social Work Service or with Learning and Teaching Scotland and NHS Health Scotland
- staff who are willing to share content and approaches used in their contribution.

How do schools know if the input is appropriate?

The presentation should be appropriate to the ages and stages of the pupils concerned. It would not be appropriate for the same presentation to be delivered regardless of age and stage. Progression through the Health and Wellbeing: Experiences and Outcomes will assist this process. The school should ensure that the presentation to be delivered is pitched at the appropriate level as well as being interesting and stimulating for the pupils. Criticism implied or direct, of other unconnected organisations should not be permitted during the presentation whether the agency or individual believes it appropriate or not. The contribution of the agency or individual to the relationships, sexual health and parenthood education programme should be based on the previous experience and expertise of the individual or agency involved.

How should schools prepare for a visit from an external agency or speaker?

The school should hold a preliminary meeting with the external agency/speaker to plan the event and to make sure the contribution is part of the ongoing curriculum and policy of the school. Paper or other materials to be used during presentations should be submitted to the Headteacher in advance of the input to ensure their suitability for use in the school. A sensible approach will be required, for example, with drama presentations for older pupils where difficult or sensitive issues are explored. Parents should be informed and involved as appropriate. Parent councils should be consulted before new initiatives are undertaken which may involve sensitive areas of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education. In the denominational school sector, prior discussion will be necessary with the appropriate Church authorities. If any difficulties or doubts remain unresolved the headteacher should consult the Education Management Team.

School/Teacher Guidelines on the Involvement of External Agencies, Groups or Speakers

- External agencies/speakers should be from credible, acceptable organisations.
- Visitor should complement the curriculum already in place.
- The class teacher should always be present during any contribution from an external agency or speaker.
- Presentations should be appropriate to the ages and stages of the pupils involved.
- A preliminary meeting should be held with the external agency or speaker to plan the contribution.
- Outside speaker has experience and expertise in working with young people on sexual health issues.
- Outside speaker can offer something specific and useful that teachers cannot.
- Materials to be used during the presentation should be submitted to the headteacher in advance of the contribution.
- Pupils and teaching staff evaluate input.
- In line with Fife Council Education Service standard circulars and policies.

- Criticism implied or direct of other unconnected organisations should not be permitted during the presentation.
- External agencies or speakers should not be permitted to sell publications to pupils or ask for donations.
- Parents, Parent Councils and Church authorities should be involved as appropriate.
- Difficulties or doubts remaining unresolved should be referred to the headteacher who can consult the Education Service Senior Management Team.

School/Teacher Checklist for the involvement of External Agencies, Groups or Speakers who want to work with Schools

Aims:

- To ensure the visit is a valuable experience for everyone concerned
- To ensure the visit is relevant to the particular programme currently being delivered and to the curriculum
- To ensure that the visitor's contribution meets your needs for the programme and most importantly, the needs of the pupils
- To ensure that there is evaluation of the visitor's contribution.

Checklist Criteria

The criteria for this checklist are not in a specific order.

- Check the organisation/agency/individual has evidence of a Disclosure Scotland check on the individual attending the school
- Which session of the programme would benefit from the contribution from an outside agency or specialist service?
- What aspect of the particular issue/topic do you want the visitor to deliver?
- Do you know the viewpoint/agenda of the agency or individual on the topic? (eg Who is their parent body? Do they exist to promote a particular viewpoint?)
- Is there opportunity in the sessions prior to the visit for pupils to write questions/concerns etc anonymously for the visitor to address?
- Can the pupils be involved in the organising/planning the visit and its content?
- Has the visitor's contribution been properly negotiated between you, the pupils and the visitor?
- Can a preliminary meeting or discussion with the visitor prior to the session be arranged? (Particularly if this is the first visit by the visitor.)
- Is the visitor aware of the number and age of the pupils, and how much time will be available?
- Is the format for the session, as well as the activities and the resources that the visitor is planning to use, appropriate?
- As the class teacher will be present during the session, what role will the teacher have?
- What classwork, both before and after the visit, can support, make relevant and reinforce the visitor's contribution?
- Have you checked what practical requirements the visitor will need? (eg working space for groups, multi-media equipment, and flipcharts.)
- Has an evaluation been organised to get feedback from the visitor, pupils and class teacher?
- Does the visit have support implications and if so how will these be met? (eg if sensitive material is being raised, or there is likely to be a demand for information following the session.)
- Could the visitor be used in other ways to support the teaching of the topic? (eg staff training, consultation, service provision.)
- Keep a record of any visiting external agencies, including names, with copies of the programme used, comments and evaluation from the pupils.

Guidelines for External Agencies, Groups or Speakers who want to work with Schools.

Fife Council recognises the contribution that outside agencies can make to help schools develop and deliver relationships, sexual health and parenthood education – particularly where the agency can offer additional knowledge or experience that the teacher cannot gain without extensive research and training.

The contents of this policy are designed to help agencies that can offer support to schools:

- know what might be expected of them;
- know what the council expects of schools when considering an offer of support from an outside agency.

Many agencies may be able to offer support to teachers by working in partnership to either bring:

- increased specialist knowledge that will broaden the teacher's own expertise; or
- to directly complement teaching approaches used with pupils in the classroom.

Policy within Fife Education Service requires schools to consider the following when deciding whether to accept offers of support from outside agencies:

- Has the agency got good links with statutory bodies?
- Is the agency willing to work collaboratively?
- Are the agency's staff subject to a Disclosure Scotland check?

Where agencies are to work with teachers directly in the classroom then in addition the following criteria must be met:

- the agency contribution should offer something specific and useful that teachers cannot;
- staff from the agency should have experience and expertise in working with young people of school age;
- care should be taken not to criticise or imply criticism of other organisations;
- teaching staff should always be present;
- school's code of confidentiality will apply.

Checklist for External Agencies, Groups or Speakers who want to work with Schools

Checklist Criteria

Aims:

- To ensure that the contribution is as valuable as possible.
- To make sure that the needs of the pupils/school are being met.
- To provide input which is relevant to, and supported by the curriculum.
- To ensure that there is good evaluation of the session.

Checklist Criteria

The criteria for this checklist are not in a specific order.

- What content has been requested?
- In what context does the visit take place? (What classwork takes place in the sessions before and after the visit?)
- How long will your input last for?
- What is the age of the pupils, and how many will be in the class/es?
- Have the pupils identified what they want, or have an opportunity to do so?
- How will this be handled? (eg questions/concerns forwarded to you prior to the visit/question time in class.)
- Can a preliminary meeting or discussion prior to the visit be arranged?
- What methods will be used? (eg groupwork, whole class talk or workshops?)
- As the class teacher will be present during the session, has the teacher's role been agreed?
- Is the school aware of your practical requirements? (e.g. working space for groups, multi-media equipment and flipcharts.)
- Has appropriate evaluation been organised to get feedback from the pupils, class teacher and visitor?

Model 1: Relationships, sexual health and parenthood education is dealt with by 'outside speakers'

Gains for Schools and Local Authorities

Sensitive issues addressed
Confidence in expert knowledge
Evidence for parent councils that responsibilities are being met

Losses for pupils

Possible lack of follow up support from in put with outside agency
Lack of confidence in teacher as a source of help on personal matters

Fallacies

Specialists have more knowledge therefore more qualified to teach
Pupils do not trust teachers enough to disclose personal matters to them
Sensitive issues can be effectively addressed by periodic, one off 'blitzes'
A medical background means expertise in relationships, sexual health and parenthood
Visiting speakers available one year will be available to do the same in future years

Gains for agencies

Access to substantial numbers of young people
Opportunity to promote health
Sense of achievement

Other losses

Undermining teachers confidence and self-respect
Devaluing of teacher skills and teachers knowledge of their pupils

Model 2: Relationships, sexual health and parenthood education is explored by pupils with their teacher and visiting speakers

Gains for teachers

- Increased credibility and stronger relations with pupils
- Increase in confidence and skills
- Developing of joint working and partnerships

Gains for pupils

- Teaching by a professional teacher
- The potential to work with a teacher who:
- Knows them
 - Can build and sustain a comfortable and trusting atmosphere
 - Is available to provide further support and advice
 - Can present lesson in holistic health education programme
- Opportunities to:
- Ensure visits largely focus on pupils agenda
 - Reflect on visit and do follow up work
 - Reinforce self esteem and a range of core skills

Gains for agencies

- Satisfaction in contributing to holistic health education
- Recognition and appreciation of their particular knowledge and expertise
- Raise awareness of services their agency provides

Challenges

- Recognising central importance of pupil's personal and social well being
- To translate that recognition into practice by prioritising to put aside adult 'baggage' and 'agendas'

Needs and pre-requisites

- Appropriate time-tabling
- Good learner centred resources
- Dialogue and planning
- Continuing support and training for both teachers and agencies

Evaluation

Evaluation Issues

Evaluating good practice in relationships, sexual health and parenthood education

Does the whole-school approach to relationships, sexual health and parenthood education display the following characteristics?

- A clear statement of shared aims and whole-school expectations concerning relationships, sexual health and parenthood education
- The involvement of staff, pupils and parents in developing provision for relationships, sexual health and parenthood education
- Balance and continuity in learning achieved through a core programme of planned coverage of relationships, sexual health and parenthood education
- Planned response to specific incidents and to the concerns of particular pupils
- Clear guidance on resources and on learning and teaching approaches
- Systematic arrangements of assessment that involve pupils recording their relationships, sexual health and parenthood education needs and their level of understanding
- Efficient management that encourages consultation, co-ordinated provision, ongoing audit, evaluation and staff development.

Meeting pupils' relationships, sexual health and parenthood needs

Does the school's relationships, sexual health and parenthood education programme take account of pupils' needs through:

- sensitivity and respect for individual differences in an open and non-discriminatory way?
- exploring pupils' pre-existing knowledge and beliefs as a basis for further learning and teaching?
- adapting tasks, pace, resources and pupil groupings to suit the learning focus?
- incorporating sufficient opportunities for taking responsibility through reflecting with and working with other pupils?
- using assessment to plan and monitor progress and provide appropriate challenge?
- taking account of pupil and staff views on the relevance of the health education programme?
- working in partnership with parents and the wider community and using their input to develop shared approaches to specific aspects such as substance misuse and relationships, sexual health and parenthood education?

Evaluating good practice in health education

Possible evaluation techniques include:

- use of rounds at the end of sessions whereby pupils can say what they felt about the session, one thing they learnt etc;
- structured observation of pupils as they work;
- checklists for individuals or groups to fill in;

- graffiti sheets on the wall on which pupils can write up new things they have found out, what they think, how views may have changed, how sessions could have been better etc;
- interviews with pupils conducted either by the teacher or other pupils;
- quizzes to measure knowledge levels;
- questionnaires to measure attitudes or what pupils feel they have learnt, what they have liked and not liked, ways it could be improved etc;
- role play where pupils act out scenes, practise skills in drug related situations etc;
- individual or group recall of what has been learnt;
- problem solving activities, eg using case studies to see what pupils would do in various sex related situations;
- story writing;
- drawing or painting, including making collages and displays;
- pupil record books of what they have done, new learning, how they have felt etc.

Improving Outcomes For Learners Through Self-Evaluation - The Journey To Excellence HMIE 2008 may also assist with the evaluation process

Working with the Media

Working with the Media

Fife Council Communications Unit is based within the Chief Executive's Service, providing support and co-ordination of information from the Council.

Handling the media is not always an easy task but many schools in Fife have worked hard to build up good relationships with their local media. If headteachers feel there is something a little different which would appeal to local media, then they should continue to contact them direct.

However, media interest is not always positive. The sad truth is that often the media only sit up and take notice when the issue is controversial or starts to become political. That is when the Communications Unit can offer the most valuable support.

When to Contact the Local Media

In some instances it is best to organise a press release between the school, education and the press office to ensure facts are accurate and concentrate on the positive issues. For example, in respect of HMIE reports, a press release is prepared by the Communications Unit in conjunction with the school and Education which can often encourage the media to concentrate more on the positive aspects of the report.

When the media contact a school and catch staff unaware, they should either be referred to the Communications Unit or politely be told to return their call when the information they are looking for has been checked out. Headteachers should never feel pressured into answering if concerned about their line of questioning, but should never say 'No Comment'. If in doubt, they should call the Communications Unit for advice.

References

Children (Scotland) Act 1995 Chapter 36

Improving Outcomes For Learners Through Self-Evaluation - The Journey To Excellence
HMIE 2008

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Advice on aspects of health and wellbeing education , including sex and relationships education
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