



Management CIRCULAR No.

81

March 2010
Management Circular No. 81

Glasgow City Council
Education Services
Wheatley House
25 Cochrane Street
Merchant City
GLASGOW
G1 1HL

To **Heads of all Educational Establishments**

Dear Colleague

Sexual Health and Relationships Education in Glasgow Educational Establishments

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In March 2001, the Scottish Government produced guidance for local authorities on sex education in schools. This guidance was incorporated into the circular '*Standards in Scottish Schools etc. Act 2000: Conduct of Sex Education in Scottish Schools*'. Local authorities are required to pay due regard to this guidance, and provide advice on policy formulation to education establishments on provision for sex education. **Sexual health and relationships education conforming to this advice will be appropriately delivered by educational establishments mainly within a programme of personal and social education, health education and religious and moral education.** Due consideration must be given to the age, stage and learning abilities of all children and young people.

In January 2005, the Scottish Government published '*Respect and Responsibility*', the strategy and action plan for improving sexual health in Scotland. It contains a series of actions for local authorities to ensure that consistent, high quality and appropriate sexual health and relationships education is delivered in all school settings and for those excluded from schools, including multi-agency training provision, parental and carer involvement, designated senior management responsibility, and provision to children and young people of information on sexual health services and their access.

In May 2009, the Scottish Government issued the experiences and outcomes for Curriculum for Excellence. Included are experiences and outcomes for Health and Wellbeing, which includes the key curricular area, Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood.

Sexual health and relationships education has an important role in promoting physical, social and emotional health and wellbeing in children and young people and serves as an important contributor to the ethos of the '*health promoting school*'. It is the policy of Glasgow City Council Education Services that every educational establishment provide sexual health and relationships education to all children and young people in line with relevant national guidelines, appropriate to each child's or young person's age, understanding, maturity and stage of development.

The need for sexual health and relationships education is great. It is a key element of education for personal, social and moral development and should be seen as an important part of preparation for adult life. Sexual behaviour that is premature or irresponsible can lead to personal unhappiness, confusion and problems in later relationships, as well as risking unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections.

Children and young people require information on sexuality and the processes of reproduction within the context of relationships based on love and mutual respect and require to develop skills to enable healthy decisions to be made on issues relating to sexual health. To enable this objective to be achieved Heads of Establishment must ensure that a sexual health and relationships education programme conforming to national advice is in place in their establishment, and that each member of teaching staff is fully aware of their role in the planning and delivery of such a programme, to ensure that the needs of children and young people for education in this area are met.

It is important to note that the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 states that every child or young person has a right to education and local authorities have a duty to provide education that is directed towards the development of the personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential. In this context, sexual health and relationships education should be part of the overall curriculum provided by Education Services and its establishments.

The role of parents and carers is crucial in the area of sex education. They play a key role in all aspects of a child's health, development and education. The efforts of educational establishments provide vital support to parents and carers to enable them to undertake this role. This is especially important in relation to sensitive areas in sexual health and relationships education. There is a necessity for schools to inform parents and carers about the nature and content of sexual health and relationships education, to respond to their concerns, and to seek their involvement when programmes are being developed or revised. By this means school and home may work in partnership to ensure the effectiveness of such education for children and young people. For Roman Catholic schools, the authority and Archdiocese will work closely to ensure that there are appropriate guidelines.

This Management Circular serves to provide all heads of mainstream and additional support needs educational establishments in Glasgow with a statement of guidance on the management of sexual health and relationships education. It is based on advice provided by the Scottish Government in the documents:

- i. Circular 2/2001: Conduct of Sex Education in Scottish Schools;
- ii. Sex Education in Scottish Schools - Summary of National Advice;
- iii. Sex Education in Scottish Schools - Guidance for Schools on Effective Consultation with Parents;
- iv. Sex Education in Scottish Schools - A Guide for Parents and Carers.

These documents and this Management Circular provide Heads of Establishment with a set of mandatory conditions to govern their provision for sexual health and relationships education.

NATIONAL AND EDUCATION SERVICES ADVICE

The Scottish Executive document, '*Sex Education in Scottish Schools - Summary of National Advice*', provides key sources of information as well as support materials that address issues relevant to sexual health and relationships education. This outline of relevant national advice is important in demonstrating that sexual health and relationships education benefits from a solid foundation, which the Working Group on Sex Education in Scottish Schools noted in its (McCabe) report was adequate and required no revision. Heads of Establishment and teaching staff involved in developing sexual health and relationships education programmes should be familiar with the advice and support materials in both documents in order that such programmes may conform to this recognised advice.

Glasgow City Council Education Services has always sought to provide educational establishments with up to date information on the nature of the sexual health and relationships education curriculum. This information takes the form of key documents featured in the '*Summary of National Advice*', as well as in publications from Education Services.

- All educational establishments and teachers have been issued with copies of the Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes. The experiences and outcomes for Sexual Health and Relationships Education are included in the Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood section of Health and Wellbeing.
- Denominational schools have been provided with advice and guidelines on religious and moral aspects of the sexual health education curriculum by the Church through the Catholic Education Commission in its publication, *'Relationships and Moral Education'*.

Further advice on sexual health education is provided by this Management Circular, and through staff development provision in sex education organised by the Quality Improvement Officer: Health and Wellbeing. Specific advice for denominational schools may also be accessed through relevant denominational authorities.

Glasgow educational establishments have sufficient national and local advice and resource materials to allow them to provide effective sexual health and relationships education programmes. Such programmes should help children and young people to gain knowledge and understanding, develop skills and reflect upon and form their attitudes and values, all of which should enable them to make informed decisions about sexual health.

DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION

Denominational schools are an integral part of the public education system in Glasgow. Denominational interests were taken into account by the Review Group on Sex Education in Scottish Schools in drawing up national advice in this area and this advice is intended to be a useful basis for everyone. It is recognised that religious authorities with a role in denominational education provide guidance on religious and moral matters for these schools, and that right will continue as at present. Consultation with appropriate denominational representatives has taken place during the production of this Management Circular.

PRINCIPLES AND AIMS OF SEXUAL HEALTH AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

The McCabe Working Group on Sex Education in Schools, appointed by The Scottish Government in February 2000, identified the key principles and aims for sexual health and relationships education. These were adopted by The Scottish Government and included in its Circular 2/2001. Sexual health and relationships education programmes in educational establishments in Glasgow should be based on these principles and aims.

PRINCIPLES OF SEXUAL HEALTH AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

Sexual health and relationships education can be defined as a lifelong process whereby children and young people acquire knowledge, understanding and skills, and develop beliefs, attitudes and values about their sexuality and relationships within a moral and ethical framework. The key principles are:

- Sexual health and relationships education should be viewed as one element of health education set within the wider context of health promotion and the health promoting ethos of an educational establishment;
- Sexual health and relationships education should contribute to the physical, emotional, moral and spiritual development of all children and young people within the context of today's society;
- Education about sexuality and relationships should reflect the cultural, ethnic and religious influences within the home, school and community;
- Sexual health and relationships education should be non-discriminatory and sensitive to the diverse backgrounds and needs of children and young people;
- Sexual health and relationships education should start informally at an early age with parents and carers and continue through to adulthood both within the home and at all stages of school life.

Additionally, Education Services would add the following principle:

- Sexual health and relationships education provision should take account of additional support needs identified in respect of any child or young person.

AIMS OF SEXUAL HEALTH AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

The key aims are to:

- provide accurate and relevant information about the physical and emotional changes that children and young people will experience throughout their formative years and into adulthood;
- establish an awareness of the importance of stable family life and relationships, including the responsibilities of parenthood and marriage;
- provide opportunities for children and young people to develop personal and interpersonal skills that will enable them to make and maintain appropriate relationships within the family, with friends and within the wider community;
- enable children and young people to develop and reflect upon their beliefs, attitudes and values in relation to themselves and others within a moral, ethical and multi-cultural framework;
- foster self-awareness and self-esteem and a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves and for others;
- provide opportunities for young people to consider and reflect upon the range of attitudes to gender, sexuality and sexual orientation, relationships and family life;
- develop an appreciation of, and respect for, diversity and of the need to avoid prejudice and discrimination;
- provide information about and skills to access, where appropriate, agencies and services providing support and advice to children and young people.

The principles and aims outlined will underpin provision in sexual health and relationships education. Programmes should be arranged to provide a learning experience for children and young people that shows continuity and progression and will be appropriate to the ages and stages of children and young people in education.

MANAGEMENT AND CO-ORDINATION OF SEXUAL HEALTH AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

It is important that the provision for sexual health and relationships education should be effectively managed and co-ordinated in educational establishments. In line with requirements of the national strategy and action plan, Headteachers should ensure that there is a designated member of the senior management team given the responsibility for ensuring that the school based sexual health and relationships education programme subscribes to current guidance and delivers key learning objectives to all children and young people, appropriate to each child's or young person's age, understanding, maturity and stage of development. This includes children and young people excluded from school and those looked after and accommodated. Part of this responsibility lies in ensuring that the programme should have regard to the value of stable family life in a child's or young person's development.

As elements of sexual health and relationships education span all stages in the curriculum, attention must be given to co-ordination in order that the programme may be effectively managed at each year stage. A member of teaching staff should be identified as the health education co-ordinator to work with the designated senior management leader and other teaching staff to allow the provision for sexual health and relationships education to be established and maintained in the school. Although the co-ordinator would be expected to be the driving force for health education, all teaching staff involved would be expected to play their part in the planning and delivery of sexual health and relationships education.

Teaching staff in early years, primary and secondary establishments are best placed to deliver sexual health and relationships education. There may, however, be areas of this part of the curriculum that teaching staff may feel less confident about. This is understandable and professional development opportunities should be sought to help develop confidence in teachers, which will enable them to teach sexual health and relationships education. Relevant courses have been included in the EdIS continuous professional development catalogue.

Staff from external agencies, including those linked with denominational education, may have expertise in the area of sexual health and relationships that teaching staff might not reasonably be expected to possess. Such organisations and their staff may usefully assist teachers in the delivery of relevant sexual health and relationships education lessons. School nurses are also included in this category. External agencies should always work in partnership with schools in the delivery of sexual health and relationships education which would continue to be the responsibility of the educational establishment. Education Services requires that all agency staff should be Enhanced Disclosure checked in advance of working in schools and that the organisation gains written approval to work in Glasgow schools from the Service Director: Education. These requirements and others have been included in the guidelines for the use of external agencies in health education issued to provide advice and direction in this area to all Heads of Establishment. (A copy of the guidelines has been attached as Appendix 1 for ease of reference).

CONDUCT OF SEXUAL HEALTH AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION IN EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

It is important that Heads of Establishment give due attention to the way in which sexual health and relationships education is taught. Lessons should be well planned and delivered in an atmosphere which is conducive to effective teaching and learning. The programme should consider a range of issues relating to personal and social development, healthy living and appropriate values which reinforce self-worth, respect for others and a sense of responsibility. It should be set within well-organised programmes for personal and social, health, and religious and moral education. Programmes should be coherent and provide progression and continuity in learning, developing knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in children and young people.

Effective programmes of sexual health and relationships education present information in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner within a framework of sound values and an awareness of the law on sexual behaviour. Children and young people should be encouraged to appreciate the value of stable family life, parental/carer responsibility and family relationships in bringing up children and offering them security, stability and happiness. Children and young people should also be encouraged to appreciate the value of commitment in relationships and partnerships, including the value placed on marriage by religious groups and others in our society. At the same time, teachers must respect and avoid causing hurt or offence to children and young people who come from backgrounds that do not reflect this value. This may include some who are looked after and accommodated. All children and young people should be encouraged to understand the importance of self-restraint, dignity, respect for themselves and the views of others. They should be encouraged to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications and risks of certain types of behaviour and to accept that both sexes must behave responsibly.

All Heads of Establishment must ensure that Glasgow City Council's obligations, relating to sex education in schools, under Section 35 of the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 are met. Accordingly, all Heads of Establishment must ensure that programmes of sexual health and relationships education have regard to:

- the value of stable family life in a child's or young person's development; and
- the need to ensure that the content of instruction is appropriate having regard to each child's or young person's understanding and age of development.

THE SEXUAL HEALTH AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION PROGRAMME

While there is a clear focus on sexual health and relationships education within the health education curriculum other key areas such as religious and moral education, personal and social education, and science will be involved. Sexual health and relationships education provision should embody the principles of consistency, coherence, continuity and progression which underpin high quality provision in all areas of the curriculum.

The curriculum should endeavour to build on prior learning to inform development of knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes and values associated with health. This means that expertise in all areas of health education is developed as children and young people progress through education rather than being confined to only one or two stages. It should also allow the teaching emphasis for each area to be related to the ages and stages taught.

KEY AREAS OF CONTENT IN SEXUAL HEALTH AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION WITHIN THE HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Content in sexual health and relationships education should afford broad coverage of areas relating to physical, social and emotional health. An example of sexual health and relationships education as covered in the Glasgow's Health programme follows:

Early Years Education

By the end of early years education children should show:

- Awareness and development of self-esteem and confidence;
- Awareness of feelings, developing ability to express own feelings and consider feelings of others;
- Development of positive attitudes to self and others, including awareness and consequences of bullying and respect for needs and feelings of others;
- Development of independence and consideration of safety in decision making including the ability to say no to strangers;
- Awareness and appreciation of uniqueness of self and others;
- Appreciation of the value of family, friends and people who care for them;
- Development of respect for others including elderly and disabled people.

Early Primary Stages

During early stages of primary school children should also show:

- Awareness and knowledge of their body, its uniqueness, how it grows and changes;
- Awareness that they can make their own choices, the value of positive choices, and consequences of choice, including in bullying situations, for self and others;
- An appreciation of the value of different family groups, friends and people who contribute to their care and welfare and an appreciation of the dangers posed by strangers.

Middle Stages of Primary School

During middle stages of primary school children should also show:

- Appreciation of changes in self and family and associated feelings;
- Awareness of how the body defends itself against infection including the importance of the immune system;
- Appreciation of the value in being part of a family and how its influence can help in making good choices;
- Awareness of the various roles in friendship, the value of supporting one another and influencing decision making;
- Development of skills and strategies to deal with bullying situations.

Upper Stages of Primary School

During upper stages of primary school children should also show:

- Knowledge and understanding of reproductive system and processes, including menstruation, pregnancy and birth;
- Awareness of influences, including media, on them and how to deal with associated pressures;
- Awareness of physical and emotional changes at puberty and the importance of related personal hygiene;
- Development of self-esteem, confidence and assertiveness to promote positive image of self worth;
- Development of ability to deal with sexual feelings;
- Understanding of own developing sexuality and awareness of gender identity;
- Understanding of the changing nature of friendship including ability to leave old friends and make new friends;
- Awareness of value of responsibility and caring in relationships.

Stages S1 to S3 of Secondary School

During S1-S3 of secondary school young people should also show:

- Further knowledge and understanding about the human reproductive process, issues related to puberty and clarify misconceptions about them;
- Skills to maintain friendships and relationships;
- Appreciation of the importance of treating others equally to ensure equality of opportunity and combating gender and other stereotypes and discrimination.
- Knowledge of the effects of risk taking associated with sexual health, responsible strategies for keeping safe and healthy, and the positive effects of a healthy lifestyle;
- Awareness of peer and media influences and ability to develop strategies to deal with them to promote positive sexual health;
- Appreciation of the importance of permanent and responsible relationships;
- Appreciation of the variety of roles of parents and carers including clarifying mistaken information about sexual health;

- Understanding of contraception and family planning issues;
- Knowledge of the range of sexually transmitted infections and ways to keep safe;
- Awareness of sources of useful information, advice and services for sexual health.

Stages S4 to S6 of Secondary Education

During S4-S6 of secondary school young people should also show:

- Understanding of the need for commitment and responsibility in relationships;
- Appreciation of variety in sexual orientation and the need for tolerance and respect of people whose sexual orientation is different;
- Understanding of women's and men's rights in relation to sexual health;
- Awareness of the issues involved in becoming a responsible parent;
- Understanding of the need for respect and responsibility in sexual behaviour;
- Knowledge of responsibilities and strategies for avoiding sexually transmitted infections;
- Awareness of sources of useful information, advice and services for sexual health.

All parts of sexual health and relationships education from across the curriculum should articulate well in order that the learning experience of children and young people in this area may be complete. Heads of Establishment should ensure coherence in this area of provision across all relevant curricular areas.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN SEXUAL HEALTH AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

As with all other areas of the curriculum, there is a need for effective practice and methodologies to be employed in the teaching of sexual health and relationships education to ensure that the learning experience of children and young people is of the highest quality and meets all its objectives. It is important that sexual health and relationships education has clear learning outcomes for each lesson and that children and young people are provided with clear information on the nature of sexual health and relationships education that they will receive at each stage, including elements provided by different curricular areas.

The active involvement of children and young people in the learning process associated with sexual health and relationships education is vital for the development of knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values about sexual health. This means that there is only a limited role for passive reception of information. A range of teaching approaches requires to be built into the programme in order to allow opportunities for discussion with peers and adults so that children and young people might develop the skills to make positive choices and decisions about sexual health and relationships in their lives. Subject matter should include at appropriate stages information and advice on relevant services and how to access them.

Continuous professional development courses organised by the Education Improvement Service (EdIS) are available to support active teaching and learning approaches for sex education. As in other areas of the curriculum careful planning and organisation are essential to the success of sex education programmes. Headteachers should ensure that all teaching staff involved in sexual health education programmes are provided with appropriate Continuing Professional Development training in this area.

Active teaching and learning approaches will include:

- focussed surveys and questionnaires;
- discussion and debate;
- analysis of information, case studies and statistics;
- quick-think/brainstorm activities;
- “draw and write”;
- role-play and drama situations;
- problem solving opportunities; and
- use of audio-visual, computer, and information communication technologies.

Variety in teaching and learning methodologies used will be important to maintain the interest and enthusiasm of children and young people and enhance the effectiveness of the programme.

It is important that up to date and appropriate resources are available for sexual health and relationships education in each establishment in order that the educational needs of children and young people may be more effectively met. Heads of Establishment should ensure that sufficient resources are available in order that staff involved may have the materials and support they need to deliver an effective sexual health and relationships education curriculum.

If children and young people are given opportunities to record what they have learned during lessons in sexual health and relationships education this will assist in assessment and reporting of children and young people progress, and be useful for future planning.

INFORMING AND RESPONDING TO PARENTS AND CARERS

The role that parents and carers play in all aspects of their children's education is important. The efforts made by the school to assist parents and carers in this role are also important in fostering a useful partnership between home and educational establishment.

Good practice dictates that parents and carers must be informed, and consulted, about key aspects of the curriculum particularly in relation to sensitive and potentially controversial areas such as sexual health and relationships education. Heads of Establishment must ensure that parents and carers are informed in advance about the sexual health and relationships education programme their child will receive. This would include sending letters and information home and including such information in school handbooks.

Heads of Establishment should ensure that parents and carers are consulted when the programme in sexual health and relationships education is to be developed or reviewed, and actively encouraged to take part in such consultation. All parents and carers should be given the opportunity in advance to view key teaching materials and to ask questions about any aspect of the sexual health and relationships education programme. Whilst it will be necessary to consult with all parents and carers the role of the school board will be important in facilitating such consultation. Children and young people should be given the opportunity to identify and express their own needs in terms of sexual health and relationships education. This should allow programmes to be developed which are relevant to these needs.

In preparing programmes and in consulting with parents and carers and responding to their views Heads of Establishment should be sensitive to parents' and carers' concerns, and to cultural and religious views which they may hold, and which may conflict with particular aspects of the planned programme.

While it is a nationally accepted part of the existing and agreed framework for Scottish schools and of childrens' and young peoples' educational entitlement, there is no statutory requirement for participation in a programme of sexual health and relationships education. Heads of Establishment must be sensitive to the rare cases in which a parent or carer may wish to withdraw a child from all or part of a planned sexual health and relationships education programme. Before a decision is taken to withdraw a child or young person from specific lessons Heads of Establishment must ensure that discussion has taken place with the parent/carer:

- to clarify the purposes of the programme;
- to encourage them to see participation in the programme as a positive and constructive part of their child's education and development; and
- enable them to appreciate the negative academic, social and emotional consequences of withdrawal for the child or young person.

The child's or young person's view must be taken into account, given their statutory right to education, and their agreement gained before any decision is taken to withdraw them from specific lessons in sexual health and relationships education. This applies to all children and young people, including those looked after, or looked after and accommodated. At the same time Heads of Establishment must also be sensitive to the reasonable view of a parent/carer as to the age and manner that they deem appropriate for their child to be educated about specific aspects of sexual health and relationships education.

In the event of agreement for a parent/carer to withdraw their child it should be made clear to the parent/carer that they would have responsibility for arranging provision in sexual health education for their child. In such cases the Head of Establishment should make appropriate arrangements for the child or young person to have alternative positive educational provision at the time of lessons from which the child or young person is to be withdrawn. It is recognised that this advice applies only to specific lessons in sexual health and relationships education and not to lessons across the curriculum where aspects of sexual health and relationships may be discussed within the context of broader subject matter in another curricular area.

Heads of Establishment should have in place arrangements to respond promptly and fully to any concerns that parents and carers might express about the content of the sexual health and relationships education programme. It is hoped that such concerns will be resolved by the establishment itself. Where a parent/carer remains dissatisfied, prompt referral to authority level through the normal channels may require to be considered. School handbooks should include arrangements for consulting parents and carers and for them to raise their concerns.

Heads of Establishment should ensure that feedback on the sexual health and relationships education programme is received from both children and young people and parents/carers. This measure will ensure that programmes may be appropriately amended to meet the needs of children and young people as well as to maintain useful links with parents/carers.

The guidance provided by the document '*Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities on Effective Consultation with Parents and Carers*' should also be followed by Heads of Establishment to inform effective provision in this area.

The leaflet '*Sex Education in Scottish Schools - A Guide for Parents and Carers*' has been prepared by Learning and Teaching Scotland on behalf of The Scottish Government and should be obtained by Heads of Establishment from Learning and Teaching Scotland. (A copy has been attached as Appendix 2 for ease of reference). Learning and Teaching Scotland has provided additional literature for parents and carers of Roman Catholic children.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Sexual health and relationships education lessons should be conducted in a sensitive manner which should not attempt to judge individual children and young people or demand information of a personal nature from them. Discussion should therefore always be general in nature. The setting of ground rules and the establishment of a group agreement to inform the conduct of sexual health and relationships education lessons may be useful in this regard as this can highlight the inadvisability of unintended personal disclosures.

Teaching staff should be clear at the outset of sexual health and relationships education programmes that information shared by children and young people during lessons relating to child protection issues cannot be regarded as confidential and teachers would have a duty to report this. (Full details may be gained from Management Circular No. 57).

CLUSTER BASED WORKING

Liaison among establishments in Learning Communities will be important in ensuring that sexual health and relationships education will be coherent throughout all sectors. Education establishments within Learning Communities should work jointly to ensure that programmes show consistency, continuity and progression across the cluster in addition to facilitating effective liaison between sectors.

Cluster based training involving staff from establishments in Learning Communities should be arranged to ensure effective joint working of staff within this area of the curriculum.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Education Services will continue to monitor and provide advice on provision of sexual health and relationships education in schools and its approach to training teaching staff in this key area of health education. An audit of school provision will be carried out on a regular basis, at least once every three years. Training provision by EdIS will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it meets the needs of teaching staff.

Headteachers should ensure that provision in sexual health and relationships education in their school is evaluated, at least on an annual basis, to ensure that teaching materials and approaches, including inputs from other agencies, continue to meet the needs of children and young people in this area as well as to incorporate any changes to national and local advice. This would form an appropriate part of the work of staff designated to manage and co-ordinate this area of provision and should form part of the business and minutes of relevant meetings.

CONCLUSION

This Management Circular provides Education Services policy and requirements on the management and implementation in educational establishments of sexual health and relationships education programmes together with requirements for consultation with parents and carers. As it constitutes Education Services policy in this area, and is in accordance with published guidance from The Scottish Government, the terms of this Management Circular must be followed by all Glasgow City Council educational establishments.

Further advice can be obtained from the Quality Improvement Officer: Health and Wellbeing, Education Services, Glasgow City Council, Wheatley House, 25 Cochrane Street, Glasgow G1 1HL (phone 0141 287 3817, fax 0141 287 5038).

Yours sincerely

Maureen McKenna
Service Director: Education

Guidelines on the Use of Other Agencies in School Health Education Programmes

Teachers will always be the main source of expertise for delivering any programme of health education. All of the initial teacher education programmes contain significant input on health education and most authorities also offer substantial opportunities for in-service training in health education materials and techniques.

In health education, as in other aspects of education, the teachers may find it valuable, in order to illustrate a particular part of the school syllabus, to invite another person or agency to visit the school, often to participate in class work with the teacher and the children and young people.

The expertise that such groups provide can prove invaluable in complementing and supplementing the efforts of the school. Carefully chosen external agencies are able to provide additional knowledge and the benefit of experience that might prove difficult for many teachers to provide without extensive research and training. With careful planning as to how such groups may be utilised by schools, their contribution can benefit the health education experience of our children and young people in a meaningful way. On some occasions, visiting agencies can also be used as a means of staff development for teachers who themselves will implement the full health education programme.

In order to maximise the effectiveness of contributions made in this way, and to satisfy local and national advice, the following guidelines have been prepared on the criteria to be met in the choice and use of external agencies by schools. These guidelines should be followed by Headteachers to ensure that this is the case. These guidelines are not meant to be restrictive or to impede local decision-making or flexibility; they are designed to offer advice on preparation, curricular continuity, parental guidance and school security. They are also meant to be used in conjunction with the school/authority policies on Child Protection Procedures.

1. Visitors should be viewed as complementing the curriculum already in place. They should not be seen as a substitute for the establishment's mainline provision as outlined in the school plan.

"Where there is collaboration with an agency to develop a particular programme in which an outsider can participate, this is probably most educationally acceptable. Where a one-off visit is arranged with no preparation and no follow-up then the impact and benefits are limited."

Health Education in Scottish Schools - SCRE

2. The class teacher should be present throughout the presentation for a variety of reasons:
 - teacher has planned this aspect of the curriculum for the year;
 - teacher is legally responsible for class;
 - teacher cannot ensure continuity of programme if absent;
 - additional information by teacher gained would enhance programme further;
 - teacher should be present to ensure proper conduct of presentation (see also Part 5).

3. Speakers should be from credible, acceptable and where possible local organisations. Individuals should agree to vetting or checking by the Head of Establishment.

Good indicators of such organisations are:

- staff are subject to Disclosure Scotland checking before being employed by the agency, and checks should be submitted to Education Services for approval.
- the organisation has good links with statutory bodies, such as Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board, Glasgow City Council Social Work Services, or, NHS Health Scotland, and should be able to demonstrate such links.
- a major organisation like Strathclyde Police may also be useful in supplementing specific programmes on road safety and drugs education especially when the visiting officers are being asked to speak about, or demonstrate, their own particular expertise in any particular area of activity.

Notwithstanding the above, all agencies wishing to work in schools in the field of sexual health education must first seek approval for this purpose from the Service Director: Education and be prepared to submit full details of their operation in schools. (This approval is additional to any other approval that an agency might require for operation in denominational schools).

4. Presentations should be appropriate to the ages and stages of children and young people concerned. It would not be appropriate for the same presentation to be delivered regardless of age and stage, and, to primary and secondary children and young people alike. The school should ensure that presentations are pitched at the appropriate level as well as being interesting, relevant and stimulating for the children and young people concerned. (See also Part 1 above).
5. Material used by agencies, including that given to children and young people, must be factually accurate and be able to stand scrutiny with widely accepted research findings or national or local statutory agency statistics.
6. A preliminary meeting should be held to plan the event to incorporate it as fully as possible into the ongoing curriculum and policy of the school and to agree protocols for handling disclosure and confidentiality issues, should they occur, in line with Glasgow City Council/Education Services policy. Agencies must work within the terms of Glasgow City Council/Education Services policies and protocols.
7. Criticism, implied or direct, of other organisations should not be permitted during the presentation, or in materials, whether the agency believes it appropriate or not. The contribution of the agency to the health education programme should remain within the agreed limit of their input into the curriculum and should reflect the expertise of the agency involved.
8. Paper or other materials to be used during presentations should be submitted to the Headteacher in advance of the presentation to ensure their suitability for use in the school. This is in addition to the requirement for sexual health related materials to be first submitted to the Service Director: Education for approval. A sensitive approach will be required, for example, with drama presentations for older children and young people where difficult or sensitive issues are explored.

Particular care should be taken to ensure that materials or presentations from agencies do not conflict with current legislation relating to children and young people. (The Quality Improvement Officer: Health and Wellbeing can offer advice to schools where such issues may arise).

9. External agencies should not be permitted to sell publications to children and young people or ask for donations from them. Any fee for the presentation should be agreed with the Head of Establishment beforehand.

10. Parents and carers should be informed and involved as appropriate. Parent Councils should be consulted before any new initiatives are undertaken which may involve sensitive areas of health education. In the denominational school sector prior discussion will be necessary with the appropriate Church authorities.
11. If any difficulties or doubts remain unresolved by these guidelines, the Head of Establishment should consult with the Service Director: Education.

This information is extracted from a leaflet produced by The Scottish Government.

Sex Education in Scottish Schools - A Guide for Parents and Carers

The leaflet considers five questions.

- What are schools expected to do?
- What is sex education?
- What will my child be taught?
- How will I be consulted?
- What can I do if I have concerns?

A Guide for Parents and Carers

Please contact your child's school if you want more information. The Headteacher, or another appropriate member of staff, will be happy to discuss what this means for your child. It is intended that this guide will be useful for everyone, however, religious authorities with a role in denominational education have the right to provide guidance for their denominational schools. They may therefore choose to supplement this information for denominational schools.

What are schools expected to do?

All schools are expected to provide sex education. The Scottish Government has produced guidance for local authorities and schools. This requires that sex education should present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner within a framework of sound values.

Schools are expected to:

- make sure that sex education takes account of each child's or young person's age, understanding and stage of development;
- work in partnership with parents/carers;
- have simple, direct procedures in place for parents/carers to raise concerns;
- have a method of consulting with children and young people;
- respect the different cultural, ethnic and religious environment of the home;
- respect the different home circumstances and needs of all children and young people. Great care is taken to emphasise the importance of relationships based on love and respect. Children and young people are encouraged to appreciate the value of stable family life, including the responsibilities of parenthood and marriage.

What is sex education?

Sex education is an important aspect of every child's or young person's personal and social development. It aims to help children and young people make informed, responsible and healthy choices about their lives, their relationships and their contribution to society.

To do this effectively children and young people will need opportunities to:

- gain information, knowledge and understanding about a wide range of issues;
- develop and use the thinking, personal and social skills that will allow them to become confident in making the decisions and choices for themselves;
- consider their own and other people's feelings, emotions and values;
- learn about their rights and responsibilities as well as those of others.

Opportunities for this learning to take place effectively are most likely where schools, parents/carers and others are able to work in partnership.

Sex education begins in the home where children first become aware of their growing bodies and how they are kept safe and cared for. The home is also the place where children begin to explore and understand their feelings and values and how they relate to the wider world around them.

From an early age children are exposed to powerful and conflicting ideas about health, lifestyle and sexuality from television, magazines and their friends. Parents/Carers and schools share the responsibility for helping children and young people to make sense of these pressures and messages.

What will my child be taught?

At school, sex education builds on what children and young people already know. It is an integral feature of health education, education for personal and social development and, religious and moral education programmes. In addition, other curriculum areas such as environmental studies in the primary school and secondary school subjects such as science, home economics, physical education and social subjects all have important contributions to make.

Effective sex education, like other learning, builds progressively from stage to stage - from pre-school to upper secondary. Certain key features are central to any programme of sex education - no matter the stage. These include helping your child to consider:

- respect and caring for self and others;
- respect for individual differences;
- ways to express and deal with feelings and emotions;
- ways to keep safe;
- positive and supportive relationships.

Schools and local authorities have more detailed programmes. They often include contributions from others such as the school nurse or other health professionals.

At the end of this leaflet you will find an example of what a sex education programme might look like at different stages of a child's or young person's school career.

The topics will not necessarily be covered in your child's school in the order or at the stages shown. The school will be consulting you about their programme.

How will I be consulted?

It is important - for you as a parent/carer, for your child and for the school - that you are fully informed and consulted about the nature and purpose of the sex education your child will receive.

The national guidance expects schools to:

- have strategies to consult parents/carers;
- give advance information on the planned programme.

There are many ways for you to be involved and offer your views. Your child's school will offer a number of opportunities.

The examples below show some of the ways different schools involve and consult parents/carers:

- Parents' evenings, where health education issues are being discussed with opportunities to ask questions about the programmes;
- Information about sex education in the school handbook or prospectus;
- Health education working groups;
- Workshops or information sessions where materials are on display;
- Question and answer booklets;
- Surveys to find out parents'/carers' views on the sex education programme.

What do I do if I have concerns?

If you have a particular concern about the sex education being provided by the school for your child the first thing to do is to discuss it with your child's Headteacher. He/She will do all they can to respond to your concerns.

Most parents/carers are happy to let their child take part in the sex education programme provided by their school. However, in some exceptional circumstances, there will be occasions when a parent/carer takes the view that this is an aspect of their child's education that they prefer to deal with only at home. This is their choice. However, parents/carers and the school must also take into account the child's views given the child's statutory right to education.

Where a parent/carer chooses to withdraw their child from the sex education programme they should talk to the Headteacher. He or she will explain what arrangements can be made for the child or young person. It is important to remember that aspects of sex education may be discussed in many areas of the curriculum. It would not be possible for a child or young person to be withdrawn from lessons across the curriculum as this would prevent a child or young person receiving an adequate and efficient education.

Making it work well

Effective sex education depends on a partnership between home and school. Making this work well requires good communication, good relationships and building trust and confidence. Where this happens it will be easier to help children and young people to make sound choices about their lifestyle and health.

This is one example of what a programme of sex education might look like. You can find out about what your child is being taught and when from your own school.

The early years

- Awareness of the way bodies grow and change;
- Uniqueness of their body;
- Where living things come from;
- Family and other special people who care for them.

Middle stages of primary school

- Exploring changes in the body;
- How human life begins;
- Being part of a family;
- Dealing with bullying situations.

Upper stages of primary school

- Physical and emotional changes at puberty;
- Body image and self-worth;
- Understanding of own developing sexuality;
- Developing an awareness of gender identity;
- Changing nature of friendship;
- Dealing with sexual feelings;
- Menstruation, pregnancy and birth.

Early secondary stages

- Skills required to maintain friendships and relationships;
- Gender stereotypes, equal opportunities and discrimination;
- Peer and media influences;
- Permanent and responsible relationships;
- Parenting roles;
- Contraception and family planning issues;
- Awareness of sexually transmitted infections and HIV and AIDS and how to keep safe;
- Awareness of risks and responsible strategies for keeping safe and healthy;
- Information, advice and support services.

Middle to upper secondary stages

- Responsibility and commitment within relationships;
- Awareness of sexual orientation;
- Parental responsibility;
- Responsible sexual behaviour;
- Responsibilities and strategies for avoiding sexually transmitted infections, HIV and AIDS;
- Information, advice and support services.

What is this leaflet for?

The Scottish Government has recently produced national advice and guidance on sex education. This leaflet describes what this will mean for your child. It outlines:

- what sex education will cover;
- the home-school partnership and shared responsibilities on which effective sex education is based;
- your rights as a parent/carer to be consulted, in advance, on the programme your child will receive;
- your child's rights to have their views taken into account.

© Queen's Printer for Scotland

This extract may be photocopied, but may not be reproduced for commercial purposes without the permission of The Scottish Government.