



Sexual Health and Relationships Education (SRE) Policy

Argyll and Bute Council Community Services: Education

Sexual Health and Relationships Education (SRE) Policy

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the aims, key principles and advice for managers and staff in all educational establishments in Argyll and Bute to support them meet national and local requirements in the delivery of sexual health and relationships education (SRE).

2. Aims of policy

- to enable educational establishments to understand fully the authority's position and to have the necessary advice and support in order to develop their own establishment's policy
- to ensure that across all educational establishments there is a measure of consistency in the quality of SRE programmes delivered in accordance with national guidance
- to ensure that there is continuity and progression in planning SRE in accordance with the relevant health and wellbeing outcomes from a *Curriculum for Excellence* and these are appropriate to each stage of a pupil's development

3. Rationale

There has been a number of documents and reports published in the last few years which have influenced this policy and these are listed in appendix 1.

Extracts from these documents include:

Pupils should be encouraged to appreciate the value of stable family life, parental responsibility and family relationships in bringing up children and offering them security, stability and happiness. Pupils 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 a Scottish society. At the same time teachers must respect and avoid causing hurt or offence to those who come from backgrounds that do not reflect this value. All pupils should be encouraged to understand the importance of self restraint, dignity, respect for themselves and the views of others.

Conduct of SRE in schools 2001

Schools have a crucial part to play in fostering healthy attitudes towards relationships, sex and sexuality in young people. All schools are expected to provide sex and relationships education (SRE). High quality SRE should be delivered in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner by professionals who are trained for this role and who are able to support and complement the role of parents and carers as educators of children and young people.

Respect and Responsibility 2005

Learning through health and wellbeing promotes confidence, independent thinking and positive attitudes and dispositions. Because of this, it is the responsibility of every teacher to contribute to learning and development in this area

Building the Curriculum 1 2006

Learners develop an understanding of how to maintain positive relationships with a variety of people and are aware of how thoughts, feelings, attitudes and beliefs can influence decisions about relationships and sexual health. They develop their understanding of the complex roles and responsibilities of being a parent or carer.

Curriculum for Excellence 2009

Learning in health and wellbeing ensures that children and young people develop the knowledge and understanding, skills capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, spiritual, emotional, social and physical well-being now and in the future. Each establishment, working with partners, should take a holistic approach to promoting

health and wellbeing, one that takes account of the stage of growth, development and maturity of each individual and the social and community context.

Curriculum for Excellence 2009

4. Key Principles

SRE 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 relationships, sexual wellbeing and sexuality within a moral and ethical background. This should be conducted within the guidelines issued by the Scottish Government and Learning and Teaching Scotland.

- SRE should be viewed as one element of pupils' health and wellbeing curriculum set within the wider context of health promotion and the health promoting ethos of the school
- SRE should contribute to the physical, emotional, moral and spiritual development of all young people within the context of today's society.
- Education about sexuality, relationships and parenthood should take into account the cultural, ethnic and religious influences within the home, the school and the community
- SRE should be non-discriminatory and sensitive to the diverse backgrounds and needs of all young people
- SRE starts informally at an early stage with parents and carers, and continues through to adulthood both within the home and at all stages of school life

5. Learning and teaching

In schools SRE will be delivered as part of all pupils' health and wellbeing curriculum (Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood Outcomes and Experiences from *A Curriculum for Excellence* 2009). However there will be links with other curricular areas eg Religious and Moral Education , Science, Social Subjects.

SRE is best delivered through an effective partnership with parents and close working between Argyll and Bute Community Services: Education and NHS Highland.

The key features of an effective SRE programme are summarized thus:

- Educational establishments, where possible, should adopt a cluster approach to the SRE curriculum to assist continuity and progression in curriculum delivery for 3 -18 year olds.
- SRE will be an integral part of the learning process and will endeavour to be of the highest quality in terms of learning experiences of pupils.
- SRE will be planned and delivered by trained and confident teachers in partnership with approved partner agencies eg Public Health/ School Nurses and others.
- Parents must be informed of SRE programmes prior to their delivery (see appendix 2 for sample letter to parents)
- The delivery of SRE is set within the context of a health promoting establishment with a positive school ethos and supportive classroom climates. This includes the provision of comfortable accommodation and resources eg equipment to show DVD. Ground rules should be agreed, trust and openness should be developed and children and young people encouraged to ask questions and raise issues.
- SRE should be fundamentally rooted in the context of caring, respectful and loving relationships, and should highlight the need for stable relationships as the vehicle for bringing up children.
- SRE will be respectful of and responsive to diversity of all kinds (eg moral, gender values).
- Resources and approaches should be varied, interactive and appropriate to the age, stage and development of children and young people.
- Only materials approved by Scottish Government or NHS Highland should be used in educational establishments
- In the case of denominational schools the programme should conform to the guidelines as set out by Catholic Education Commission
- Head teachers will have due regard to views of parents, pupils, other major stakeholders in respect of the programme, and supporting materials.

Current research evidence suggests that SRE is most effective when children and young people are:

- ❖ Given factually accurate information at appropriate times
- ❖ Encouraged to reflect and discuss the issues
- ❖ Given opportunities to reflect on the consequences resulting from alternative courses of action.

6. Pupils with additional support needs and vulnerable pupils

Within educational establishments all staff should bear in mind the vulnerability of all children, particularly those with additional support needs. There is a particular need for sensitive and personalised SRE for vulnerable pupils and staff require to have a heightened awareness of the backgrounds and needs of those children and young people. This may result in 1:1 individual programmes tailored to meet pupils' needs which could form part of a pupil's co-ordinated support plan. It is important that establishments work with parents to ensure that the individual needs of young people are addressed.

7. Child Protection

The pupil's welfare is paramount and the authority's child protection guidelines should be followed at all times. Teachers will endeavour to build trusting relationships with young people breaking confidences only where failure to do so places the young person (or others) at risk of serious and immediate harm. In such instances young people would be made aware that such information would only be passed on, on a need to know basis as covered by child protection guidelines and current legislation.

SRE is by its very nature a sensitive area of the curriculum and schools should encourage teachers and others to develop a set of ground rules with their classes before embarking on programmes that deal with such sensitive issues.

8. Management

The delivery of SRE in any educational establishment is the responsibility of the headteacher or Campus Principal. Within the service this remit is shared by

- Health and wellbeing Leaders in each establishment
- tThe Quality Improvement Officer and Education Support Officer with responsibility for health and wellbeing
- The Heads of Service for pre-school, primary and secondary education

The service is committed to working with health professionals and others who can offer establishments expert advice and support in line with this policy. Argyll and Bute's Sexual Health Strategy Group is the steering group which promotes joint working and supports joint staff development in relation to SRE.

9. Monitoring

Monitoring and evaluating the delivery of SRE is the responsibility of the headteacher. This will be undertaken using the school's monitoring and evaluating procedures using quality indicators from *How Good is Our School 3*.

10. Working with parents

The service is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers and acknowledges the cultural, ethnic and religious influences within the home, the school and the community.

Parents play a key role in all aspects of their children's education. It is essential that parents and carers should be given the opportunity in advance to view key teaching materials and to ask questions about any aspect of an SRE programme.

See appendix 2 for an example of a letter sent to be parents.

Where parents or carers wish to withdraw a child from all or part of a planned SRE programme they should be invited to discuss their concerns. Schools may wish to ensure that parents and carers are making an informed decision based on knowledge and understanding of the programme and relevant materials. Given the child's statutory

right to education, the child's views must also be taken into account. However, if the parents and carers decide to withdraw their child from a specific programme of SRE, arrangements will be made for the pupil to have alternative positive educational provision. If there is a conflict between the child and the parent/carer's views which are unresolved after discussion, Argyll and Bute's Legal services should be consulted. It is recognised that aspects of SRE may be discussed in many areas of the curriculum and it would not be possible for a child to be withdrawn from lessons across the curriculum as this would prevent the child from receiving an education directed to the development of his/her fullest ability.

Establishments will use the school handbook to inform parents about protocols and procedures; clarify for parents the issue of confidentiality and external agency involvement. Parents will be informed in advance of any sensitive visit or presentation. Arrangements will be in place to respond promptly and fully to any concerns which parents and carers might express about the content or conduct of an SRE programme. They should be encouraged to raise concerns directly with the school as soon as possible so that matters can be resolved promptly.

Where, after consultation with the school, the parents or carers remain dissatisfied, the Complaints Procedures Framework should be implemented. Schools will make clear the arrangements for consulting parents and carers and for them to voice their concerns. Detailed guidance can be found in *Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities on Effective Consultation with Parents and Carers* and information in the leaflet *Sex Education in Scottish Schools – A Guide for Parents and Carers*.

11. Working with partners

Young people need information on sources of health advice, appropriate helplines and access to local health services. All secondary school pupils should have access to a youth health drop in centre in or near to secondary schools.

Schools and partner organisations need to work together to establish a protocol that takes into account the professional ethics of the staff involved and the rights of parents and young people. Staff must be fully aware of the implications of protocols with external partner agencies.

See appendix no. 3.

Building relationships and joint working with partners is encouraged as this can provide a valuable addition to SRE programmes. Time for planning and consultation between class teachers and partners should be made. A teacher must be present during inputs to SRE programmes by partners and visits from other professionals should not be regarded as an alternative to teacher input.

12. Staff development

Staff will be given appropriate opportunities for on-going training and staff development provided jointly by Argyll and Bute Community Services and NHS Highland. Training and staff development needs will be identified through the professional review and development process.

13. Equality Impact Assessment

This policy is in accordance with Argyll and Bute Council's Equalities and Diversity Scheme. It supports the Council in its duty to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good relations between diverse groups.

14. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed during session 2012-13.

15. Resources

Copies of *Living and Growing 2005* resource packs were distributed to all primary schools in September 2009. School Nurses will have additional resources to enhance the delivery of SRE in primary schools.

SHARE (Sexual Health and Relationships Education) Resource packs have been distributed to secondary schools' staff, school nurses and partners who have attended three days SHARE training.

SHARE Special resource packs were distributed to all staff from secondary schools and learning centres who attended SHARE Special training in September 2009 for use with

pupils aged 11-19 with additional support needs. All secondary schools now have this resource.

Additional resources (leaflets, booklets, DVDs, posters etc) to support the delivery of SRE and other health and wellbeing health outcomes can be obtained/ borrowed from:

Resources Library

Dykebar Hospital

Paisley.

These can be viewed online at www.phru.net/perl or tel 0141 314 4074/4261.

There are many websites which can enhance the delivery of SRE but each school should satisfy themselves that they are comfortable with the content of these sites. The following sites are accessible in schools:

www.thehormonefactory.com

Fun and interactive site for 10-12 year olds to learn about their bodies, keeping safe and basic reproductive health

www.childline.org.uk

site for all aspects of child welfare and safety

www.ltscotland.org.uk

Lists the experiences and outcomes for relationships, sexual health and parenthood

www.healthyrespect.co.uk

Lothian site giving young people sexual health and relationships information, advice and support

www.healthscotland.co.uk

NHS advisory site

www.need2know.co.uk

Magazine style site on all aspects of wellbeing for teenagers, including pages on sexual health and experiences

www.sexualhealthscotland.co.uk

Scottish Government site very informative including section on sex and the law but not recommended for viewing by under 16s

www.caledoniayouth.org.uk

Edinburgh based service providing support for young people covering sexual health and wellbeing, relationships and emotional issues

www.lgbtyouth.org.uk

Information on the work of Scotland's LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) charity for young people

Appendix 1

<i>Conduct of Sex Education in Scottish schools (The McCabe Report)</i>	2001
<i>Sex Education in Scottish Schools - A Guide for Parents and Carers</i>	2001
Scottish Executive	(modified 2006)
<i>Called to love Catholic education teaching programme</i>	2001
<i>Health Promoting Schools Being well, doing well</i>	2004
<i>Respect and Responsibility, Strategy and Action Plan for improving Sexual Health</i>	
Scottish Executive	2005
<i>Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) Act (Scotland)</i>	2007
<i>Sexual Health Strategy NHS Highland 2008 – 2011</i>	2008
<i>Curriculum for excellence: Health and wellbeing: Experiences and outcomes</i>	2009
<i>Principles and practice</i>	2009

The following resources are available from Healthy Respect www.healthyrespect.co.uk

<i>Addressing LGBT Issues with Young People</i>	2005
<i>A Guide for Teachers on LGBT issues</i>	2005

**SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS
PLEASE AMEND AS NECESSARY**

Appendix 2

Dear Parent/Carer

SEX and RELATIONSHIPS (SRE) EDUCATION : PRIMARY 6 AND 7 PUPILS

As part of your child's health and wellbeing curriculum in school, it is planned to introduce a new 2-stage sex and relationships education programme which will commence in P6 and reach completion during P7. Each stage will comprise of 3 lessons with each lesson taking the format of viewing a DVD, group work, discussions and questions/answers. These will be delivered by the class teacher in partnership with our school nurse.

In stage (1) lessons will cover the physical and emotional changes that take place in both boys and girls at the onset of puberty. Children will be encouraged to recognise the link between 'body image' and self-worth, as well as the various external influences (media etc) which impact on this. The development and importance of relationships is then explored, leading up to the process of life cycles, reproduction and finally the birth process.

Stage (2) will build on the work covered in P6 in greater depth and the lesson content will tie in with your child's science curriculum.

The aim of these programmes is to deliver knowledge and information, challenge myths and beliefs, build up self-esteem during a very sensitive transition stage in each child's life, enabling the children to form positive attitudes and values whilst helping each individual develop their sexual identity.

If you would like to know more about this planned programme, please contact either the class teacher or myself (at the above number). If you wish to withdraw your child from this programme, please inform the class teacher as soon as possible. As I have only one copy of the DVD used, it is not possible to lend them out for home viewing, but if parents particularly wished to view these, special arrangements may be possible. Please do not hesitate to contact me about any issues or concerns you may have about this programme.

Yours sincerely



CRITERIA AND APPLICATION FOR EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS WORKING WITHIN ARGYLL AND BUTE SCHOOLS DELIVERING SEXUAL HEALTH AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

There are several roles within sexual health and relationships education which external organisations and agencies can fulfil in a schools setting. Both staff and pupils often find the involvement of external agencies useful.

Curricular:

External agencies can be useful in delivering agreed parts of the sexual health and relationships programme operating in schools. It is important that schools can be confident that external agencies wishing to take on this role are suitable in terms of organisational ethos, staffing, appropriateness of materials used and consistency of messages about sexual health and relationships. Curricular work in schools should be restricted to approved organisations.

One-off “events”:

Organisations such as theatre groups may offer one-off events aimed at complementing or enhancing the sex and relationships education programme. It is important that schools can be confident that such events are in line with Argyll and Bute Council guidelines in sex and relationships education and messages and materials given to young people are appropriate.

One-off peer education sessions:

There will be occasions where schools wish to stimulate discussion around sexual health by involving a member of the peer group. This may happen, for example, in the case of teenage pregnancy where a teenage mother is invited to talk to a group about her experiences. This type of event should be at the discretion of guidance staff.

Service promotion:

It is appropriate that young people are aware of the services they can access in relation to sexual health. Schools will often facilitate awareness-raising by inviting speakers from agencies to describe the services on offer. Where this is the case schools may be regarded by pupils and parents as, effectively, endorsing a service. Schools will, therefore, require comfort that the service offered by agencies is appropriate to young people's needs, is delivered by appropriately trained and qualified people and does not put young people at risk. Service promotion in schools should be restricted to approved organisations.

Debate:

Schools may wish to stimulate debate or discussion on some of the more contentious subjects of interest in relation to sexual health. Debate and discussion can involve agencies not on the approved list, provided that they do not, during the course of their involvement in school, promote any service with which they might be involved and provided that their input is balanced by the opposite view also being put.



Application for Approval to work in Sexual Health and Relationships Education within Argyll and Bute Schools

To be completed by all external (ie non-Argyll and Bute Council/non NHS) organisations wishing to work in sexual health in schools where involvement extends to promotion of the organisation/agency’s services and/or contributing to the sexual health and relationships curriculum and/or one-off “events” such as plays and workshops.

N.B Individuals can participate in one-off peer education events without Argyll and Bute Council approval and organisations/agencies can participate in one-off debates around sexual health without having to be approved provided they do not, in the course of their involvement in school, promote any service and provided that the opposite point of view is also being put.

Name of organisation

Address
.....
.....

Phone

Email

Area in which organisation wishes to operate

- Input into the Sexual Health and Relationships curriculum
- Promotion of young people’s sexual health services
- One-off “event”

Tick all that apply

Is your organisation a registered body under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974?

- Yes
- No

Aims of the organisation/agency (as they appear on your constitution – use separate sheet if necessary)

Do you come under the umbrella of a “parent” organisation?

- Yes(name of parent body)
- No

Aims of the parent body (as they appear on its constitution – use separate sheet if necessary)

Are you familiar with Argyll & Bute Council’s Guidelines on sex and relationships education?

- Yes
- No

Does your organisation have a confidentiality policy?

- Yes (please attach a copy of your confidentiality policy)
- No

Are you willing, on request, to submit lesson/talk plans?

- Yes
- No

Are you willing, on request, to attend for interview to assess your organisation, group or agency’s commitment to promoting access to all sexual health services for young people?

- Yes
- No

Are you willing, on request, to provide samples of all materials used in schools?

- Yes (list overleaf)
- No

Please list all resources you intend to use during the forthcoming school year.

Resource type (e.g., DVD, leaflet, teaching pack)	Title	Author	Subject matter (brief summary)