
SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION POLICY

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Jenny Chapman,
Children and Young People Portfolio**

Responsible Director – Murray Rose Director of Children’s Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek cabinet members’ approval of the Sex and Relationship Education Policy (**Appendix 1**).

Summary

2. The Sex and Relationship Education policy:
3. Outlines what appropriate SRE should be including:
 - (a) lifelong learning process
 - (b) looking at family in a broad context
 - (c) learning in a safe comfortable environment
 - (d) inclusive of parents & carers and supporting them
 - (e) working in partnership
 - (f) Includes guidelines for employees on what to cover in SRE programmes, including:
 - (i) age and stage appropriate material
 - (ii) the benefits of delaying early sexual activity
 - (iii) Child protection guidelines in line with Darlington Borough Council procedures
 - (iv) Confidentiality guidelines in line with Darlington Borough Council procedures
4. Covers diversity, ensuring SRE is inclusive of all, taking in account:
 - (a) ethnic and diverse culture groups
 - (b) special needs
 - (c) Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that the policy is adopted.

Reasons

6. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons :-
- (a) The policy contributes to several of the national indicators, including:
 - NI 112 – the under 18 conception rate
 - NI 113 – prevalence of chlamydia in those under 20 years old
 - NI 150 – Emotional health of children
 - (b) The policy also supports priorities within the Children and Young People’s Plan for Darlington, specifically under promoting positive health and well being with actions including:
 - (i) reduce teenage pregnancy and promote positive sexual health
 - (ii) promote positive mental health and emotional well-being

Murray Rose
Director of Children’s Services

Background Papers

- (i) Every Child Matters – Change for Children
- (ii) Darlington Children and Young People’s Plan 2008 – 2011
- (iii) Beyond Biology – Call for PSHE, which includes sex and relationships education, to be made statutory. Written by Anna Martinez, published by the National Children’s Bureau for the Sex Education Forum.
- (iv) Department for Education and Employment (2000) Sex and relationship education guidance. London DFEE.
- (v) Sex Education Forum (2005) Sex and Relationship Education Framework. London : NCB.

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S17 Crime and Disorder	No effect
Health and Well Being	This policy should have a positive effect on the health and well bring of young people. It should help young people to make more informed choices about sex and relationships and should impact positively on areas such as mental health, the rates of sexually transmitted disease and teenage conception rates
Sustainability	No effect
Diversity	Sex and Relationships is an issue for all groups
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	Children and young people of school age
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the Council's budget or policy framework
Key Decision	Yes
Urgent Decision	no
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	One of the core outcomes for healthy Darlington is 'Improving the life chances of young people through good health choices'. This policy will give young people the necessary information to make informed decisions about some of those choices
Efficiency	No effect

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

7. Good sex and relationship education is essential in order to provide children and young people with the skills, knowledge and confidence to make informed choices and decisions. Sex and relationship education must be consistent and factually correct. If children and young people are not taught about sex and relationship issues in this way, they will begin to learn from other areas and this may prove harmful. Deliverers of sex and relationship education must be well trained, happy and confident with what they are delivering, covering a broad range of topics in an interesting way, ensuring the information is relevant to age and stage development and practical, refraining from using shock tactics and covering a range of learning styles. Sex and relationship education needs to be a continuous programme and should be developed accordingly using external professionals and partnership work to ensure the best way of working for the children and young people we work with.
8. Having a strong Sex and Relationship Education Policy will support the improvement of the long term health of children and young people in Darlington while also supporting other local and national strategies and reports including Every Child Matters, The Children's Plan, National Healthy Schools Programme, Darlington's Children and Young People's Plan, the NHS 2009 – 2010 Delivery Plan and the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy.
9. Information to support this policy includes the Locality Profiles 2008 – 2009. Within this document, statistics can be found which identify locality B and D as teenage pregnancy 'hotspots' with 75 conceptions in young people under 18 between 2003 and 2005. Other localities also have high levels of teenage conceptions. The teenage conception data runs two years behind the current date, however the latest data also shown that teenage conception rates in the area are very high and the Government strategy to make a 55% reduction in these rates by 2010 is very challenging. Information in repeat terminations also recently published shows that Darlington has a large repeat termination rate in under 19 year olds. The national average is 10.4 per 1000; however Darlington has a rate of 12.3.

Outcome of Consultation

10. The consultation process began in 2006 through the Local Area Agreement where this was identified as a priority. The Teenage Pregnancy Partnership Board members were consulted and asked to take a draft of the policy forward to their organisations and groups which they worked with, these groups included young people.
11. The Teenage Pregnancy Stakeholders event also provided the opportunity for consultation with stakeholders and young people between 2006 and 2008. Following this the draft policy was re-drafted and passed to Children's Services to be adopted by cabinet.