

## **RSE Headteachers' Briefing – 25.02.19**

Following a clear request from Headteachers, the LA will be providing an agreed position on RSE. This has been agreed at cabinet level. Schools individual governing bodies then need to agree to whether to follow this.

LA has consulted widely:

- Religious groups including East London Mosque and the largest Somali Mosque in TH.
- Direct conversations with the DFE
- PSHE Association and the Sex Education Forum
- Other Local Authorities, including those with similar religious make-ups e.g. Luton, Barking and Dagenham

LA has taken significant legal advice on how the DFE guidance should be interpreted and their position is based on this.

The LA are providing a wide range of documentation so that schools in the borough can have clear guidance and take the same position as each other:

- Curriculum guidance document indicating clearly what is statutory and what is non-statutory and how this maps against existing schemes of work (to be issued to Leads at the upcoming training session)
- Suggested published schemes of work (includes the scheme we already use)
- Model Policy (due before Easter)
- Model letter to parents (it was suggested that this is hosted on the LA website)
- Model power point for parent information sessions
- Suggested timeline for actions

Science Curriculum, Relationships Education and Health Education elements are statutory and children cannot be withdrawn from these. Sex Education is non-Statutory. Key changes to what falls under the statutory curriculum (under the LA advice):

- KS1 – Teach LGBT relationships within teaching about different kinds of families that children might be in (e.g. single Mum, grandparents as primary carers, step families etc). That all family types should be valued and respected. Clear definition of being gay as a man who loves another man, and being lesbian as a woman who loves another woman.
- Failure to teach this puts schools at risk of not meeting their statutory duty under the Equalities Act.

- KS1 – Teach names of sexual body parts: penis, vagina, breasts, nipples, testicles, vulva, bottom, anus.
- Failure to teach this puts children’s safeguarding at risk (ability to describe medical conditions accurately, ability to make accurate disclosure of abuse).
- Y4 – teach about puberty including periods.
- Children should have this information before the start of puberty and puberty is starting in children at a younger age than previously.

Key information suggested re. parents:

- The National Curriculum is set by the DfE and school are not at liberty to change that.
- Schools should listen to parents views and then make a reasonable decision.
- Parent consultation does not provide a veto on the curriculum contents.
- We should tell parents the half term in which items will be taught but not the specific week (to maintain good attendance).
- We will teach children factual information only – it is for parents to proceed or follow with faith based information as they see fit.
- There should be clarity for parents that there will not be a prevent referral if children express their family’s faith based views about LGBT.
- Parent sessions should be information sharing sessions once the curriculum has been set.
- Parent sessions should be by year group and not whole school meetings.

Support Available from the LA:

- Documentation being provided (see above)
- Available to speak at governors’ meetings (I don’t think we need this)
- Available to attend parent information sessions (I think this would be good – I thought we could book them in for a day and run the meetings back-to-back across a single day)
- Available to provide staff training (I would like to book this for September INSET ASAP but need confirmed dates)

Suggested Timeline:

- Spring 2 2020 – start to develop curriculum and policy based on LA guidance
- Summer 1 2020 – take policy to Governors for approval
- Summer 2 2020 – hold parent meetings about changes
- Autumn 1 2020 – introduce new curriculum