

BY EMAIL

Children and Culture Directorate Education

8 September 2021

Ref: DC75- RSE

Steve Nyakatawa
Director of Education
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Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to you about the new DfE relationships and sex education and health education guidance 2019. I know that many of you have already put an enormous amount of time, thought and effort into introducing the curriculum changes into your schools and working closely with parents and staff in order to do so and that this has already resulted in the successful delivery of the changes in the majority of schools.

As you are aware, Headteachers asked the LA for a Borough steer around certain aspects of the Guidance. This was discussed at the highest levels within the Local Authority and a steer was given which gave due consideration to safeguarding and equalities. The Local Authority remains committed to this steer as it has been consistently, whilst being mindful that it is for each school to take their own decisions on the detailed implementation of the curriculum based on what they consider to be the best for their pupils and their school community.

As well as writing to express our continued support for you on this issue, it is also to make you aware that the Local Authority has been having ongoing discussions with representatives of the East London Mosque, Darul Ummah Mosque, Ashadibi Masjid, the Maryam Centre and the Tower Hamlets Parents Association. The Local Authority is grateful and appreciative of the time and effort given by the above representatives in discussing, with openness and honesty, the issues related to the curriculum changes. There is broad agreement over most areas of the RSE curriculum, however for some there remain concerns and differences of opinion over key elements contained within the Borough steer, in particular the age at which elements of the new curriculum are introduced.

We recognise the anxieties in the community and want to ensure schools are informed and supported. I have met concerned community representatives and have attached their RSE statement which they requested we circulate – I also attach our Borough statement, plus Statement of Support from LBTH medical and safeguarding Leads.



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The mosques wanted the Mayor to write to the schools about their concerns. We will maintain our approach and support schools as they continue the approach adopted to date of working closely with parents over this sensitive matter, to hear parents' views and concerns, be fully transparent about subject matter to be taught and have a full programme of parent meetings and dialogue. We are confident that as a local community, where we are all committed to keeping our children and young people safe and protected, that we can remain determined to work together for the very best possible outcomes for our children and young people.

We look forward to working with and supporting all LBTH schools with their delivery of RSE and health education in this academic year.

If you have any queries, please let me know.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Steve Nyakatawa".

Steve Nyakatawa
Director of Education