

John Biggs
Mayor of Tower Hamlets
Mayor's office
Town Hall, Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
London
E14 2BG

10 February 2021

Dear Mayor John Biggs

Re: Delivering RSE appropriately

Further to our previous constructive dialogue about ensuring appropriate delivery of Relationships & Sex Education please see below the views and suggestions on RSE as discussed in our recent meetings.

1. Naming of sexual body parts

- a. The naming of the sexual body parts is not part of the statutory guidance for Relationships Education nor the Science Curriculum.
- b. It is understandable to name the sexual body parts during the teaching of puberty in KS2.
- c. Puberty should be taught from Year 5 and not earlier. LBTH should not push for Year 4, as boys do not reach puberty in year 4.
- d. When teaching the names of the sexual body parts in puberty lessons, scientific diagrams should be used, not real-life images or cartoons.
- e. When teaching this content, girls and boys should be separated into different classes with female and male teachers respectively, to ensure better learning outcomes.
- f. There are a several excellent resources that teach about safeguarding appropriately without naming or showing the sexual body parts:
 - i. My Body belongs to me – <http://www.mybodybelongstome.com/>
 - ii. NSPCC Pants (Pantosaurus) – <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/pants-underwear-rule/>
 - iii. My Body belongs to me: from my head to my toes – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Y3JHm524E4>
 - iv. My body is mine – <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B08BTPN5TC>
 - v. Let's chat about your body and privacy – <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B086Y4SQ6N>

2. Teaching of LGBT topics in primary schools

- a. Parents expect educators to respect their pupils, their families and the faith that defines them; that the teachings at school do not conflict with the faith and values of teachings at home. Not doing so creates serious confusion, putting schools at odds with many parents and their community.
- b. Primary schools are not required to teach LGBT elements, it is not part of the statutory/mandatory Relationships Education curriculum in school.
- c. The DfE guidance states, “others’ families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children’s families are also characterised by love and care for them.” This can be addressed using examples of other family structures, such as step-parents, single parents, divorced/separated parents, other close family members, etc, without the need to describe every type of family structure including same sex families. This way, children can still learn “that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children’s security as they grow up.”

3. Use of resources that are sensitive to the faith and values of communities

- a. Resources that contain explicit images or videos of body parts are not appropriate for children.
- b. Resources that contain references to and promote LGBT are also inappropriate for children such as “Respect yourself”, “All about me”, “Educate and Celebrate”.
- c. External guests or agencies should not be allowed to come in to deliver or support the delivery or the Relationships Education curriculum. Issues around external agencies have been one of the main flashpoints for parental disquiet, as there have been notable incidences of agencies going beyond fact-based education to promoting lifestyles and values.

We hope that Tower Hamlets will take the above suggestions into consideration and come up with an amicable resolution on the Tower Hamlets guidance to schools on RSE. We look forward to meeting you again and finalise this matter and discuss about organising a public / parents meeting in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Dilowar Khan – Director, East London Mosque & London Muslim Centre

Sahra Mire – Director, Ashadibi Mosque

Kazi Ashiqur Rahman – Imam & Khateeb, Darul Ummah London

Shams Addhuha Muhammad – Imam & Director of Mawarid Lifestyle, Convener, Muslim Education Committee

Nur Choudhury – Consultant, Tower Hamlets Parents Association

Mizan Abdilrouf – Head of Pro-Bono in the LMC

Sufia Alam – Manager, Maryam Centre

