



To introduce a Sex & Relationship Education programme into a Primary School

Katrina Pawlyszyn & Michaela Jones
St Hugh's School

Context/Background

- Initial discussion with the Headteacher re. some complex children and their behaviour (particularly around sexual behaviour/comments made, observed in school) from the discussion a whole school training opportunity arose regarding an SRE programme for Year 5 & 6 in order to safeguard / inform then for the future
- It was agreed that for some students where behaviour was challenging – there was a possible link between external factors which were affecting their behaviour and their ability to learn in school

SRE is essential because:

- “High-quality sex and relationships education (SRE) helps create safe school communities where pupils can grow, learn, and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life.”
- <http://www.fpa.org.uk/unique-interactive-education-resource-primary-schools/why-sre-schools-important>



talking sense about sex

SRE in the curriculum?

- Children and young people have a right to good quality education.
- SRE plays a vital part in meeting schools' safeguarding obligations.
- Children and young people want to be prepared for the physical and emotional changes.
- Schools maintain a statutory obligation under the Children Act (2004) to promote their pupils' wellbeing.

Organisation of Study

- Following the discussion, staff at St Hugh's devised a programme for the school which was presented to the Headteacher.
- An SRE policy and literature for parents was also devised to support the school in presenting it to its key stakeholders.
- A scheme of work was planned & then presented to the Governors of the school regarding its purpose and the impact of the programme by the assistant Headteacher & a TA3 (specialist in SRE).
- Once it had been approved by the Governing body – dates were arranged whereby the TA3 facilitated the teaching of the scheme of work to Year 5 & 6 on a weekly basis alongside staff from the school as part of their CPD process.

“Very effective
/ positive” –
Headteacher

“I learnt
proper names
for private
body parts” –
Year 5 student

“I learnt the
difference
between a
good and bad
touch” – year
5

“I learnt how to stay
safe by saying NO!” –
Year 5

“I learnt about
good, bad &
confusing
touches” – Year 6

“I learnt how to
stay safe on the
internet” – Year 6

Experience/Evidence

- From the experience it was apparent that In order for this to have impact in the school in the future, this programme needs to keep running and be built upon, according to the bespoke needs of the students in the year group.
- Further training was identified as requirement for particular staff in the school to continue this work, staff who would be confident in the delivery of the programme and the contents of it – to ensure that it is delivered consistently across the school, and the message around safeguarding and “keeping themselves safe” is understood by all.



- **Student A** – non-compliant, angry outbursts, low self-esteem, withdrawn, attachment issues, unable to focus – how many students do you have like this?

Outcomes/Findings

- All children need to have a toolkit of skills to be able to protect themselves in all situations and to be able to make informed decisions, based on prior knowledge. In order for schools to be successful at this all key stakeholders need to be “on board” and this is an area that might result in some resistance.
- Therefore schools need to consider the points below when presenting the rationale around the importance of introducing an SRE programme and be prepared for what might occur as a result of this.....
- **Safeguarding:**
- All children need to have a toolkit of skills to be able to protect themselves in all situations and be able to make informed decisions, based on prior knowledge.

Outcomes/Findings

- **Curriculum:**
- School key stakeholders need to be aware of the importance of providing a curriculum that protects and informs youngsters within the remit of statutory safeguarding expectations.
- **Behaviour:**
- Challenging behaviour by some students may be attributable to factors outside of the school environment, Sometimes it is about providing an outlet for youngsters to be able to make sense of the world as they know it and providing them with the tools and skills to be able to make informed decisions in protecting themselves.



- The way forward.....

Summary/Messages

- **Behaviour** in any form is a means of communicating. Challenges in behaviour must be assessed holistically where a child is concerned in terms of internal & external factors - within the school and home context. An informative SRE programme may be a small piece of the puzzle but in some cases a very valuable one.
- The outcome of the study highlighted the lack of knowledge in this area – in particular this was alarming considering the imminent transition into the Secondary phase of education.
- Subsequently from this work and recent media revelations regarding sexual exploitation nationally - a number of Primary schools have come forward requesting support.