

Overview

This report examines the current and future status and development of the Sex and Relationships Education curriculum in Wales and provides a series of recommendations linked to a secondary report which has been presented to the Cabinet Secretary for Education (Renold and McGeeney 2017).

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Cover image:

“Stop/Start SRE”: This visual collage was created by over 50 young people (age 14-18) in Wales on 30th November 2016. The red plates describe ideas of what young people wanted to stop from happening in SRE. The green plates describe what young people wanted in their future SRE.

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Foreword from the Chair

As chair of the Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) Expert Panel, I would like to acknowledge and register my thanks to all those who shared their practice and expertise during the face to face panel meetings and in the virtual discussions leading to the publication of this report.

Special thanks go to Dr. Ester McGeeney, a leading scholar-practitioner in the field of sexuality and relationships education (SRE), who supported and co-authored key sections of the full report. Special thanks also go to David Sargent (Welsh Government) who provided extensive assistance throughout the entire panel process. Thanks also extend to Steven Price, Kerry Davies and Abigail Williams (Welsh Government) for their administrative support.

This was a truly collaborative process and the group's commitment, enthusiasm and collegiality was commendable. Indeed, the ways in which different sectors, groups and individuals worked together, across diverse yet inter-connected fields and sectors to exploit the potential of what SRE could become as the new curriculum takes shape, makes for a very promising future for SRE in Wales as the infrastructure for a whole school approach to SRE evolves.

Professor Emma Renold, Cardiff University

Chair of the Sex and Relationships Expert Panel



Introduction and Context

Overview

This report examines the current and future status and development of the Sex and Relationships Education curriculum in Wales and provides a series of recommendations linked to a secondary report which has been presented to the Cabinet Secretary for Education (Renold and McGeeney 2017).

The report focuses on the following areas:

- The impact of the narrow and non-statutory status of the current Sex and Relationship Education curriculum on children and young people's learning and experience;
- The core principles and thematic areas of the new proposed Sexuality and Relationship Education curriculum;
- Effective pedagogy and assessment for a rights and gender equity based SRE curriculum that is inclusive, holistic, creative, empowering and protective; and
- The urgency of training, leadership, resources, support and a robust research base to ensure high quality SRE provision of learning and experience.

If the recommendations outlined in this report are approved and implemented, we are confident, that over time, Wales can address the much-neglected area of SRE and begin to meet the learning and experience needs of all children and young people, their schools, and the wider community.

Remit of the expert panel

The expert panel was established in March 2017 by the Cabinet Secretary for Education, Kirsty Williams to help inform the development of the future Sex and Relationships (SRE) curriculum as part of the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning Experience (AoLE). The panel were asked to identify issues and opportunities which could inform decisions around supporting the teaching profession deliver high quality SRE in schools more effectively.

Specifically, the group were tasked with:

- 1) providing recommendations to the Cabinet Secretary for Education on how current SRE practice might be improved before 2022 and the new curriculum being introduced.
- 2) providing recommendations for the Cabinet Secretary for Education and the pioneer schools on the future of Sex and Relationships Education in Wales as part of Health and Wellbeing AoLE.

The terms of reference set were ambitious (see Annex 1), but necessarily so given the radical overhaul that SRE in Wales and across the UK urgently requires. In the absence of a robust research base for mapping how current SRE practice might be improved before 2022, and in light of the rapid development of the health and well-being AoLE, the group focused its attention on providing recommendations on the future of SRE in the context of the new curriculum. However, if supported, the recommendations on pedagogy, assessment, training, leadership, resources, research and support must be undertaken with immediate effect as Wales begins the process of ensuring high quality SRE provision by 2022.

The group carried out its work in a series of face to face meetings between March and September 2017. The panel was not funded to undertake original research, consultation (e.g. with practitioners, parents/carers or young people) nor was the panel asked at this stage to conduct a more tightly prescribed task and finish exercise (e.g. SRE resources, SRE curriculum content). Nevertheless, the exploratory remit of the panel enabled the group to think big and engage with innovative and effective SRE practices in Wales and internationally, while simultaneously considering the very local, national and international affordances and challenges that beset the unique field of SRE, as a cross-disciplinary subject. Only a handful of school teachers across Wales are extensively trained and/or hold academic qualifications in SRE related areas. The panel therefore comprised of academic specialists in SRE, service providers in SRE, and teachers with SRE responsibilities (see Annex 2 and Annex 3)

As Welsh Government, working with pioneer schools, consider the future of SRE, the panel anticipate and expect that there will be a range of opportunities to safely and creatively involve children and young people, parents/carers, communities and service providers more widely to play a central part as the pioneer schools design the new SRE curriculum.

Part 1: Current Status and Provision of Sex and Relationship Education: an evidence informed view

a. SRE in Wales

i) A brief history of SRE in Wales and the UK

There are many different terms associated with the provision of school based SRE, which reflect its varied aims and underpinning values. The most widely used is 'sex education', which has its roots in a biomedical approach to sexuality, that is often referred to as the 'prevention and plumbing' or functional approach (Lenskyj, 1990). Early approaches to sex education focussed on hygiene, birth rates and sexual abstinence outside of marriage and family life. In the UK there are references from the 1920s for example to senior girls being provided with instruction at school on such topics as 'self-reverence, self control and true modesty', and to boys, on leaving school, being given talks on the 'temptation of factory and workshop life', with special reference to sex (Reiss, 2005).

Despite significant changes to sex education over the past 100 years, the focus on 'the dangers of disease, pregnancy, loss of reputation and moral character' has continued to dominate UK approaches (Hall 2009, p. 21). The term sex education continued to be used throughout the 1970s and 80s even though the aims and scope of the subject expanded significantly, no doubt largely in response to the notable social changes of the 1960s and 70s (Hampshire and Lewis 2004). Biology textbooks started to provide fuller accounts of the human reproductive systems and methods of contraception began to be taught more widely (Pilcher 2005). Although the emphasis was mostly on the provision of accurate information, more holistic approaches began to be developed.

'it is dishonest and futile to hide, at the proper time, that sexual intercourse should be highly enjoyable—if this were not so most of this chapter would not have to be written—and that it includes much more complex activities than elementary accounts of reproduction suggest' (Department of Education and Science, 1977, p.117, in Pilcher 2005, p.164).

In contrast to later developments, parents were warned off withdrawing their children from sex education lessons, because 'their children will certainly ask their friends what happened when they were excluded, and will almost certainly receive a garbled report' (*ibid*).

The 1980s continued to see a broadening in the aims of sex education and programme content reflected the influence of 'progressive educational pedagogies',

including, in some local authority areas, feminist, anti-racist and gay liberation philosophies (Thomson, 1994). During this time there was a growing acceptance of approaches to sex education that focused on managing the *consequences* of adolescent sexuality (as opposed to trying to *prevent* pre-marital sex for example) which were mainly perceived to be unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (Iyer and Aggleton 2014). In part this was due to the 1980s Western AIDS crisis and the work of campaigners who argued that education was urgently needed to avert further crisis (Reiss 2005).

At the same time however, sex education in the UK became a 'political football' (Reiss 2005, Thorogood 2000) as elements of the British political New Right became increasingly agitated over the content of sex education. The central concern was that school-based sex education programmes encouraged a 'precocious and promiscuous' heterosexuality and 'promoted' homosexuality as an acceptable form of sexuality (Durham, 1991, p. 111). These concerns are reflected in the 1986 Education Act in which schools are instructed to 'have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life' (Section 46) and in the introduction of section 28 of the Local Government act that banned schools from 'promoting' homosexuality. The Education Act (1986) also passed control of schools in England and Wales to school governors who were made responsible for deciding whether sex education should form part of the curriculum (Green, 1994; McEwan et al., 1994; Scott and Thomson, 1992). Research suggests that 20% of school governors at the time were opposed to sex education on the grounds that it encouraged sexual experimentation (Davies et al 1997), and that many failed to fulfil their responsibilities (Scott and Thomson 1992, Green 1994, and McEwan et al. 1994).

A further Education Bill in 1993 made it compulsory for schools to deliver sex education that includes information about HIV, other sexually transmitted infections and 'aspects of human sexual behaviour, other than biological aspects' (HMSO 1993, 241.4.c,156). However, this bill also established a parental right to withdraw their child from sex education lessons. Researchers at the time were highly critical of this arguing that 'the bestowing of these rights on parents/carers appears to be at the expense of children's entitlement to sex education' (Davis et al. 1997 in Iyer and Aggleton 2014, p. 11), and arguing that the parental rights created in this bill were at odds with the child's right to information concerning their health under the UNCRC. Sex education at this time was reported to be inconsistent and confused. Teachers' lack of training, uncertainty and embarrassment concerning the content of sex education, and a lack of time (largely due to the demands of the UK National Curriculum) all being cited as reasons for the limited provision of sex education in schools (McEwan et al., 1994; Scott and Thomson, 1992).

Comprehensive SRE?

In 1999 powers over education were devolved to the Welsh Assembly Government. The following year the UK government published new guidance for England and

Wales which referred to 'Sex and Relationship Education' for the first time. Although non-statutory, the new guidance was comprehensive and its location of SRE within the PSE/PSHE and Citizenship Curriculum marked an attempt to move beyond reductionist and biological frameworks for sex education and attend to the personal and social aspects of intimate relationships (Monk 2001). As several critics have noted however the conceptual framework that underpins the guidance is contradictory, with protectionist concerns about childhood sexuality and a morally informed public health agenda limiting the potential of the guidance to realise the broader aims of SRE (Monk 2001, Spencer et al 2008, Hirst 2008, Alldred and David 2007). For example, it failed to fully acknowledge sexual and gender diversity and inequalities and remained focused on the benefits of heterosexual married relationships (Epstein, O'Flynn and Telford 2003). Neither did it successfully advance a 'sex positive approach' to human sexuality that acknowledges the right to sexual desire, pleasure, and intimacy, and worked towards alleviating shame, guilt and fear (Jackson 1982; Fine 1998; Fine and McLelland 2006; Tolman 2009; Allen, Rasmussen and Quinliven 2014)

At this time concerns surrounding unwanted teenage pregnancies were growing across the UK after it was revealed that the UK had some of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in Western Europe (McEwan et al., 1994 In Iyer and Aggleton 2014, p.11). These concerns were used to highlight the importance of sex education for young people and argue for improved community sexual health services (e.g. McEwan et al 1994) In 1998 the National Assembly for Wales launched the Better Health - Better Wales: strategic framework for promoting sexual health in Wales (1998) which aimed to reduce rates of sexually transmitted infections and teenage conceptions and ensure access to good quality sexual health advice. As a result a new Sexual Health Strategy for Wales was developed for consultation with the aim of improving sexual health, reducing sexual health inequalities and enhancing 'the general health and emotional well-being of the population by enabling and supporting fulfilling sexual relationships' (p.4). This was to be achieved through the provision of SRE in schools and other youth settings. The strategy highlighted two key concerns about SRE provision in Wales; one in ten schools had no SRE provision and most teachers of SRE or PSE more widely had no specialist training on the subject and most teaching report feeling ill-equipped to deliver SRE. The subsequent *Sexual Health and Wellbeing Action Plan for Wales 2010-2015* (WAG 2010) further emphasized the importance of providing high quality SRE in schools, noting the beneficial effects in terms of sexual health behaviours, e.g. by delaying sexual activity, reducing the number of partners and increasing knowledge about methods and availability of contraception (p.9). Here, SRE is firmly located within a comprehensive and inclusive PSE framework that aims to tackle gender equality and homophobia, as well as equipping young people with the 'the skills and knowledge to make safe and responsible choices regarding their sexual behaviour' (p9). By this time, legislation had been passed in England and Wales to repeal section 28 of the local government act 2003, following years of campaigning by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender and Queer+¹ rights groups.

¹ The '+' symbol has been added to acknowledge minority sex, gender, sexuality identities, expressions and orientations (e.g. asexuality, gender fluid, non-binary, pansexual, intersex etc.). See Lantaffi and Barker (2017)

Online SRE: Risks, Opportunities and Inequalities

“Children must be educated to become competent and resilient digital citizens and this education should link technical competence in managing online interfaces with personal, social and sexual education so that children are empowered to respond constructively – with critical literacy and moral responsibility – to the online risk of harm” (Livingstone 2014²)

The past two decades have also seen huge advances in mobile information technologies transforming the ways in which children, young people and adults connect, form and engage in relationships with others (see Albury 2013; Livingstone and Mason 2015; Livingstone and Third 2017). Concerns about the risks to children and young people’s safety online have led to the rapid development of high profile online safety education programmes and public campaigns (see <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/> for examples), which have become widespread and in many schools, the focus of some school’s PSE/SRE programmes. The online safety agenda has been criticized for its narrow focus on the risks of online communication and focus on individual behaviour change (e.g. via what is becoming known as sext education, see Shields Dobson and Ringrose 2015), without due consideration to the ways in which sex and gender inequalities and inequities shape online relationships and behaviours, and how this disproportionately affect girls, young women and LGBTQ+ young people (Ringrose, Harvey, Gill and Livingstone 2013; Albury and Byron 2015; Hope 2015; STIR 2016; McGeeney and Hanson 2017). The overemphasis on risk understood through a safeguarding lens does not “allow for children’s participation even in risky opportunities” (Livingstone 2014). E-learning strategies are only just beginning to focus upon supporting children’s digital sexual rights more widely as a means of supporting young people as they navigate a rapidly changing sexual digital age (Livingstone and Bulger 2014).

Rights and Equity based SRE

There are differences in the way that each of the devolved nations have approached SRE (see Figure 1 below), with the underlying approach in Wales characterised as ‘a sexually-informed citizenship and children’s rights agenda’ (Oerton and Pilgrim 2013). This can be seen as part of a wider approach to education in Wales that moves away from what has been described as an English ‘risk management’ approach towards a social justice model that aims to embed equalities and human rights within education policies (Chaney 2011; Drakeford, 2010, Davies and Williams 2009), including safeguarding policies and guidance (see Keeping Learners Safe 2016). In 2010 Wales issued new guidance on Sex and Relationships Education, which places SRE firmly in the context of the UNCRC, emphasising children’s rights to access educational and health services, and their right to be listened to and to

for an accessible overview of contemporary gender identities, expressions and relations, and for a recent snapshot of young people’s views of gender diversity, see Bragg, Renold, Ringrose and Jackson (forthcoming 2018). See also Attwood, Bale and Barker (2013) for an accessible research overview of sex, sexuality and sexual health and wellbeing issues.

² <http://www.lse.ac.uk/website-archive/newsAndMedia/newsArchives/2014/07/Cyberbullyingmorecommonfacetofacebullyingchildren-.aspx>

participate in the decisions that affect them, which includes being given the knowledge, skills and understanding to make informed choices that support the development of positive life experiences for sexual well-being and respectful relationship cultures (see Haberlan and Rogow 2016). A rights-based and equalities approach to comprehensive SRE was also recently foregrounded in the recommendations of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children's (ENOC) (2017) Position Statement on a Comprehensive Relationship and Sexuality Education (see also Blake, Muttock; Beal and Handy 2012; European Expert Group on Sexuality Education 2016, Blake and Aggleton 2017).

Regarding gender equity and equality, the Welsh Government Strategic Equality Plan 2016-2021 contains a specific objective, which relates to embedding SRE in a gender equalities framework (Objective 4). Welsh Ministers are also under a duty to comply with the European Convention on The Welsh Ministers also support the principles contained in the UN Sustainable Development Goal: "this includes goal 5 - Achieve Gender Equality and empower all women and girls which includes a target in relation to violence against women and girls" (Welsh Government 2016)

Gaps between SRE guidance and SRE legislation

Although outlined in government guidance on SRE, a comprehensive, inclusive and rights based vision for SRE is not reflected in the relevant legislation. The 2002 Education Act placed a requirement that all maintained schools in Wales, including faith schools, had to include a Basic Curriculum comprising religious education, sex education and the National Curriculum for Wales. The 'basic curriculum' is statutory for delivery by all maintained schools but SRE is only statutory in secondary schools and in special schools for pupils provided with secondary education. The current definition of Sex Education is outlined in Section 579 (1) of the Education Act 1996 and gives a definition of 'sex education' as including education about:

- (a) Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome and Human Immunodeficiency Virus,
- And
- (b) any other sexually transmitted disease.

Since 2008, SRE has been developed largely in the context of Personal, Social Education (PSE) and in practice the term Sex and Relationships Education is commonly used to reflect the range of learning and support that schools provide regarding the emotional, physical and social aspects of relationships, sexual health and well-being. This practice is not however reflected in current legislation.

ii) Key terms and definitions: From Sex to Sexuality

Internationally the term 'sexuality education' (or 'comprehensive sexuality education') is widely used as the preferred term for sex education. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines sexuality as follows (see also Annex 4):

Sexuality is "...a central aspect of being human throughout life and encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors." (WHO 2006)

This definition of sexuality has been adopted by the panel and underpins the core principles and thematic areas outlined in this report. The panel thus also recommends Sexuality and Relationships Education, rather than Sex and Relationships Education, be used to reflect the broad aims of SRE that includes but reaches beyond the physiological aspects of sexed bodies and sexual and reproductive health to address the wider aspects of sexuality as defined above, and specifically how "sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors".

In the absence of an equivalent inclusive and holistic definition of relationships the panel also created the following working definition:

Relationships

The world is made up of all kinds of relationships that shift and change over time. For example, they can be platonic, romantic, spiritual, non-sexual and sexual.

Who we are is defined to a great extent by our relationships with others and the world around us. They can be formed with and between people, communities, deities, place and nature (e.g. caring for pets or the environment). We are all inter-connected and shaped by each other in one way or another.

Interpersonal relationships, that is relationships between people, are formed in the context of social, cultural, technological and other influences (e.g. ecological, historical). They can be made up of two or more people, and range in duration and intensity, from the very brief to life-long commitments. Interpersonal relationships can include a range of consensual and non-consensual associations and bonds between, for example, strangers, peers, friendships,

families/kinship relations, partnerships, civil partnerships and marriage. Relationships can encompass a range of feelings (e.g. affection, attraction, closeness, care, fear, love, obligation, power, powerlessness, respect, trust).

Relationships are formed and experienced across diverse spaces and places (e.g. from playgrounds and places of worship, to schools and social media) that increasingly traverse any simple online/offline divide as digitally networked and enabled relationships proliferate. Relationships are often regulated by law, custom, ritual and mutual agreement, and operate in the context of shifting, uneven, unequal or abusive power relations.

These definitions have been used to underpin the approach to SRE set out in this report. These definitions have informed the development of the panel's recommended core principles and indicative thematic areas for the pioneer schools to consider as they develop this area of the curriculum including SRE elements of the Health and Well-being AoLE. A glossary of key concepts and working definitions can be found in Annex 4, including a working definition of 'sexuality and relationships education'.

Figure 1: Summary of current status of SRE in Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Summary of current status of SRE in Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland: It is mandatory to deliver Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) in all grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland as part of the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding learning area. Updated guidance for primary and post-primary schools was published in 2015 which recommends the use of the CCEA resource *Living.Learning.Together* in primary schools. (http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/curriculum_microsite/pdmu/living_learning_together/home.asp). Secondary school teachers are advised to select their own resources. Whilst 'there is no legislative provision permitting parental withdrawal from sex education', schools can grant these requests on an individual basis (Lundy, Emerson, Lloyd, Byrne and Yohanis, 2012, p. 25). Schools are responsible for providing training opportunities for teachers such as in-service training courses, directed time after school, and staff development days. Little is known about the provision of RSE training for pre-service teachers in Northern Ireland.

Scotland: There is no statutory requirement to teach sex education in Scotland. A new curriculum for 3–18 years, introduced in August 2010, introduced Health and wellbeing as one of eight curriculum areas of Curriculum for Excellence. Relationships, sexual health and parenthood (RSHP) education is included as part of this curriculum area. Updated draft guidance was published in 2013. Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from specific programmes of sexual health education, but not from other areas of the curriculum where aspects of RSHP are included. Education Scotland lists RSHP resources on a national e-platform for practitioners to use. There is no mandatory training for teachers delivering SRE but

Scotland has a long standing sexual health education programme, SHARE, which includes teacher training and which has been subject to long-term evaluation with some positive results.

England

From September 2019 Relationship Education (Primary) and Relationship and Sex Education (Secondary) will become compulsory in all schools in England under an amendment to Children and Social Work Bill 2017. The government is due to publish updated guidance in 2018 alongside further details about teacher training, resource development and the circulation of evidence best practice³. Parents/carers will retain the right to withdraw their child from RE / RSE.

Wales

SRE is a compulsory part of the basic curriculum in secondary schools, under the Education Act 2002. Primary schools are also required to have a policy on SRE, outlining details of their SRE programme or explaining their decision not to provide SRE. Personal and social education (PSE) became a compulsory part of the basic curriculum in both primary and secondary schools in September 2003. Schools are expected to use the PSE framework for planning and delivering SRE and to follow government guidance. The most recent guidance was published in 2010. Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from SRE. Schools have responsibility for the SRE professional development needs of staff, although all staff in Welsh schools are required to complete basic safeguarding training and level 1 training on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

iii) A note on the evidence: significant research gaps in Wales

There is a wealth of international research on SRE. Much of this consists of small-scale qualitative studies of young people's experiences of SRE within different social and cultural contexts and small, medium and large scale surveys of young people's views and experiences of SRE. This research is often child and young person centred and seeks to put the experiences of children and young people at the heart of education policy and practice. There are also a number of international evaluations of SRE programmes that seek to ascertain the impact of SRE for children, young people and wider populations. Here the focus is often on the public health benefits of SRE, rather than the wider benefits and outcomes of SRE. There is a focus on the literature on the views and experiences of secondary age young people (or of young adults' views on their secondary education) and on education about sex and sexual health, rather than relationships. There is limited research on SRE in Early Years Settings and Primary Schools (Martin and Bobier 2017, ENOC 2017). Internationally there is also scarce research on professional training for SRE. In the UK there is a focus on the delivery of SRE in England, with far less research conducted in the devolved nations.

³https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/595828/170301_Policy_statement_PSHEv2.pdf

The most authoritative source of evidence on sexual behaviours and attitudes in Britain is the National Attitudes and Lifestyle survey (NATSAL) which is a representative survey of over 15,000 people aged 16-74 in Britain. The survey is conducted every ten years allowing for longitudinal comparisons (<http://www.natsal.ac.uk/home.aspx>). There is no equivalent evidence on relationships or the wider aspects of sexuality beyond sexual behaviours, sexual health and sexual attitudes.

In Wales there are a number of significant gaps in the research literature. There is no robust quantitative or qualitative research on:

- What SRE is currently provided in Welsh schools, how it is delivered, in what contexts and with what aims / objectives.
- The quality of the SRE experience for students and teachers.
- In particular there is a lack of research on SRE provision and quality in faith schools; early years; primary schools; special schools and mainstream schools for students with disabilities.
- What professional training is currently delivered for pre-service and post-service teachers.
- The quality of professional training for in-service and post-service teachers, health professionals and community workers involved in delivering SRE.
- What children, young people, parents, carers and wider communities in Wales think about school-based SRE provision.

In response, the panel recommends that the Welsh government develop a SRE research network that can work with research partners to facilitate the provision of up to date research for the Welsh SRE community (see Recommendation 11).

This report draws on the available international evidence whilst recognising the gaps in research focussed on Welsh schools and communities. A recent synthesis of qualitative research on children and young people's views of their school-based SRE used research from UK, Ireland, the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Japan, Iran, Brazil and Sweden (Pound, Denford and Shucksmieth et al, 2017). The review found that there was surprisingly little variation in children and young people's views and experiences despite the considerable social and cultural variations. Therefore, whilst we recognised the need for robust evidence focussed on Welsh schools and communities, we also draw confidently on the international evidence available in assessing what changes are needed to improve the provision of SRE in Wales. For additional key facts and figures on children and young people's experiences of SRE-related issues, see Annex 5 for a comprehensive but by no means exhaustive list of research evidence on SRE and potential safeguarding issues.

b) Why is change needed?

Sex and Relationships education is not mandatory in all schools, its contents and quality varies depending on the school, and lesbian, gay, bisexual,

transgender and intersex children and young people do not have access to accurate information on their sexuality (UNCRC, Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of the UK, 2016, Section 64b)

As a basic curriculum subject SRE has low status and is poorly resourced

‘The non-statutory nature of the PSE Framework means that schools have the flexibility to make their own arrangements for delivering the components of PSE set out in the framework. Overall, schools do not allocate enough time or importance to this subject.’ (Estyn 2017; p. 9)

Research consistently shows that when SRE is a non-statutory subject it has low priority and low status in schools (Butson et al 2002). Insufficient time and resources are allocated to teacher training and curriculum planning, with the success of SRE programmes too often resting on the interests and enthusiasm of individual teachers or school leaders with SRE/PSE responsibilities. This leads to wide variation in the quantity and quality of SRE that children and young people receive (Estyn 2017).

An evaluation of a two year SRE programme (SHARE) in 13 Scottish schools for example found that the programme was not fully implemented by all teachers in all schools, despite teachers being provided with a 4 day training course, a complete teacher's pack containing lesson plans and resources and a top-up training course half-way through the programme (Butson et al. 2002). The evaluation found that delivery of the programme was hindered by competition for curriculum time, the short length of lessons and the low priority awarded to PSE by senior management, particularly in relation to timetabling.

The lack of professional training means that teachers are often poorly equipped to deliver SRE or respond to the potential safeguarding concerns or equalities issues that may arise, in particular homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, sexist bullying and abuse. A survey of staff from 100 secondary schools in Wales found for example that only 68% of schools provide any staff training in safeguarding young people specifically about issues in sexual health and relationships (SHRN, 2015⁴). This survey of 35,071 students from 87 secondary schools in Wales also found that less than half of secondary school pupils feel that teachers take action when they hear

⁴ The School Health Research Network is a partnership between the Centre for the Development and Evaluation of Complex Interventions for Public Health Improvement (DECIPHer) at Cardiff University, Welsh Government, Public Health Wales, Cancer Research UK and the Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data & Methods (WISERD), funded by Health and Care Research Wales via the National Centre for Health and Well-being Research. The work was undertaken with the support of DECIPHer, a UKCRC Public Health Research Centre of Excellence. Joint funding (MR/KO232331/1) from the British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research UK, Economic and Social Research Council, Medical Research Council, the Welsh Government and the Wellcome Trust, under the auspices of the UK Clinical Research Collaboration, is gratefully acknowledged.

girls being called offensive names at school such as 'slut' and 'slag' (SHRN, 2015). This is something that around 30% of secondary school girls report experiencing, with 4-9% of girls reporting that this happens several times a week (SHRN, 2015). We know from research that girls report feeling unable or uncomfortable to speak up during SRE lessons, as they fear being called a 'slag', particularly if talking openly about sexual enjoyment or pleasure (Ringrose 2011; Allen 2013).

A recent review of international qualitative evidence on children and young people's experiences of SRE found that young people report that SRE classes are awkward, embarrassing and uncomfortable (Pound, Langford and Campbell 2016). Evidence suggests that SRE is often delivered in schools using a 'no-nonsense approach' but this is not always helpful as it does not acknowledge the many anxieties around sexuality that exist for children, young people and teachers (Epstein et al. 2003). The review reports that children and young people dislike their teachers delivering SRE, particularly in secondary schools as they don't trust teachers to keep things confidential. They also report a lack of knowledge and expertise, which is highly valued in external visitors. The preference is for expert educators, who have good classroom management skills and can respond to name calling and create a safe learning environment (Pound et al. 2016).

The low priority given to SRE has been identified as an issue by Estyn in a comprehensive review of SRE provision in Wales (2007) and more recent view of healthy relationships education (2017). The review of SRE provision (2007) found that where PSE is a well-planned and integrated part of the whole secondary curriculum, pupils are helped to incrementally develop confidence in thinking, listening and talking about sex and relationships. This work raises their awareness and self-esteem when dealing theoretically with difficult situations and making important choices. The review found however that most older pupils in Secondary Schools from Year 11 and upwards had not benefited from a comprehensive programme of sex and relationships education. Teaching was found to be hampered by a lack of curriculum time and the absence of well coordinated curricula and effective monitoring of student learning. The review states that the use of one-off 'health days' in secondary schools meant that not enough time is provided for pupils to discuss the moral and emotional aspects of what they are taught.

More recent evidence from Estyn inspections shows that nearly all year 6 pupils in primary schools receive sex and relationships education (SRE) and increasingly, primary schools are extending this provision into Year 5 (Estyn 2017). There are however a minority of primary schools that avoid teaching aspects of sex and relationships education, other than puberty. In these schools, the teaching of personal hygiene and puberty is left 'solely to NHS health professionals in one-off sessions, which does not give pupils the opportunity to raise personal issues with teachers they know' (p.5) on a wider range of issues that children may have questions and concerns about (see Renold 2013; Robinson and Davies 2017). There

is no available evidence on whether SRE is provided to children in reception or years 1-4, but a strong steer by the research community and most recently by European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC) (2017) Position Statement on a Comprehensive Relationship and Sexuality Education, (ENOC 2017) that SRE must start early (Robinson and Davies 2017, Martin and Boiber 2017).

In Welsh secondary schools however Estyn found there to be 'wide variation' in planning and provision for healthy relationships education, with similar findings for Sex and relationships education a decade earlier (Estyn 2007). In most secondary schools, healthy relationships education does feature as part of the PSE curriculum at key stage 3. However, a few of the schools surveyed in this recent Estyn review did not have discrete PSE lessons at key stage 4. These schools 'promote healthy relationships education during themed days, assemblies and as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate. Schools that deliver healthy relationships education in stand-alone assemblies, themed days or small blocks of lessons in discrete subjects do not give pupils enough opportunity to explore important social and emotional aspects of relationships' (*ibid*, p.5). Many specialist agencies believe that the wider aims of SRE, including the aims of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015 and the accompanying National Strategy, will not be fully realised without statutory guidance for schools, setting out a core curriculum that all children and young people are entitled to receive.

Too little, too late, too biological, and not enough on inclusive relationships

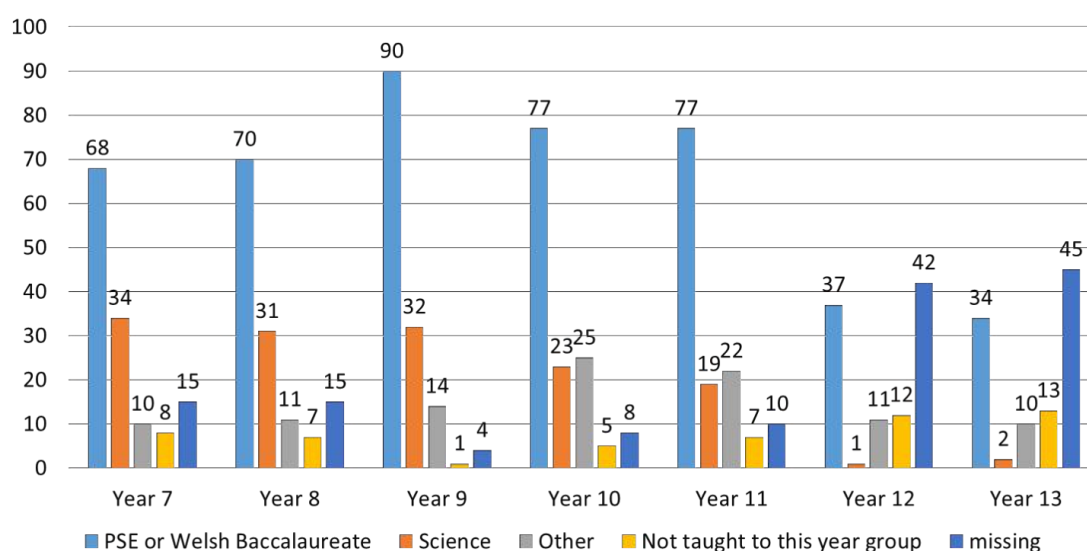
The majority of children and young people in Wales receive some SRE at primary and secondary school (Estyn 2017). A survey of staff from 100 secondary schools in Wales found that SRE was mostly delivered in PSE or Welsh Baccalaureate (SRHN 2015).

Evidence suggests however that many programmes fail to address children and young people's diverse needs, particularly in relation to gender and sexual diversity, positive relationships, consent and safety (Terrence Higgins Trust 2016, Stonewall 2017, UK Youth Parliament 2007, Pound et al. 2016, Stein, Tolman, Porche and Spencer 2002; McGeeney and Hanson 2017, Pallotta-Chiarolli 2017). There are also insufficient opportunities for children and young people to participate in influencing the SRE curriculum, leading to a gap between the SRE curriculum and children and young people's lived experiences of sexualities and relationships.

For over a decade young people in the UK have consistently reported that the SRE that they receive in school is 'too little, too late, too biological and doesn't provide enough (if any) information on relationships.' (UK Youth Parliament 2007, p. 3). In 2007 the UK youth parliament conducted a survey of 21,602 young people aged 11 to 18 across the UK and found that 40% of young people said that their SRE was either poor or very poor, whilst a further 33% thought it was average. 43% of all

young people surveyed stated that they had not been taught about personal relationships at school. Over the past ten years survey evidence from England with much smaller survey samples shows that young people consistently report that the quality of their SRE is poor, although there is some evidence that this is slowly improving (Sex Education Forum 2008, 2011, 2016a, and 2016b). There is no equivalent data set for Wales.

Figure 1. Which year groups receive Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) within the formal curriculum and where is it taught? (SRHN 2015⁵)



A recent UK survey of over 2,000 young people across the UK found that 85% of young people had received Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at school (McGeeney and Hanson, 2017) but only half (48%) felt the timing of this education was about right (48%). Of the remaining 52% who felt that the timing was not quite right, 71% felt that some or all the information should have been given earlier, with 29% feeling that some or all should have been given later. Evidence from international qualitative research suggests that schools often struggle to accept that young people are sexual beings who may be sexually active (Pound et al. 2016). This leads to aspects of SRE often being delivered ‘too late’ and the curriculum feeling out of touch with the realities of young people’s lives and to young people feeling that the content of the curriculum feels irrelevant or patronising (*ibid*). For example, research with primary school children shows that boyfriend-girlfriend cultures are prevalent in children’s social worlds, yet they are rarely acknowledged by teachers or within primary SRE curricula as students are deemed ‘too young’ or ‘too innocent’ for such discussions (Renold 2002; 2006; 2013).

⁵ SHRN data from year 12 and 13 (KS5) students are collected from sixth forms within schools, whose pupils are unlikely to be representative of all 16-18 year olds in Wales.

11-16 years: what girls have learned and think they should have learned at school. Results from a Girl Guiding UK attitudes survey (2015)

- 83% say they are taught about biological puberty, sex and reproduction and 86% would like to be taught this.
- 90% say they are taught about staying safe online 87% thinks they should have been

BUT

- 49% say they are taught about consent but 82% would like to be taught this.
- 47% say they are taught about violence against women and girls but 84% say they would like to be taught this.
- 45% say they are taught about understanding what is good and bad behaviour within relationships, but 84% say they would like to be taught this.
- 25% say they are taught about pornography but 68% say they would like to be taught this.
- 50% say they are taught about Sexual orientation and LGBTQ identities but 81% say they would like to be taught this

Limited opportunities for children and young people to influence the curriculum

We know that in Wales, there are not enough opportunities for children and young people to influence what they learn in SRE or contribute towards curriculum development, peer support and education or wider community activism (Estyn 2017). Data from the School Health Research Network, which has conducted a survey with staff at 100 secondary schools in Wales, suggests that 48% of schools have no student involvement in developing the school SRE policy. 35% of schools consulted the school council or student voice, and 9% conducted wider student consultation (SHRN, 2015). This can be understood in the context of a wider lack of opportunities for primary and secondary students to be asked for their views at school and to have their views taken into consideration when making decisions (Children's Commissioner for Wales 2016).

Where young people are asked about what issues are important to them they articulate a range of concerns about equalities, emotions, inclusive relationships and the school environment (See Figure 3), which are often not covered in the SRE curriculum. This is supported by a body of international evidence that suggests that there is a 'gap' between what young people want to learn and what schools and teachers think they need to learn (Allen 2001). Internationally school based SRE programmes have been criticised for being 'too biological' or health focussed at the expense of including children's rights, emotions and relationships; too negative and risk focussed, at the expense of the positive and pleasure aspects of relationships and sexuality; too heteronormative leading to a silencing of LGBTQ+ identities, experiences and relationships (Ingham 2005, Hirst 2004, Allen 2012; Corteen 2007,

McGeeney 2015; Austin 2017; Allen and Rasmussen 2017; Blake and Aggleton 2017; Cover, Rasmussen, Aggleton and Marshall 2017).

SRE is not addressing the needs, experiences and relationships of LGBT young people

Between November 2016 and February 2017, 3,713 LGBT young people aged between 11-19, including 267 living in Wales, completed an online questionnaire about their experiences at schools and colleges. The Stonewall School Report Cymru (2017) reported that more than half of LGBT pupils in Wales (54%) – including 73% of trans pupils - are still bullied at school for being LGBT and almost half (47%) never tell anyone about it. Only a quarter of LGBT pupils who experience bullying in Welsh schools (25 per cent) say that teachers intervene when they are present during the bullying and just 29 per cent report that teachers or school staff consistently challenge homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language when they hear it.

In PE lessons people would deliberately run into me, throw footballs or rugby balls at me and just try to attack me. The teacher said it was nothing. I have done everything possible to miss PE lessons. *Leigh, 16, secondary school* (Stonewall Cymru 2017, p. 11).

This research, based on a small sample of 267 LGBT young people living in Wales, also found that LGBT young people continue to experience high levels of poor mental health. These findings are supported by international research that has documented young LGBTQ people's experiences of poor mental health, self-harm, depression and attempted suicide (Formby 2014, Robinson and Espelage 2011)

I used to be made fun of a lot for my appearance. I frequently got asked if I was a boy or a girl and was called names like shim and hermaphrodite. I got pushed in corridors, kicked and told that I was a 'nervous wreck' when I would cry about the bullying. It went on from the start of Year Seven, probably until the end of Year Eleven. I've never really got over it. *Jamie, 17, sixth form college* (Stonewall Cymru 2017, p.7).

The Stonewall Schools report Cymru also suggests that trans pupils are at particular risk with many facing harassment, bullying and violence (Stonewall Cymru 2017). More than half of trans young people reported that they are not able to use the toilets they feel comfortable in at school, while two in five are not able to be known by their preferred name at school. Three in four trans young people have harmed themselves at some point.

The survey also found that three in five pupils in Wales (58%) are never taught anything about LGBT issues in school. A higher proportion of pupils in Wales (40%), than in the wider British sample, reported never being taught about LGBT issues at

school. As the figure below from Stonewall Cymru's (2017) survey indicates, the majority of young people in Wales are learning about contraception and safer sex, consent, violence in relationships and healthy relationships, yet less than 20% have learnt about these issues in relation to LGBT issues. Further, more than four in five LGBT pupils in Wales have never learnt about or discussed bisexuality in school (84%) or been taught about gender identity and what 'trans' means (87%).

School has only ever taught me sex ed for straight people. I had to learn about same-sex relationships by asking people and looking on the Internet. Given that school didn't teach me about same-sex relationships when I was young and questioning, I found it alienating and felt even less like I could come out. *Rachel, 18, FE college* (Stonewall Cymru 2017, p.15).

Nothing LGBT has ever been discussed in a positive way at school.
Anna, 13, secondary school

These findings are not unique to Wales and are echoed in research across Britain which suggests that LGBT issues are not routinely addressed in SRE and that programmes were delivered under the assumption that all pupils were heterosexual (Formby 2011, Stonewall 2017, Terrance Higgins Trust 2016).

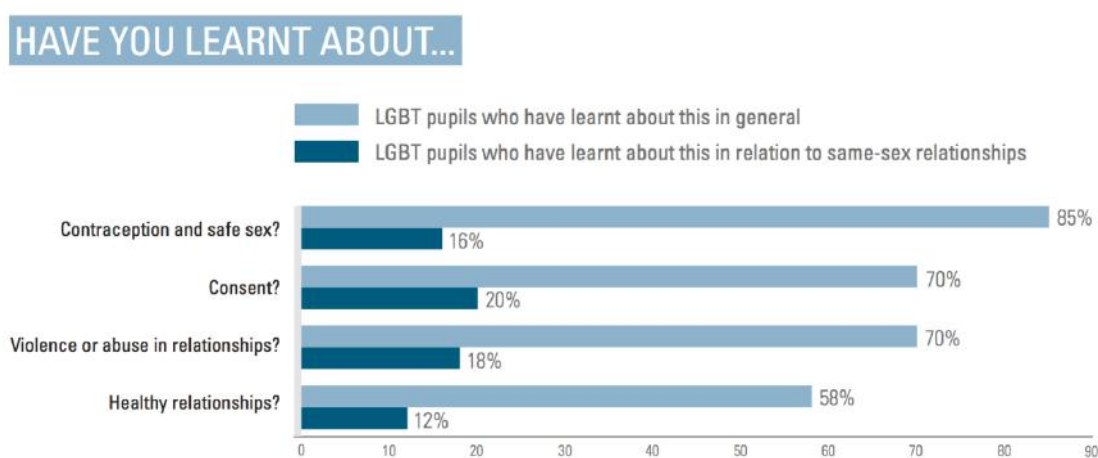


Figure 2: Have you learnt about ... (Source: Stonewall Cymru 2017 p. 16)

Figure 3: SRE Stop Plates

Young people at the launch of AGENDA: A Young People's Guide for Making Positive Relationships Matter tell the government what it is that they want to 'stop' in relation to current SRE and SRE related issues



- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Stop slut shaming in the media, it's not helping!!</p> <p>Stop joking about periods</p> <p>Stop abusing people for their sexuality.</p> <p>Stop gender stereotyping</p> <p>Stop catcalling me</p> <p>Stop weight shaming</p> <p>Stop saying women belong in the kitchen</p> <p>Stop people not understanding what feminism is.</p> <p>Gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, transsexual, heterosexual: STOP THE LABELS. I am not a label, I am me.</p> <p>BANTER- them jokes aint funny it could really hurt somebody</p> <p>Stop calling black people the N word</p> <p>Stop discrimination against religion, ethnicity and race</p> <p>Stop assuming 2 people of the opposite sex are dating</p> <p>Stop telling us how high/low are skirt can/can't be</p> <p>Stop peer pressure for sexual consent</p> <p>Stop boys de-valuing girls</p> <p>Stop boys judging girls for not doing what they want</p> <p>Stop homophobia</p> | <p>Stop the stigma around mental health, we need more support systems!</p> <p>Stop using the female body as an excuse for feeding rape culture.</p> <p>Stop saying men are helpless to their urges</p> <p>Stop boys forcing girls AND girls forcing boys to do sexual things.</p> <p>Stop sexism in PE</p> <p>Stop objectifying me. I am not your property.</p> <p>Criticising those who are from a different background or religion</p> <p>Stop telling us how short/long our skirts should be</p> <p>Stop teachers ignoring bullying</p> <p>Stop making fun of disabled people</p> <p>Stop judging girls by their make-up</p> <p>Apparently, I'm not allowed to cry, who made up the rules?</p> <p>Make it normal for anyone to openly speak about how they are feeling no matter what age, gender or sexuality.</p> <p>Stop and ask instead of assuming people's emotions</p> <p>Stop sexualising girls' bodies</p> <p>Stop judging people for their interests based on their gender</p> |
|---|---|

Inadequate SRE for children and young people with disabilities.

People with disabilities have historically been excluded from SRE, due to myths about disabled people being either asexual or 'too sexual', which make SRE either irrelevant or potentially dangerous (Rohleder 2010, Gougeon 2009). We know very little about current provision of SRE for young people with disabilities in Wales, as there is limited research in this area. In North Wales the Jiwsj project has been providing SRE programmes for young people with learning disabilities and/or autism for 15 years. A case study of their work in an additional needs school in Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd is inserted below.

We do know that internationally education and support providers have often failed to promote and advocate for disabled children and young people's rights or to provide appropriate education and support (Murphy and Young 2005, Rohleder 2010). Practitioners providing education for people with learning disabilities, for example, express ambivalence about the work, recognising its importance whilst also experiencing anxiety that SRE will lead to inappropriate sexual behaviour (Rohleder 2010). Children with disabilities generally have fewer opportunities to participate in social activities, compared to their able-bodied peers and typically developing peers (Murphy and Young 2005). Young people with autism, for example, report high levels of social anxiety and difficulty in forming social groups and reading the intentions of others (Hannah and Stagg 2016). This means that young people with autism have fewer opportunities to discuss sex, sexuality and relationships with their peers. This suggests that young people with autism will have specific and requirements and needs when it comes to SRE and may need increased support around developing safe and positive relationships and learning the information, skills and values that may be otherwise learned informally during social interactions with peers (ibid).

Evidence suggests that children with disabilities are sexually abused more than twice as frequently when compared with children without disabilities and are found to have a scarcity of sexual knowledge even as adults (Suris et al. 1996, Quint 1999, American Academy of Paediatrics: Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect and Committee on Children With Disabilities. 2001, Crosse, Kaye and Ratnofsky 1992). Societal and cultural barriers are significant in this limited knowledge and prevalence of abuse, which is compounded by the lack of formal and informal opportunities for children and young people with disabilities to develop, express and explore their sexuality, have positive relationship experiences and access information about when and how to ask for help and support (Murphy and Young 2005).

Children and young people with disabilities have the same rights as all other children to access high quality education about sexualities and relationships and to have opportunities to develop and express their sexuality and have positive relationships. Internationally there is a wealth of expertise and resources to support the development and delivery of high quality SRE (See the bibliography of curricula, teaching resources, websites and books for professionals and general consumers provided by The Sexuality and Information Education Council of the United States ([Siecus](http://www.siecus.org/))⁶, or the resources and FAQs for older teens provided by [Enhance the UK](#)⁷).

⁶ SIECUS

<http://www.siecus.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document.viewDocument&documentid=182&documentFormatI>

FPA Project Jiws: A 6 week SRE programme at Ysgol Hafod Lon, an additional needs school in Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd.

Jiws is a BCUHB funded sex and relationships education project in North Wales that delivers SRE programmes to groups of vulnerable young people under 25 years old. Over half of the clients Jiws work with have learning disabilities and/or autism.

Project Jiws delivered a six week SRE programme to class of 8 to 10 young people aged 13 to 16 years old at Ysgol Hafod Lon, an additional needs school in Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd. As usual the project team didn't arrive to work with the group with a fixed learning agenda but instead used the first session to need assess the group, set learning and safety boundaries (working contract/ground rules) and then create a learning agenda in agreement with the young people and the staff. Here is an outline of the programme agreed by the project team, young people and school staff.

Week 1: Introductions, needs assessment activity, working agreement, agenda setting

Week 2: Bodies. Male & female bodies, external parts, reproductive parts, what changes during puberty?

Week 3: Periods. What are they & who has them. Why? Looking at and activities with pads & tampons.

Week 4: What is sex? Why do people have sex? What is it? Are there any rules for sex? (Consent/age/private place) Do only heterosexual people have sex? What can happen if you have unprotected sex?

Week 5: Relationships. What is love? Who do we love? Who/what gives us loving feelings? (people/pets/objects/activities) Do we always need to be in a relationship to have love feelings?

Week 6: Public & private. Public & private parts of your body and public & private places you may access.

Week 7: Evaluate, participation certificates, thank you, goodbyes & close.

Session 4 – in more detail

During the needs assessment it became clear that most of the group didn't know what sex was. After the sessions on bodies, where we created a fictitious male and female character on flip chart paper, we changed the characters ages to adults and used the characters to discuss the following questions;

- What is sex? Do only heterosexual people have sex?

- What body parts can be involved? What actually happens?
- Why do people have sex?
- Are there any rules for sex? (Yes - Consent/age/private place/law)
- What can happen if you have unprotected sex? (just touched on the topic of condoms & contraception, this is something that can be covered in a future programme or SRE lesson)

The group engaged brilliantly with this session. Explaining sex clearly, using their fictitious characters and other pictures, enabled them to get to grips with the topic. They took the whole thing in their stride and the session enabled them to finally understand what the word 'sex' actually meant!

Evidence: personal communication with Jiwsj project lead, Melanie Gadd.

Too negative and risk focused

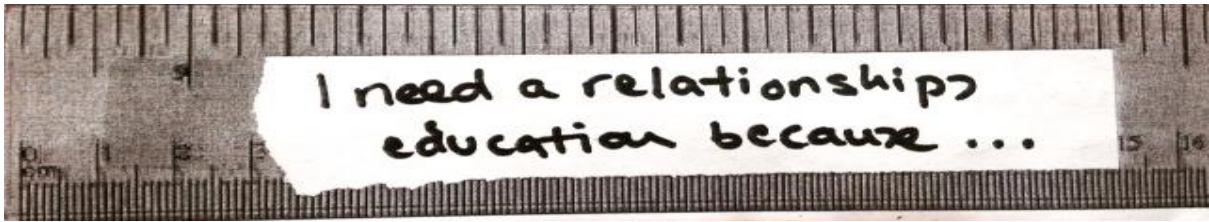
Research suggests that SRE at secondary schools is overly focussed on the risks and negative consequences of sexual behaviour and online relationships, at the expense of exploring what is healthy, pleasurable, positive or normal (Ingham 2005). For example, of those young people who reported in a recent survey that they have received SRE, nearly all had received education on online safety and online risks (94%) and sex (93%) but fewer had received education on developing relationship skills (76%) or how to have positive relationships online (73%) (McGeeney and Hanson 2017). Similarly whilst two thirds of young people rated the quality of their SRE as good or very good only 26% said this of their education on positive relationship skills. Qualitative data from this study painted a similar picture with young people reporting that whilst their education made them aware of useful information and relevant issues, it was overly negative and narrow in its focus.

“We call it three ‘R’s, which was ‘Rules, Rights and Responsibilities’, and they would teach us stuff like online safety and genuine stuff like that. I always remember three ‘R’s being painted in a negative light. It was always, like, ‘If you drive a car, you’re gonna die, you have sex, you’re gonna die.’ I was, like, ‘Okay, so you’re not gonna give us any light on the subject, you’re just gonna tell us that basically, thanks.’” (Anthony, 19, interview participant, McGeeney and Hanson 2017)

Research with young people clearly shows that sexuality and relationships education needs to acknowledge the importance of intimacy, desire and pleasure within relationships. This acknowledgement would assist young people to feel positive about themselves, their sexuality and their bodies (Harrison, Hillier and Walsh 1996; Allen 2005; 2011; Tolman 2012; McGeeney 2013).

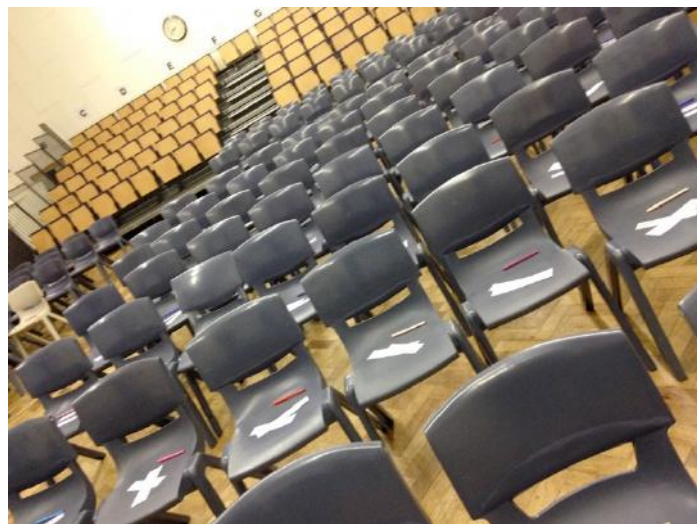
Groups of Year 10 students in Wales collected comments from a sentence

completion task with over 1000 students (age 11-18)



I want a healthy relationships education because ...

I didn't know what an unhealthy relationship was until I was in one
we've never learnt about consent
we need a place to talk about our feelings
I don't know what a healthy relationship is
girls are thought of as objects not human beings



me and my girlfriend constantly argue
they forced me to do stuff that I didn't want to do
they called me a slag
I wish boys knew how much their comments hurt
people are forced into relationships
rape culture

Figure 4: I need a healthy relationships education because ...

There is a gap between curriculum and lived experience

Evidence suggests that schools often struggle to accept that young people are sexual beings who may be sexually active (Pound et al. 2016). This leads to SRE being out of touch with the realities of young people's lives and to young people feeling that the content of the curriculum feels irrelevant or patronising. As a result of the gap between children's and young people's lived experiences of sexuality and relationships and the content of SRE programmes, children are not leaving school equipped to tackle the challenges and complexities they may face. Evidence from NATSAL suggests that most young people (around 70%) do not know enough about sex when they first have some sexual experience.

Data from the School Health Research Network survey of 35,071 students from 87 secondary schools in Wales tells us that around half of secondary school students agree that their school teaches them who to go to if they, or a friend, experiences violence within a relationship (SHRN, 2015). Less than 50% of young people in this survey agreed that they would talk to a member of staff at their school about relationship violence if it was happening to them or anyone they knew. This evidence, combined with data on children and young people's experiences of sexist and HBT bullying and violence in schools (Stonewall 2017) tells us that more needs to be done to create and deliver an SRE curriculum that is able to respond to the wide ranging, shifting concerns that children and young people encounter throughout their school careers.

Why is change needed: summary box

Current provision of Sex and Relationships Education in schools is limited

SRE is often too biological, too negative, and not enough focus is placed on rights, equity, emotions and relationships

There is a gap between children and young people's lived experiences and the content of SRE

There are not enough opportunities for children and young people to influence what they learn in SRE

SRE is rarely inclusive and too heteronormative

SRE is inadequate for children and young people with disabilities.

c) What change is needed?

Recommendation 1

Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) should incorporate a name change from Sex and Relationships Education to Sexuality and Relationships Education. This new definition will draw upon the World Health Organisation's (WHO) definition of 'sexuality', with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and equity.

To make the Sexuality and Relationships Education (SRE) a statutory part of the new curriculum for all schools (age 3-16) and underpinned by the core principles in recommendation 2.

To develop new statutory guidance for Foundation Phase, Primary and Secondary Schools underpinned by the core principles in recommendation 2.

All children and young people have the right to high quality, holistic and inclusive education about sexualities and relationships (ENOC 2017). Under the proposed new curriculum, 'Successful Futures' (2016) Sex and Relationships will be part of the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience. Informed by current international SRE research on the consequences of non-statutory SRE (see Part 2), the recent UNCRC (2016, Section 65b) and ENOC (2017) statements that children and young people have the right to meaningful, high quality, comprehensive and inclusive SRE, and Objective 2 in the Welsh Government's National Strategy on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (2016-2021) which states that the new curriculum must include the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships⁸, the panel recommend that Sexuality and Relationships Education (SRE) be a statutory part of the new curriculum for all schools (age 3-16) from Foundation Phase to compulsory school leaving age (3-16).

These changes should apply to all maintained schools. The remit of the panel was to look at the role of SRE within the new curriculum, which does not apply to independent schools. The panel strongly advocates however that independent schools also provide high quality SRE to all children and young people underpinned by the core principles set out in this report.

⁸ To ensure that "the development of the new curriculum, and specifically the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience, enables children and young people's education to be supported by a holistic approach to health and well-being and helps them to build the knowledge, understanding and skills that will enable them to develop positive and appropriate relationships" (Welsh Government 2016 p.21/22).

Implications for Faith schools

All schools should ensure that their SRE policies and practice are inclusive and culturally relevant to the religious and spiritual needs of learners and the wider community. This is in line with current government guidance (ibid) and with the core principles of SRE set out in this report, in particular that SRE should be **Experience-near and Co-Produced** and that SRE should be embedded in a **whole school approach**. This means that all schools, including faith schools, should involve children and young people, as well as school staff, parents and community members in curriculum development. This is to ensure that the curriculum engages with, and is inclusive of, the needs, values and interests of all children and young people and that key messages are reinforced across the curriculum and wider school policies and pastoral provision. As current guidance states, 'while faith schools may apply a particular religious ethos through their sex education policy, they are required to meet the statutory requirements that apply to all maintained schools and take note of guidance issued by the Welsh Assembly Government.' (Welsh Government, Sex and relationships education: frequently asked questions).

Estyn's recent (2017) review of healthy relationships education found that the faith schools visited for the review were 'particularly effective in using collective worship to link the values of the school to the values that inform the practice of their faith' (p.18). In the best examples, values were embedded in assemblies, acts of worship and curriculum subjects. For example, at St Helen's Roman Catholic School in Caerphilly, 'staff promote key values from the religious education (RE) syllabus across a wide range of subjects and activities' (p.18). As a result, the review found that students revisit values that promote healthy, respectful relationships each year and are able to talk confidently about 'the importance of treating others as they themselves would like to be treated' (ibid).

There is limited research in the Wales, or the UK on the role of faith based schools and community organisations in providing SRE to children and young people⁹. While many faith-based programmes have existed for decades, we have limited knowledge about their effectiveness (Cornelius and Appiah 2016). Some researchers suggest that whether or not a school is faith-based or not makes less difference to how SRE is experienced than is generally presumed, particularly given the range of religious views on SRE (Reiss 2014), and how faith and religion intersect with children and young people's identities and relationship cultures in different ways (Shiple 2017; Rasmussen 2017). There is however some evidence from Britain (no data available for Wales only) that suggests that LGBT pupils in faith schools are more likely than

⁹ The report contains data from a survey of 35,071 students from 87 secondary schools in Wales (SHRN 2015). The sample includes a combination of faith and non-faith schools.

those in non-faith schools to say that teachers and school staff never challenge homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language when they hear it (31 per cent compared to 22 per cent, Stonewall 2017). This highlights the need for training and support for all schools, including faith and non-faith based schools, to engage with faith communities and work with specialist organisation to create an inclusive and rights-based approach to SRE.

St Woolos Primary School, Newport.

Currently there are 337 pupils on roll at St Woolos Primary School aged 3 to 11. The school has a diverse population made up of pupils from many countries. Across the school population, there are 43 different languages spoken and forty-nine per cent (49%) of pupils speak English as an additional language. Around 38% of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school has identified that 38% of pupils have additional learning needs. These figures are well above national averages.

St Woolos Primary School is committed to ensuring that all pupils feel valued, safe and secure. The school promotes an understanding of diversity and respect for all and ensures that pupils develop a strong sense of responsibility and empathy for one another.

The school provides a comprehensive package of training for staff that equips them with the awareness and skills necessary to understand the cultural heritage of pupils and support their diverse needs. For example, staff receive regular training from specialist agencies including child and adolescent psychotherapists and BAWSO. In addition, staff have gained qualifications to enable them to run innovative intervention programmes supporting pupils' social and emotional development. These include 'restorative justice' sessions, which enable pupils to understand how their behaviours affect others and how they can resolve disagreements successfully. The school also runs projects to develop parents' communication and language skills alongside their children.

Teachers plan many worthwhile opportunities for pupils to learn about healthy relationships within topics across the school. For example, the school uses positive role models from the local community to raise the aspirations of pupils from the black and ethnic minority community. Welsh Women's Aid run workshops with pupils at key stage 2 to learn about gender equality and the importance of healthy respectful relationships. Faith leaders from the local community come into school to increase children's understanding of the main faiths represented at the school.

The school uses grant funding successfully to provide additional services to support pupils. These include counselling and play therapy.

The curriculum promotes respect and understanding of the many faiths and cultural identities of the pupils. As a result, pupils with a wide range of languages and cultural backgrounds work together well. They show care and consideration for each other and value equality and diversity.

Staff build positive relationships with key stakeholders including parents and community leaders. As a result, parents have increased their engagement with the school.

Evidence: *Estyn (2017) A review of Health Relationships Education. Pg.15-16*

There are a number of key reasons why the panel recommends that the SRE is a statutory part of the curriculum for all schools from Foundation Phase to compulsory school leaving age (3-16).

There are two key arguments for making SRE a compulsory part of the curriculum. The first is that **all children and young people have the right to high quality, inclusive education about sexualities and relationships**. The United Kingdom Government, including Wales, is a signatory to the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and has agreed to uphold the rights of children and young people as set out in the Convention. This means that all children and young people in Wales have a right to a high quality education, including education about sexuality and relationships. In its recent report to the UK government (UNCRC 2016), the UNCRC noted that 'Relationships and sexuality education is not mandatory in all schools, its contents and quality varies depending on the school, and LGBT children do not have access to accurate information on their sexuality' (UNCRC 2016; 63(b) p.16) n (see also the recent ENOC 2017 statements). The UNCRC recommends that the state ensure that meaningful SRE is part of the mandatory school curriculum in all schools (64(b)).

The second key argument for making SRE a statutory part of the curriculum for all schools is that **high quality, inclusive SRE is associated with a range of positive and protective outcomes for children, young people and their communities**. Some of these include the following:

- ***Reduction in homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying and an increase wellbeing for LGBTQ+ learners***

Recently published research by Stonewall on the experiences of more than 3,700 LGBT young people in Britain (Stonewall 2017) found that in schools where pupils are taught about LGBT issues, LGBT pupils are less likely to experience homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying than in schools where pupils don't learn about LGBT issues (43 per cent compared to 49 per cent). Further, LGBT

pupils in these schools are also more likely to report feeling safe, welcome and happy at school.

My teachers at sixth form always tried to include LGBT people and issues. In English Literature lessons my teacher included work by Audre Lorde and Oscar Wilde and discussed the ways that they presented their homosexuality in their poems or novels. We watched films such as *Pride* and *Milk* to learn about LGBT history. I think that a lot of my confidence and acceptance around my sexual orientation is because of the way my A Level teachers celebrated LGBT history and the achievements of LGBT people.

Sadie, 18, now at university (Yorkshire and the Humber) (Stonewall 2017, 22)

- ***Helps young people make informed decisions about sexual intimacy, sexual consent, and sexual and reproductive health***

Many arguments for making school-based SRE statutory are based on the need to avoid negative public health outcomes for children and young people; in particular unwanted teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. Case-study research conducted in England found that areas of the country that achieved the greatest reductions in teenage conception rates had provided both good quality school SRE as well as accessible sexual health services for young people (Department for Education and Skills 2006, in National Children's Bureau 2015 p.2). However, trends in teenage conceptions and STIs are driven by social and economic factors far out way the provision of SRE in schools and provide limited insight into the usefulness of SRE. In addition the vision for SRE set out in this report is much broader in its scope with the aim of impacting on children and young people's relationships, social and emotional wellbeing and safety from harm.

National and international research does however show that young people who report having had good SRE are more likely to choose to have sex for the first time later and that sex is more likely to be consensual and safe. There is no evidence that SRE hastens the first experience of sex or increases the number of sexual partners. These findings are confirmed by three separate evidence reviews: Kirby 2007, UNESCO 2009 and NICE 2010, as well as from NATSAL - the British survey of sexual attitudes and lifestyles (Macdowall et al 2015, SEF 2015). Evidence from NATSAL shows that young people who mainly learned about sex from school lessons were less likely to have had sexual intercourse before age 16 compared to young people who learnt from parents or other sources. They were also less likely to have had unsafe sex in the past year, compared to others.

NATSAL also found that men and women who reported school lessons as their main source of sex education, compared to learning from friends or other sources, were more likely to be 'sexually competent' at first sex. This means that at first sex a reliable method of contraception was used; the timing felt right; the decision to have

sex was an autonomous one; both partners were equally willing (Wellings, 1995; Wellings, 2001; Macdowall 2015). The survey data also suggests that learning about sex in school lessons has a series of positive outcomes for women in particular. Women for whom school was their main source of information about sex were more likely to have been 'sexually competent' at first sex (see above); less likely to have had an abortion or experienced 'sex against their will'; less likely to have felt distressed about their sex life in the past year. There was no association with these outcomes for men (SEF 2015).

"If you have really good, comprehensive SRE, you talk about consent in a meaningful way with young people. You tell them about age gaps and predatory behaviours, so they start to recognise that. If you are not giving them any ammunition to understand these things, no wonder they are ending up in very dangerous situations".

(Alison Hadley, Director of the Teenage Pregnancy Knowledge Exchange, University of Bedfordshire, speaking to the House of Commons Education Committee)

- ***Helps challenge gender and sexual stereotypes and increases children and young people's understanding of safe, healthy and positive relationships***

Children's knowledge and understanding of gender, sexuality, and relationships has an impact on how they learn to develop a skill set to negotiate respectful relationships early in life. Sexuality and access to sexual knowledge is relevant to children's awareness and understanding of their bodies and desires, impacting on their health and well-being (Robinson and Davies 2016. p.231)

Research indicates that those with fixed ideas about gender and the perpetuation of gender stereotypes are more likely to be in abusive relationships (Barter 2011; Barter et al. 2009; Barter and McCarry 2013; Barter *et al.*, 2017; Stanley *et al.*, 2015a, Stanley et al. 2016b; Lichter and McCloskey, 2004). It appears that effective interventions to prevent intimate partner violence and abuse (IPVA) in young people's relationships address both negative gendered attitudes and the acceptance of aggressive behaviour, which supports the use of gender-based violence (Lombard 2017).

Whilst we can work to prevent gendered violence and the perpetuation of attitudes that support it, we cannot do so within current restrictive gender regimes that normalise and justify much of what children and young people experience (Lombard 2016, Barter and McCarry 2013; Sundaram 2013; Renold 2013). We need to begin with a commitment to challenge gender inequality and inequity before we can work to undo its consequences. As such, the preventive work conducted as part of SRE should include sessions on healthy respectful relationships in the context of the importance of challenging the impact of gender stereotypes and gender equality and equity (Sundaram 2013). This work must go beyond the limitations of lessons that

only focus on the risks in relation to, for example, violence against girls and women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (see Welsh Government 2015) or only on the risks, for example, of social media that fail to attend to the gender norms and expectations that shape children and young people's experiences of risk, harm and abuse on and offline (Barter et al. 2016; Ringrose et al. 2013; McGeeney and Hanson 2017).

i) Why should SRE be statutory for all children in Wales aged 3 – 16?

The panel recommends that the SRE should be statutory in the curriculum for all schools from Foundation Phase through to compulsory school leaving age (3-16). The age at which countries start SRE varies throughout Europe (See map) and across the UK. In England the government has recently agreed that where Sex and Relationships Education will be statutory for secondary school pupils only, with primary school pupils receiving only relationships education. In contrast, and following the recent recommendations by the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC) (2017) Position Statement on a Comprehensive Relationship and Sexuality Education:

ENOC recommends that a mandatory high-quality CRSE is included within early-childhood education, primary, elementary and secondary education” (ENOC 2017, p.3).

The panel recommends that that *all children in Wales receive education on sexualities and relationships, underpinned by the core principles set out in this report.*

Children's learning and experience of sexuality and relationships (as defined above) begins as soon as they enter the social world. Frequently children and young people are viewed as 'innocent' or 'pre-sexual' beings, sparking unproven concerns within schools about the potential for SRE to 'corrupt childhood innocence' or 'prematurely sexualise' young people (Blaise 2005; Kehily and Montgomery 2013; Robinson 2013; Taylor 2010; Faulkner 2010; Renold 2003; 2013; Epstein, Kehily and Renold 2010; Bhana 2016). Yet expressing sexuality through sexual behaviours and relationships with others is a natural, healthy part of growing up. For example, for children aged between 0-5, behaviours such as holding or playing with own genitals, curiosity about other children's genitals, interest in body parts and what they do and curiosity about sex and gender differences reflect 'safe and healthy development' (see Brook 2015¹⁰).

¹⁰ <https://www.brook.org.uk/our-work/category/sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool>. Brook's "Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light Tool adapted with permission from True Relationships & Reproductive Health. (2012). Traffic Lights guide to sexual behaviours in children and young people: identify, understand and respond. Brisbane: True Relationships & Reproductive Health, Australia"

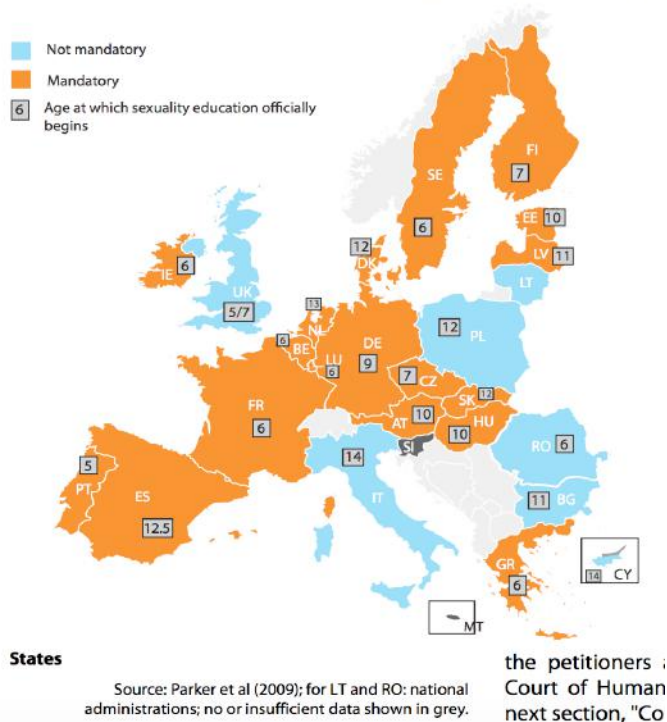
Children and young people are also growing up in a social context in which they are exposed to and navigating daily messages about sexuality, relationships and violence through books, television, music, online games and advertising, as well as from their family members and peers (Ollis, Harrison and Maharaj 2013; Kehily and Nayak 2013; Epstein and Sears 1999). They are also negotiating a range of norms about sex, gender and sexuality that shape their relationships, play and imagined futures (Thorne and Luria 1986; Walkerdine 1980; Taylor and Richardson 2005; Epstein et al. 2012; Renold 2013; Sparman 2015; Kromidas 2015; Robinson and Davies 2015).

Children construct knowledge about sexualities and relationships based on the information available to them (Robinson and Davies 2017). However much of what children learn about sexuality and relationships is 'piecemeal and fragmented', coming from a range of (often contradictory) sources (ibid, p. 230). Whilst many primary and secondary age children will not receive comprehensive SRE at school they learn about sexuality and relationships from the 'hidden curriculum' (Giroux and Purpel 1983). The hidden curriculum refers to 'the unwritten, unofficial, and frequently unintended lessons, values, and perspectives that students learn in school. The curriculum is described as 'hidden' because it is usually unacknowledged or unexamined by students, educators, and the wider community and may uphold the status quo (Robinson and Davies 2017, p. 234).

Evidence based SRE programmes play a vital role therefore in working with children, young people, parents/carers and communities to create environments explore the information and values about sexuality and relationships that children are already exposed to and often struggling to navigate for themselves (see Annex 5). By building upon children and young people's own informal learning and experience, offline and online, schools have the potential to create safe and empowering environments that enable children and young people to express their views and feelings on SRE issues. Schools are key sites for learning from and responding to children and young people's questions and needs.

Working in partnership with specialist services and local communities, schools are also important sites for prevention, protection and change. They are places that can support children and young people to gradually develop confidence to know where and how to seek advice and support in relation to, for example, prejudice, discrimination, abuse and violence and accurate information on sex, gender, sexuality and relationship issues.

Figure 1 - Sexuality Education in the EU Member at school level. H



ii) What support is there for statutory SRE in Wales?

There is widespread support for making SRE compulsory in schools across the UK from the following House of Commons committees: the Education Committee; the Women and Equalities Committee; the Home Affairs Committee; Chairs of the Health, and Business, Innovation and Skills Committees (See PSHE Association 2017). There is also support from the Association of Directors of Public Health; the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners; the Association of Independent Local Safeguarding Children Boards Chairs; two royal societies; six medical royal colleges and over 100 expert bodies, including The Terrence Higgins Trust, Brook, Sex Education Forum, Family Planning Association (FPA), Relate, British Pregnancy Service (BPAS), National AIDS Trust, the NSPCC, The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT), The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health; Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ALT), Girlguiding, PSHE Association, Stonewall (see PSHE Association 2017 and <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/campaigns>; also see the House of Commons Education Select Committee summary of written evidence submitted to the enquiry into whether PSHE education should be a statutory part of the National Curriculum in England).

Parents and carers also overwhelming support statutory SRE in all schools. Although there is no data specifically on the views of parents and carers in Wales, data from the School Health Research Network survey of staff from 100 secondary schools in Wales tells us that in 98% of these schools, less than 5% of parents remove their child/ren from SRE (SHRN, 2015). The National Association of Head Teachers survey (2013) of 1009 parents and carers across England, Wales and Northern Ireland found that 88 per cent of the parents and carers with school-aged children said that they want SRE to be compulsory.

Young people also want SRE to be statutory in schools. A survey by the National Union of Students, of over 2,500 students found that 90% of students want to see sex and relationships education (SRE) become statutory in schools. This is supported by international qualitative research that suggests that children and young people want high quality SRE in schools, provided by well-trained, specialist educators (Pound et al 2016). Here is one group of year ten students in Wales expressing their view.

**Roses are red,
violets are blue,
it's not too late,
for me and you.**

**To change the law,
that can change our lives,
and end the violence,
so we can survive and thrive.**

**We need pupil champions,
we need proper teacher training,
we need a real relationships education,
to stop girl shaming & boy blaming.**

**So when it's time to vote,
please think of our ode,
we NEED YOU to take action,
because you're in control.**

**Roses are red,
violets are blue,
respect and consent,
are about policy change too.**

Year 10 students at Pen Y Dre High School, Ysgol Gyfun Cymer Rhondda, and Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr

iii) What does SRE for children in the Foundation phase (3-7) look like?

“Sexuality education in the early years is important: for building children’s literacy around sexuality; to increase their confidence to explore different ways of expressing their gender and sexuality; to challenge peer pressure; to take responsibility for their decisions and actions; to develop critical thinking essential for decision-making; and to develop awareness of ethical relationships in life. (Robinson and Davies 2017, p.239)

Personal and Social Development, Well-being and Cultural Diversity are at the heart of the Foundation Phase. Children's skills are developed across all areas of learning through participation in experiential learning activities indoors and outdoors. Children learn about themselves, their relationships with other children and adults both within and beyond the family. They are encouraged to develop their self-esteem, their personal beliefs and moral values as well as an understanding that others have differing needs, abilities, beliefs and views. These are all areas of learning that can be appropriately and effectively covered during the foundation phase, that provide opportunities to respond to children's needs and questions and that creates an important foundation on which later stages of the SRE curriculum can build.

However, we know little about early childhood sexuality and SRE in the Foundation phase, especially when compared to adolescence and secondary school SRE provision (Martin and Boiber 2017). The limited research available suggests that in designing SRE curricula for the early years we need to question our assumptions about what is commonly understood as "developmentally appropriate" (Martin and Boiber 2017, Martin and Torres 2014). A study of preschool children and their parents in the USA found that children frequently misunderstood pictures meant to inform in developmentally appropriate ways (Martin and Torres 2014). For example, a picture that shows a pregnant woman's belly with a cut away to see an upside down smiling baby inside was understood to be a window that the baby was looking out of. Children sometimes could not cognitively understand the representation. Also misunderstood frequently in Martin and Torres' study was a picture meant to describe that babies come from both parents, from egg and sperm. The picture showed a man and a woman each holding the side of a construction paper cut-out of a heart. Scissors and paper were on the table. The text said, "part of you came from Mommy and part of you from Daddy." The children who read this book asked questions like "what are the scissor for?" or "why did they need paper?" The example indicates the ways in which ideas about being 'developmentally appropriate' can involve trying to 'protect' children from sexuality in ways that obfuscates and confuses children rather than teaching them (see also the discussion in Section 4 on experience-near SRE)

The Traffic Light Tool, Brook.

The national sexual health charity Brook has developed an acclaimed traffic light tool that sets out what 'healthy sexual behaviours' look like for children aged 0-5, 5-9, 9-13 and 13-17. Based on the Traffic Light Guide developed by True Relationships & Reproductive Health in Australia the traffic light tool has been adapted for use in the UK to provide parents, carers, health, education and social care professionals with advice on what is 'normal' when it comes to children and young people's sexualities and how best to ensure that children and young people have safe and healthy relationships and sexual development.

<https://www.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool>

TRAFFIC LIGHT TOOL		SCENARIOS	
0 to 5 years	5 to 9 years	9 to 13 years	13 to 17 years
<p>Green behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • holding or playing with own genitals • attempting to touch or curiosity about other children's genitals • attempting to touch or curiosity about breasts, bottoms or genitals of adults • games e.g. mummies and daddies, doctors and nurses • enjoying nakedness • interest in body parts and what they do • curiosity about the differences between boys and girls 	<p>Amber behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preoccupation with adult sexual behaviour • pulling other children's pants down/skirts up/trousers down against their will • talking about sex using adult slang • preoccupation with touching the genitals of other people • following others into toilets or changing rooms to look at them or touch them • talking about sexual activities seen on TV/online 	<p>Red behaviours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • persistently touching the genitals of other children • persistent attempts to touch the genitals of adults • simulation of sexual activity in play • sexual behaviour between young children involving penetration with objects • forcing other children to engage in sexual play 	

The potential for building sexualities and relationships education curricula for preschool aged children is enormous and necessary (Walkerdine 1981; Best 1989; Davies 1989; Epstein 1995; Paechter 2008; MacNaughton 1998; 2000; Blaise 2005; Mellor and Renold 2012; Lyttleton-Smith 2017; Martin and Boiber 2017, Osgood and Robinson 2017). Preschool teachers report managing much sexual (or sexual-like) behaviour among their students, likely even more than teachers of older children. While there may not be much formal sexual education in preschool, there is much informal sexual education. As noted above, even very young children 'are likely to encounter a variety of sexual information and behavior (from the mundane to the abusive) through interactions with their family, peers, communities, and the media' (Martin and Boiber 2017, p. 243. See also Mason and Woolly 2011; Lyttleton-Smith 2017; Walkerdine 1981; Davies 1989; Blaise and Taylor 2012). This knowledge can often reflect stereotypes, misconceptions and misinformation about sexualities and relationships (Robinson and Davies 2017).

"Sexuality education in early childhood, whether delivered by parents or preschools, is often not offered via a formal, planned conversation or program. Rather, sexuality education is more often delivered via everyday socialization as parents, caregivers, and teachers answer questions, manage behavior, or encounter teachable moments. In other words, young children are already getting sexual education; it is just that adults often do not think of it as such. However, ignoring a child's behavior, answering or dodging a child's question about a sexual topic, or turning off (or not) the television in response to sexual material are all sexual education for preschoolers. The question becomes how might we more consciously deliver thoughtful messages about sexuality to young children in constructive ways in preschool". (Martin and Boiber 2017: 243)

There are currently few SRE curricula for children in the early years. The Sexuality and Information Education Council of the United State (SIECUS) does however provide “Right from the Start Guidelines for Sexuality Issues: Birth to Five Years” (Early Childhood Education Task Force 1998). These SIECUS guidelines for early childhood sexuality education place sexual development within the context of six key concepts including:

- Human development; relationships;
- Personal skills;
- Behaviors;
- Health;
- Society and culture.

Together, these concepts cover topics such as friendships, feelings, communication, body appreciation, sexual curiosity, self-pleasuring, sexual abuse prevention, gender roles, diversity, and equity. See the examples below of how educators might cover issues of emotion, love, affection, bodily autonomy and consent with children in the early years using a spiral curriculum which involves returning to key topics each year to build on students evolving understandings and capacities.

Foundation phase, Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (2016, p.36)
Emotional literacy: “Everyone can be gentle and strong”

The Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) learning materials cover eight topics of Social and Emotional Learning across all levels of primary and secondary education: Emotional Literacy; Personal strengths; Positive Coping; Problem Solving; Stress Management; Help Seeking; Gender and Identity; and Positive Gender Relationships”

<http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/Resource/LandingPage?ObjectId=893b7ed8-1f0a-4b6b-a2d0-c4a037ea0216>

4 Everyone can be strong and gentle

TIME: 20+ MINUTES

Evidence base

Gender norms influence beliefs about emotional experience and self-expression. For example, men and boys are expected not to express their feelings of vulnerability and sadness because 'boys are tough' and 'boys don't cry'.⁵⁵ Dominant conceptions of masculinity and femininity can limit the possibilities that children see for themselves and others, influencing their behaviour and relationships.

This activity challenges gender norms by demonstrating that both girls and boys can be strong and gentle, and by teaching that both boys and girls need to be able to exercise self-control. This helps to challenge the stereotype that men cannot control their anger, and are entitled to use aggression. It sets the same standards of self-control for boys and girls.

Learning intention

- Students practice being both strong and gentle in the way they move, handle objects and work with others
- Students talk about when it is important to be able to be both strong and gentle at the same time
- Students talk about the importance of being able to be strong and gentle when they feel angry so they do not hurt themselves or others

Equipment

- Room to move
- Bell (optional – you can use a hand clap pattern instead)

Method

- 1 Explain that we all need to know how and when to be strong, and how and when to be gentle.
- 2 Introduce the *Strong and Gentle* self-control game. In this game the teacher calls out the move and the children mime it. Ring the bell when you want the students to stop. Switch between strong and gentle scenarios.
 - Show me a strong mountain-climbing person.
 - Show me how you gently stroke a frightened kitten.
 - Show me a strong running-on-the-spot-in-a-hurry person.
 - Show me how you gently and very slowly carry a plate with a big wobbly birthday cake on it across the room.

- Show me how strong you are when you carry a big heavy bag of shopping up some big stairs.
- Show me how gentle you are when you dust the sand off the knees of a toddler who just fell over.

3 Ask:

- Can everyone be strong?
- Can everyone be gentle?
- Can women and girls be strong?
- Can boys and men be strong?
- Can women and girls be gentle?
- Can men and boys be gentle?
- When do we need to be gentle?
- When do we need to be strong?

Sum up by saying that it is important that we all know *when* to be strong and *when* to be gentle, and how to make sure we do not hurt anyone when we are being strong. Sometimes you might hear people saying that boys can't be gentle or girls can't be strong. But we know that is not true. We must *all* know how and when to be strong *and* how and when to be gentle.

- 4 Invite students to move back to their desks in a way that is both strong *and* gentle. Suggest a slow motion walk, as if they were walking on sharp stones in bare feet and must tread very lightly, whilst also being strong about how sharp the stones are.
- 5 When they are back in their seats, compliment them for their self-control. Explain that we call it self-control when people can stay in charge of their bodies like that. Self-control is a mix of strong and gentle. You must be strong to control your feelings and your body, and gentle in the way you move and speak.

COACHING POINT

To reinforce the learning intentions: throughout the school day (in the classroom, playground, during transitions), look for opportunities to catch students displaying self-control, comment on this to reinforce the concept and compliment the effort it can take to show self-control by using a combination of both strong and gentle.

The Sex Education Forum has developed a series of progressive areas of learning and experience from 3-16, that cover: relationships; my body; feelings and attitudes; lifecycles/human reproduction; keeping safe and looking after myself; people who can help me/getting help and advice:

“At this age children are interested in the differences between boys and girls, naming body parts, where babies come from, and friends and family. What areas of the body are private and should not be touched and who they can talk to if they are worried

are also important.

Questions to help you understand what children want to learn about are listed in themes below.

Relationships

Who is in my family?
How are other families similar or different to mine?
What does my family do for me?
What do I like about my friend?
What does my friend like about me?
What can other people do to make me feel good?
Who do I look after?
Why shouldn't I tease other people?

My body

Why are girls' and boys' bodies different?
What do we call the different parts of girls' and boys' bodies?

Life cycles

Where do babies come from?
How much have I changed since I was a baby?
How are other children similar and different to me?

Keeping safe & looking after myself

Which parts of my body are private?
When is it OK to let someone touch me?
How can I say 'no' if I don't want someone to touch me?
Who should I tell if someone wants to touch my private parts?

People who help me

Who can I ask if I need to know something?
<http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/resources/curriculum-design/ages-3-6.aspx> who can I go to if I am worried about something?"

See the SEF website for details on age 7-9 and age 9-11

<http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk>

Circle time for sexuality education

"Teachers might structure a series of lessons over several weeks around a collection of words (e.g. kiss, love, marriage, boys, and girls). For example, getting young children to talk about the word love or the word kiss can facilitate beginning conversations that lay the ground work for many of the topics that SIECUS recommends. For example, the teacher presents the word "kiss" and asks what it means. She would then show a picture of a mother kissing a baby and then ask for more discussion. She might ask if this is the only kind of kiss there is. She might show a picture of adults kissing or ask who else gives kisses beside parents and children. She might ask the children if they ever do not like to be kissed. The

discussion could then be developed into one about affection, boundaries, good touch/bad touch, and how and when we like affection and when it is wanted and unwanted.

These words might allow a lesson to develop ideas about differences between children and adults, different kinds of love and affection (parent–child, for your pet, for your friend, romantic love), who can marry, who loves romantically. Children might then be sent to draw pictures of love”

Evidence: Martin and Bobier (2017) p.255-26, drawing on recommendations from SIECUS.

Consent education for early years. Deanne Carson, Australia.

“Australian educator Deanne Carson teaches consent to children aged 3 and above

A quick round of ‘heads, shoulders, knees and toes’ moves into a lesson on private body parts...Kindergarten children know that their body belongs to them and they don’t have to kiss or hug if they don’t want to. They know who they can talk to if they are hurt, and when we practice saying, “STOP, I DON’T LIKE IT!” they raise the roof.’

Consent education also teaches children about non-verbal cues. Through role play we examine how a person’s body language and facial expressions show they do or don’t want to be touched. We talk through everyday scenarios, and kids get it right. They know what someone wants, even without a verbal “yes” or “no”. If a friend flicks her plait away she doesn’t want you playing with her hair. When your mate shuffles over in class, you’re sitting too close to him.

Carson argues that it is essential to start consent education from a young age if we are to tackle a ‘culture of coercion’ and combat the high levels of sexual violence and assault experienced by young people and adults. Carson argues that if we wait until children are 10 or older to teach them about consent it is too late.

Ten-year-olds know their bodies are their own but they rarely feel able to say “stop!” They tell me this is because they’re afraid of hurting their friends’ feelings, of making a fuss, of not “holding their ground” or of losing social standing.

At three, there is no split along gender lines. This changes by age ten. Girls are less likely to speak out and more likely to put other’s perceived needs ahead of their own. Boys tend to puzzle over why someone wouldn’t enjoy something they enjoy and feel entitled to hassle their friends until they give in. If roughhousing is fun for them, shouldn’t it be fun for everyone?

If children are finding it hard to negotiate non-sexual touch, how much harder will it

be for them as they negotiate their first relationships?”

Evidence: <http://www.kidspot.com.au/parenting/real-life/in-the-news/we-need-to-teach-consent-to-our-kids-from-as-young-as-threeyearsold/news-story/c3cdb0b4d1ef12704b17f77e7130222f>

The Netherlands: relationships and sexuality education in primary schools

The relationships and sexuality (R&S) curriculum for primary schools (eight grades, ages 4 to 12) was originally developed in 1990 by Rutgers WPF, the expert centre for sexuality in the Netherlands, and has recently been supplemented by an e-learning component. In the curriculum, “hygiene and healthy behaviour” is cited as an objective and, since 2013, the inclusion of sexuality and sexual diversity is mandatory.

There are almost 60 suggested lessons divided over several school years, from which teachers can choose. In the lower grades, the focus of attention is on: getting to know the human body; image of oneself and others; nudity; differences between boys and girls; friendship; and touching the body. With increasing age, interest and level of understanding of the pupils, the attention gradually shifts to topics such as: self-perception; how boys and girls think about the other sex; how to make and maintain friendships; being in love; and what “sex” means, including sexual abuse and its prevention. In the highest grades (ages 10 to 12) important topics are: changes during puberty; friendship and love; (starting) relationships; dealing with media; sexuality and contraception; and resisting unwanted peer pressure. The curriculum takes into account all stages of sexual, social, emotional and physical development of children. The methodology is playful and varied.

Since 2004, with the promotion of the “Week of Spring Fever”, about 25% of schools (1800 of 7000 primary schools) have been using the programme. The number of schools doing so is also increasing rapidly: in 2012 alone, 480 schools participated in the project. The number of teaching hours per grade is 6–7 on average. In schools that implement the programme every year in each grade, pupils receive about 50 hours of sexuality education before they enter secondary school.

Evidence: WHO Regional Office for Europe and BZgA, 2013, p.38.
http://www.oif.ac.at/fileadmin/OEIF/andere_Publikationen/WHO_BZgA_Standards.pdf

As noted above evidence from Estyn inspections show that currently nearly all Year 6 pupils in primary schools receive sex and relationships education and that increasingly; primary schools are extending this provision into Year 5 (Estyn 2017). Little is known about the nature and scope of current SRE for students in Wales in reception to year 4, or in the foundation phase. As also noted above there is also limited international research in this area. Expert statutory guidance and training will therefore be required in Wales to ensure that educators are able to provide

engaging, safe and relevant programmes of learning and experience. It is recommended that developing this statutory guidance is a task of an expert panel, using the available evidence. Children and parents will need to be consulted to ensure that the curriculum is relevant to children and their families.

iii) The role of parents and carers

As already noted, learning about sexuality and relationships starts as soon as children enter the social world, before a child attends an educational institution. Some argue that children should continue to learn about relationships and sexuality at home, within families and that SRE should not be taught in schools. When it comes to learning about sexual activity however we know that very few children and young people currently learn from their parents, with young men as likely to report getting information from pornography as they are from their mother or father (MacDowall et al, 2015, Tanton, Jones and McDowell et al 2015). Only 4% of men and 14% of women report that their mother was the main source of information about sex when they were growing up (Tanton, Jones and McDowell et al. 2015) and even fewer report that their father was the main source of information (3% of men and 0.5% of women). Evidence from NATSAL also suggests that young people who learn about sex mainly from lessons in school, compared to those who learn from their parents or other sources, are less likely to have sex under 16 and less likely to get an STI (Macdowall et al. 2015).

Focus group research with young people in Cardiff found that young people's conversations with their parents with regards to sex and relationships depended upon the nature of their parental relationships (Powell 2008). For some young people, parents were seen as very close and useful sources of advice and help; for others, such interaction was seen as wholly inappropriate or inadvisable.

'I'm really close to my mother, it's like a friend, I speak to her about everything'

'My dad? You mad? My dad'll stitch my lips together if I asked him about sex.'
(Powell 2008; p.297)

Leaving SRE to parents and carers means therefore that not all children will receive adequate information and support, which is often exacerbated by sex/gender/sexuality assumptions and norms (Measor 2004, Powell 2008). Parents and carers do however have an important role to play in educating their children and working with schools to support consistent messages and open avenues for discussion (Walker 2004; Morawska, Walsh, Grabski and Fletcher 2015; Stone, Ingham, McGinn and Bengry-Howell 2017). Best practice school-based SRE involves creating opportunities to work with parents and carers as part of a whole school approach (see case study below). Evidence suggests that creating opportunities for parents and carers to become familiar with SRE materials in

primary schools has the potential to enhance education provision by improving coherence between educators' and parents' messages to children about sexuality and relationships. It can also increase discussion of SRE topics in parent/carer-child conversations and reduce parental/carer anxiety about topics such as sexual orientation (Allred, Fox and Kulpa 2016, Pallotta-Chiarolli 2010).

Case study: Grafton primary school, Islington, London.

The school held a parent SRE workshop (for year 2 – 5 parents), which was led by the Assistant Head, two teachers and the Islington health and wellbeing adviser for PSHE and children's life skills. Other staff also visited. The aim was to raise the profile of sex and relationships education and to help parents understand what the school is teaching

'Coffee mornings' are regularly held each term and as part of these, workshops are delivered on different topics; the SRE workshop was one of these. Documents/leaflets produced by Islington's 'Health and Wellbeing Team' were provided and parents were given time to look at a selection of books used in SRE. There were presentations from the local authority Health and Wellbeing lead and the Head Teacher and parents were given many opportunities to discuss and ask questions.

'It was really informative, it was good to speak to other parents, good to see a whole school approach' (parent)

Evidence: personal correspondence with Lorraine King at the Health and Wellbeing Team School Improvement Service, Islington Council.

v) Making SRE statutory: a good start

Making SRE a statutory part of the new curriculum is essential for ensuring that all children and young people in Wales have access to high quality education about sexualities and relationships. Without this legislative change it is clear that SRE will remain a low priority for schools, with pockets of excellent provision, and areas where children and young people's needs, questions and concerns are not met and where inequalities remained unchallenged. However, making SRE statutory is only the beginning of the process of ensuring that every child in Wales receives high quality, rights and equity based, inclusive SRE. It is a starting point from which to develop comprehensive statutory guidance that embeds the core principles set out in this report and to develop and deliver professional training to ensure that schools are equipped to provide the quality of SRE required.

Part 2: Envisioning the new Sexuality and Relationships Education curriculum in Wales

Recommendation 2: The SRE Curriculum should be guided by the following core principles and thematic areas with clear learning outcomes that can evolve to meet changing biological, social, cultural and technological issues and knowledge. Core principles include: Rights and Gender Equity; Creative and Curious; Empowering and Transformative; Experience-near and Co-produced; Holistic; Inclusive; Protective and Preventative

Under the proposed new curriculum, ‘Successful Futures’ (2016) Sex and Relationships **will be** an element of the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience. In light of the clear and urgent progression needed for this much neglected area of the curriculum to address ALL children and young people’s rights to a comprehensive and inclusive sexuality and relationships curriculum, the panel, as outlined in Part Two, recommend that the SRE element of the Health and Well-being AoLE is to be made statutory part of the new curriculum for all children and young people, from Foundation Phase to compulsory school leaving age (3-16).

Aligned to Donaldson’s 10 principles of curriculum design (p.14) one of the primary tasks of the panel was:

- ❖ To consider the **core principles** and **key areas** for ‘high quality¹¹’ comprehensive and inclusive Sex and Relationships Education.

This discussion began in the very first meeting and was returned to at each subsequent meeting.

Drawing upon the more expansive and inclusive working definition of ‘sexualities’ and ‘relationships’ (see Part Two) that now embrace the holistic nature and diversity of sex, gender, sexualities and relationships, the core orienting principles as recommended by the panel, are outlined below. They will be drawn upon and consolidated with case study examples throughout the report.

¹¹ “High-quality SRE, delivered as an integral component of a well-planned whole school PSE programme, contributes positively to learners’ well-being” (Welsh Government, ‘Sex and Relationships Guidance for Schools’, 2010, para 2.9, p.9)

a. Core SRE principles at a glance



Figure 5 SRE Core Principles

b. Core principles

i) Rights and Gender Equity-based

**RIGHTS & GENDER EQUITY BASED SRE ...
supports children and young people's rights to a relevant, holistic,
inclusive and empowering SRE that is embedded in and promotes
gender equity, social justice, safety and well-being**

Sexuality and relationship rights are an evolving set of human rights related to sex, gender, sexuality and relationships that contribute to the freedom, equity, equality, dignity, well-being and safety of all people. International research states that the most effective SRE programmes are those that have a rights and gender-based approach. Situating SRE firmly within the United Nations on the Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the Equality Duty (2010) the Violence Against Girls and Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (2015) and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015), supports all children and young people's rights to enjoy a holistic sexuality and relationships education that is embedded in the context of gender equity, social justice, safety and well-being.

A rights and gender equity based SRE curriculum will create learning environments that enable children and young people to explore the impact of uneven power relations in society, and specifically how the advancement of gender equity and equality contributes to the realisation of sex, gender, sexuality and relationship rights and freedom from gender-based and sexual violence. It will enable children and young people to understand the impact of gender and sexual norms on the self, other and society, and the role that gender and sexual norms play in social and economic marginalisation, and inter-personal conflict, oppression, discrimination, abuse and violence.

A rights and equity based curriculum is the foundation of a creative and curious, empowering and transformative, experience-near and co-produced, holistic, inclusive, and protective and preventative SRE.

ii) Inclusive

**INCLUSIVE SRE ...
recognises and values diversity and difference across the domains of
sex, gender, sexuality and relationships**

An inclusive SRE curriculum is vital in a changing social, cultural, political and digital landscape where gender, sexual and relationship identities, cultures and laws are expanding and contracting in complicated ways around the world. An inclusive SRE curriculum not only recognises diversity and difference across the domains of sex, gender, sexuality and relationships, but values these differences as a source of strength and as foundational to cohesive, fair and equitable societies. An inclusive SRE curriculum can fundamentally address how unequal power relations play out when other markers of social, cultural, geographical, embodied and cognitive differences (e.g. age, dis/ability, ethnicity, class, religion, faith, body, locale etc.) interact in ways that empower or disempower individuals, groups and communities.

iii) Holistic

HOLISTIC SRE ...

explores the interconnected ways in which sex, gender, sexuality and relationships shape people's lives across the world

A holistic SRE curriculum offers an inter-disciplinary curriculum for learning and experience. Shifting away from segregated or single issue based curriculum programmes (e.g. lessons on 'pornography', 'consent', 'gender identity'), a holistic SRE is characterized by its capacity to integrate these issues with reference to how they connect with each other (e.g. the biological, cultural, economic, historical, political, psychological, social and digital domains). A holistic and inter-disciplinary SRE can enable children and young people to explore the dynamic and interconnected ways in which sex, gender, sexuality and relationships are shaped across the six core areas of learning and experience, including creative arts and expression; health and well-being; humanities; languages, literacy and communication; mathematics and numeracy; science and technology.

iv) Experience-near and co-produced

EXPERIENCE-NEAR and CO-PRODUCED SRE ...

is developed with children and young people to ensure a relevant and responsive curriculum that enhances pupil voice and agency.

Expectations of what is an age-appropriate SRE curriculum are rarely grounded in, and often fail to address (or silence) children and young people's *own* learning and experience on matters of sex, gender, sexuality and relationships (see Section 1 above). A developmentally appropriate *experience-near* curriculum is needs-led, and recognises and responds to children and young people's own agency, knowledge and experience (UNCRC Article 13, ENOC 2017). Co-producing the curriculum with children and young people can ensure a relevant *living* curriculum as it connects directly to what children and young people are experiencing around them. Utilising a range of critical and creative pedagogies, it will not assume, but attune to children and young people's *evolving capacities*, enabling ALL children and young people to see themselves and each other (e.g. peers, family, community, world issues) in what they learn. Working co-productively also offers opportunities and spaces for children and young people to "directly influence decisions about curriculum, pedagogy and assessment" (Successful Futures p.23).

v) Creative and curious

CREATIVE & CURIOUS SRE ...

supports a questioning curriculum and draws upon creative pedagogies to facilitate an ethical, safe and agentic learning environment.

Promising and best practice in sexuality and relationships education has documented the benefits of drawing on creative pedagogies for the development of

engaging and safe learning environments (See section three below). Creative pedagogies, which often utilise the expressive arts (e.g. drama, visual art, poetry), have the potential to facilitate interactive, agentic and ethical spaces to feel, think, question, embody and share often sensitive or difficult personal issues without children and young people revealing too much of themselves. This is often achieved through integrating the mode of expression (e.g. visual collage) with distancing techniques, and utilising critical pedagogies that invite children and young people to create scenarios that connect to the personal but provide opportunities for collective thought, understanding, debate and action for change (UNCRC, Article 13).

vi) Empowering and transformative

**EMPOWERING AND TRANSFORMATIVE SRE ...
creates an affirmative and transformative curriculum that invites children and young people to advance social justice for gender, sexual and relationship equity and well-being**

Too often, children and young people learn about sexuality and relationships through highly normative gendered, racialized, heterosexist, classed and abelist scripts of risk, shame and blame. An affirmative and empowering SRE curriculum is vital for a meaningful, interactive and engaged learning experience. It is fundamentally non-judgemental, non-stigmatising and anti-discriminatory. It promotes active and collective meaning-making and understanding through critical inquiry into historical or contemporary issues and problems of when, where, how and why things happen and their potential for change. A transformative approach to SRE can support children and young people to challenge the impact of negative social attitudes and expectations in relation to sex, gender, sexualities and relationships and invites children and young people to identify, forge alliances with others and act on the injustices in their own and others' lives and well-being.

vii) Protective and preventative

**PROTECTIVE & PREVENTATIVE SRE ...
supports children and young people to develop: social, emotional and physical literacy; resilience to cope with change, conflicts and pressure; the knowledge to recognise abusive relationships; and the confidence to seek support**

A protective and preventative SRE is informed by many of the protective articles embedded in the UNCRC. Article 19, 32, 35 and 37 state that governments should protect children under 18 from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, and sexual abuse. Article 2 covers freedom from discrimination (e.g. sexism, racism, sectarianism, homophobia, transphobia, discrimination against the disabled or ableism); Article 8, the right to an identity (including gender and sexual identity) and article 24 and 31 state children's rights to health, well-being and play. Integrating these articles with the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act (2015), the Equality Act (2010) and the Well-being of Future

Generations (Wales) Act (2015), a protective and preventative SRE curriculum will enable children and young people to build their knowledge and understanding of how to recognise discrimination, abusive relationships and violence.

A preventative and protective SRE will also avoid focusing only on strategies which minimise personal risk. Rather, it will address personal risk within the systemic constraints (e.g. social norms and inequitable power relations) which provide conducive contexts for the types of discrimination, oppression, violence and abuse outlined above. It will be embedded in a whole school approach, utilising interactive pedagogies that aim to create transformative collaborative learning environments within the school and wider community. These environments will support children and young people to gain the social, emotional and physical literacy¹² and resilience to understand and manage change, conflict, and pressures of different kinds (e.g. in relation to identity, their body, in relationships, in families and in society). They will also support building children and young people's confidence to speak out and know where and how to seek advice, support and factual information (e.g. on sex and gender equality/equity, sexual health, LGBTQ+ issues and VAWDASV)

A protective and preventative SRE is an ethical curriculum that promotes the awareness of mutual respect, care of the self and others, as responsible, ethically informed individuals and citizens of Wales and the world.

c. Thematic areas

i) The beginning of a process

It is envisaged that the core principles outlined above will underpin the progression pathways in the future design of clear developmentally appropriate learning aims and outcomes. It is expected that this process will be undertaken by the pioneer and cluster schools, with support from relevant and available expertise, over the next three years (2018-2022). While it is beyond the capacity of the panel and inappropriate to create more detailed thematic content without a robust process of consultation, particularly with children and young people themselves¹³ (see for example Johnson et al. 2016), the panel did make some progress on exploring *guiding thematic areas*. However, these thematic areas only mark the beginning of a process and should be read in the context of useful starters for discussion and debate for the pioneer schools. They have been drafted in the context of, and guided by, a range of curriculum, including:

❖ Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships: Foundation Learning Materials¹⁴ (Victoria, Australia State Government)

¹² Physical literacy in the context of SRE would enable learners to develop embodied knowledge, communication skills and well-being in relation to SRE related topics (e.g. affirmative consent, see the Under Pressure? case study in Part 4).

¹³ see Section 4 for best practice on a co-produced curriculum.

¹⁴ <http://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/Resource/LandingPage?ObjectId=893b7ed8-1f0a-4b6b-a2d0-c4a037ea0216>

- ❖ **Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS)**
 - [Right from the start](#)¹⁵: guidelines for sexuality issues, birth to five (1998)
 - [Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education](#)¹⁶ (3rd Edition) kindergarten– K12
- ❖ [International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education](#)¹⁷ (UNESCO 2009) An evidence-informed approach for schools, teachers and health educators (Volume 2: Topics and Learning Objectives)
- ❖ *Spring Fever: Relationships and Sex Health Education: Reception to Year 6*¹⁸ (Rutgers, international centre of expertise on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), Netherlands)
- ❖ [It's All One Curriculum](#)¹⁹: Guidelines and Activities for a Unified Approach to Sexuality, Gender, HIV, and Human Rights Education (The Population Council 2009)
- ❖ [Sexual Ethics for a Caring Society Curriculum](#)²⁰ (Lamb 2013 and Sexandethics.org)

ii) *A holistic approach to SRE: integrating the I and We of SRE*

While the following thematic areas have separated out 'personal' skills, knowledge and experience from the other core areas of knowledge and experience, as the Figure 4 illustrates, they are crucially inter-connected in ways that traverse any simple self/other/world divide. Lamb and Randazzo (2016) refer to this as the I and We approach to SRE. For example, integrating the I and We, educators would facilitate SRE learning environments and activities that would explore the self always in relation to and connected with others, as Lamb and Randazzo state, "what would be good for me, is hopefully transformed into what would be good for society, for the other person and for the world".

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<http://www.siecus.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document.viewDocument&documentid=190&documentFormatId=222&vDocLinkOrigin=1&CFID=3643253&CFTOKEN=75b5d02d2ef445f7-97D492D7-1C23-C8EB-80C2D5852CD93AC2>

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<http://www.siecus.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document.viewDocument&documentid=185&documentFormatId=217&vDocLinkOrigin=1&CFID=3643253&CFTOKEN=75b5d02d2ef445f7-97D492D7-1C23-C8EB-80C2D5852CD93AC2>

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http://data.unaids.org/pub/externaldocument/2009/20091210_international_guidance_sexuality_education_vol_2_en.pdf

¹⁸ <http://springfever.org.uk>

¹⁹ http://www.popcouncil.org/uploads/pdfs/2011PGY_ItsAllOneGuidelines_en.pdf

²⁰ <http://sexandethics.org>

PERIODS AND BODY HAIR: A HOLISTIC APPROACH INTEGRATING THE I/WE CURRICULUM

A personal skills-based lesson on menstruating bodies can be explored in relation to their changing medical, cultural and social historical journey (e.g. rites and rituals of menstruation or sanitary product inventions through the ages). And/or they could be explored through economics and geography (e.g. the tampon tax, or the un/availability of sanitary products across the world). Doing so, might enable a rich discussion of gender equity and rights, provide some deeper understanding of why shame and stigma endure, and what people, including children and young people, are doing to address this.

Similarly, a personal skills based lesson on *body hair* in the context of *puberty and bodily autonomy* might also be approached in ways that integrate the I and We curriculum across all the thematic areas below, from hair as a commodity (e.g. hair-care market is big business) to the imposed rules of conduct and conformity across different gendered bodies, cultures, religions and over time (e.g. excess, absence, cutting, covering, growing, grooming etc).

RIGHTS, GENDER EQUITY AND POWER

Indicative core areas could include student learning and experience on;

- ❖ How social and cultural norms shape the way people learn about and express their sex, gender, sexuality and relationships
- ❖ How new technologies, the media and the law shape the way people learn about and express their sex, gender, sexualities and relationships
- ❖ Sex, gender, sexuality and relationship rights across the world.
- ❖ Sex, gender, sexuality and relationship equity across the world.
- ❖ Sex, gender, sexuality and relationship-based discrimination, oppression, abuse and violence across the world.

IDENTITIES, EXPRESSION AND BEHAVIOUR

Indicative core areas could include student learning and experience on;

- ❖ The history of gender, sexuality and relationship identity formation, expression and behaviour
- ❖ The diversity of gender, sexuality and relationship identities, expression and behaviour, across the world and over the life course.
- ❖ Representations of sex, gender, sexuality and relationship identities, expression and behaviour in arts, media and culture.

BODIES

Indicative core areas could include student learning and experience on;

- The diversity of sexed bodies over the life course and across the world.
- The changing body, human reproduction and life cycles.
- The social, cultural and technological world of body image, body objectification & body modification.



Figure 6: Sexuality and Relationships Education: Thematic Areas

RELATIONSHIPS & FEELINGS

Indicative core areas could include student learning and experience on;

- The history of relationships across the world
- The diversity of relationships across the world, and over the life course.
- The biological, social, cultural and technological world of feelings
- Representations of relationships and feelings in arts, media and culture.

PERSONAL SAFETY, CARE, SUPPORT AND WELL-BEING

Indicative core areas could include student learning and experience on;

- How personal, social and cultural values and beliefs impact on decision making, feelings and behaviours for self and others
- Communication skills: discursive, embodied and digital

- Bodily autonomy, respect, privacy and consent
- Managing safety, conflict, risk and pressures of different kinds & unwanted behaviours and outcomes
- The social, emotional, physical and legal nature and impact of violence against girls and women, domestic abuse and all forms of gender-based and sexual violence, including homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic violence.
- Seeking support, advice and factual information (e.g. on sex and gender equality/equity, sexual health, LGBT+ issues and VAWDASV)

SOCIAL JUSTICE & ETHICAL CITIZENSHIP

Indicative core areas could include student learning and experience on;

- How laws and policies contribute to equity and human rights regarding sex, gender, sexuality and relationships.
- The opportunities and challenges people face in exercising their sex, gender, sexuality and relationship rights across the world.
- How people, including children and young people, contribute to social justice, equity, equality and rights regarding sex, gender, sexualities and relationships.

Part 3: Towards a Living Sexuality and Relationships Education Curriculum: Pedagogy and Assessment

Recommendation 3: The SRE curriculum should be engaging, relevant and developmentally appropriate with clear progression pathways for learning and experience.

Sexuality education starts early in childhood and progresses through adolescence and adulthood. It aims at supporting and protecting sexual development. It gradually equips and empowers children and young people with information, skills and positive values to understand and enjoy their sexuality, have safe and fulfilling relationships and take responsibility for their own and other people's sexual health and well-being. (WHO 2010)

For many children and young people, sexuality is rarely derived from any singular source or formal pedagogy. Rather, sexual learning involves a 'sticking together' of different experiences, practices, knowledge and understanding. It is then contingently assembled in diverse ways through bodily practices, including first-hand experiences, peer-group interactions, formal and informal sexuality education, popular culture representations, as well as social media networks and technologies (Kehily and Nayak 2017, p.22).

a. What makes for effective SRE pedagogy?

A recent review of the international qualitative evidence on children and young people's views on SRE (Pound et al. 2017, p.8) identified what constitutes best practice in SRE. The review, which was based on a synthesis of qualitative research with children and young people aged 4 – 25 in UK, Ireland, the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Japan, Iran, Brazil and Sweden, identified the characteristics of good SRE provision, key elements of which are summarised below (Pound et al. 2017, p. 5-6):

Adaptable: Programmes need to be adaptable to different school environments, structures, timetables and class groupings, with the content sufficiently flexible for it to be easily and immediately adapted according to local need. Having core and peripheral elements of a curriculum would make this possible.

Developmentally and culturally appropriate: Most children and young people report that their SRE was too late and therefore was not able to meet their needs.

Spiral: a 'spiral' curriculum with developmentally-appropriate stages delivered via regular lessons, as well as special projects and events. This involves

returning to the same topics to ensure learning. Must ensure inappropriate repetition by checking students are progressing.

Of sufficient duration and intensity: One-off interventions or ‘drop down days’ should only be used alongside a comprehensive SRE programme. They can be valuable for bringing in external educators but not as the sole provision.

Interactive and engaging: Interactive and participatory educational strategies that actively engage children and young people. Young people report that they appreciate interactive, dynamic teaching techniques and want SRE to include group discussions, skills-based lessons, demonstrations and diverse activities.

Safe: Create a safe learning environment where children and young people do not feel ridiculed, embarrassed or harassed. This necessitates excellent class control.

Confidential: Building trust between classmates, establishing ground rules and bringing in external educators. There is a lack of agreement in the literature as to whether young people prefer single or mixed gender classes, with a suggestion that young women prefer single-gender and young men mixed-gender groups²¹.

b. Developmentally Appropriate and Experience Near: a needs-led, adaptable and responsible curriculum

“Part of designing an effective education curriculum for children and young people is tailoring it to their intellectual, cognitive and social development in general, and to their emerging social and sexual identities and relations in particular” (Flood, Fergus and Heenan, 2009, p.47)

In *Successful Futures*, Donaldson (2015) outlines 10 principles for curriculum design. The curriculum should, he states, be ‘authentic, evidence-based, responsive, inclusive, ambitious, empowering, unified, engaging, based on subsidiarity and manageable’ (p.14). Many of these features are embedded in the core guiding principles for SRE established by the panel and outlined in Part 3. ‘Evidence based’ curriculum content is also especially relevant in designing a comprehensive SRE programme. Research has highlighted that much SRE provision is out of touch with children and young people’s lived realities and the wider learning that Kehily and Nayak (2016) outline above. Moreover, discourses of age-appropriateness are sometimes drawn upon by practitioners to avoid particular topics (e.g. FGM, domestic abuse), and thus fail to address or silence children and young people’s

²¹ In response to the final recommendation, the panel cautions against assuming that children and young people prefer single or mixed sex/gender classes or groupings. Exploring **with** children and young people what constitutes a safe and comfortable environment for them, and which may vary according to the issues being explored (e.g. LGBTQ+ relationships, violence against girls and women etc.), is likely to be the most appropriate and needs-led response. Dividing the class into boys/young men and girls/young women may create and reinforce sex/gender/sexuality binaries that may not reflect the gender and sexual diversity of the group.

own questions and curiosities on matters of sex, gender, sexuality and relationships. This not only makes for a very disempowering experience, but can also lead to misinformation. As one 13 year old talking about their own sexual learning online says, “On the one hand the Internet is useful, on the other hand it isn’t. Because half of what can be found online is nonsense’ (Naezer, Rommes and Jansen 2017, p.723)

Research suggests that SRE is “most effective if it is timed and crafted to suit [children and young people’s] developmental needs, including the character of their developing identities and social and sexual relations” (Flood 2009 et al. 2009, p. 47). Current SRE guidance for schools (Welsh Government 2010, para 2.18, p.10) states that “SRE programmes should be relevant to learners and sensitive to their needs”. However, the guidance also advises schools on the need to develop age-appropriate programmes and avoid answering questions in class that the teacher feels is ‘too old’ for a pupil or ‘inappropriate’ to share with the class. There are many activities and ethical pedagogies which can mediate how children share their curiosities and ask questions (see section a and b above, Martinez, Cooper and Lees, 2012). However, without training, informed by up-to-date empirical research, how are educators expected to confidently differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate knowledge and behaviour (Ey, McInnes and Rigney 2017)?

For example, the qualitative study, *Boys and Girls Speak Out* (Renold 2013), which listened to over 125 children, age 10-12, across south Wales on a range of gender and sexuality related issues, including body cultures, media cultures and relationship cultures, showed that sexual harassment in peer cultures is not confined to adolescence but a growing feature of pre-teen social worlds. However, school policies and practices that do not connect with and address the realities of children’s own sexual and relationship cultures, and wider learning and experience, often due to assumptions of childhood innocence, heteronormativity and the normalisation of gender-based and sexual violence in peer cultures (Renold 2005; 2013; Paechter 2007; De Palma and Atkinson 2009; Epstein et al. 2012; Huuki and Renold 2015; Lombard 2017) creates a conducive context within which such practices can thrive.

The reality of children and young people’s own relationship cultures and sexual knowledge often blurs and problematizes many of the age and stage models in current SRE guidance around what children should or shouldn’t know, learn and experience (Epstein et al. 2012). In the absence of both training and in-depth research, particularly in the early and primary years, SRE, designed and practiced in this context becomes a safe-guarding issue if children and young people are not provided with safe spaces to speak up and seek advice or support about issues that are concerning them (e.g. from sexist insults to sexual abuse). While the importance of drawing upon children’s own experiences as ‘starting points’ for the development of SRE and gender equity provision isn’t new and reiterated throughout most overviews of high quality SRE programmes (Blake et al. 2012, European Expert Group on Sexuality Education 2016, Blake and Aggleton 2017), an informed, needs-led, experience-near approach to SRE, needs to be continually re-stated (see Part Five on Training and Leadership). A developmentally appropriate, *experience-near* curriculum then will not only progressively meet learners needs and competencies, but also recognise, trust and enhance children and young people’s voice and agency.

A relevant and experience-near curriculum involves more than drawing upon contemporary issues and media, such as popular culture, although, as research on using the media in sexuality education suggests, such connections can prove extremely productive (Bragg and Buckingham 2009; Albury 2013; Attwood, Barker, Boynton and Hancock 2015).

Jo Taylor, Associate Headteacher at the Chestnut Grove Academy in London, gave a presentation to the Westminster RSE symposium in 2017 on her award winning SRE curriculum. This programme included inviting young people to critically assess gender, sexuality and racial bias by applying the Bechdale test to Disney films, music videos and youtube adverts.
<https://www.westminster.ac.uk/events/healthy-sexual-development-symposium>

A relevant and experience-near curriculum will involve adaptability and responsibility – that is, the ability to be responsive and flexible to the issues that may arise when curriculum content creates an interactive platform that welcome’s children’s own curiosity and knowledge (Bragg 2006). It will also, often involve working with children in small groups:

“Developmentally appropriate typically means in small groups, with opportunities for children to ask questions, in short periods, with information and/ or involvement opportunities provided to parents, and props and interactive activities for engaging young children (McLeod and Wright 1996, cited in Martin and Boiber 2016, p.245).

Consider the following examples of small group interactive work that enabled children to explore areas, make connections and ask questions on areas that mattered to them:

Doctoral student, Matt Abraham, undertook a six month project on friendships and healthy relationships with three small groups of Year 6 children in a local multi-national and multi-faith Cardiff primary school. Its participatory child-led focus, and creative activities (from glitch apps and glitter bottles to mood strips and stress balls) supported the groups to share, explore and create connections between their own personal friendships and conflicts and wider global conflicts and relationships across different faith communities and countries.



(Evidence: Matthew Abraham, PhD Student, Cardiff University, Presentation in Panel Meeting 4)

Cross-Stitching our Rights



The Spectrum Cymru Project delivered a lesson to Year 5 and 6 children on female genital mutilation (FGM) in the context of cultural difference, gender equity and equality, children's rights and safe-guarding in a rural community primary school in Powys. The lesson finished with pupils creating and colouring their own P.A.N.T.S bunting inspired by the NSPCC's 'Talk PANTS' resource. They hung their bunting like a washing line across the classroom ceiling.

To work with the angry feelings that many children voiced in learning about girls and women's experiences

of FGM, a follow-up craftivism session was designed. Creating a safe and agentic space in the school's spiral SRE curriculum, this session used a range of methods, including a 'runway for change', in which children were invited to share their thoughts and ideas on the issues they wanted to change, and any areas they wanted more information about on a large roll of paper.



During the session, one child asked were they "allowed to add LGBT rights" to their rights-based 'runway of change', which also included comments on sexism, racism, poverty and safe touch. Over ½ the class included LGBTQ rights, discrimination and bullying.



The comments below were collected by the teacher following the session:

"I found it very interesting but a little shocked to know what LGBTQ means but I have heard these names being used in a bad way and I am glad to know the facts."

"I felt I could discuss LGBT without it feeling wrong"

(Evidence: Spectrum Cymru Project, Year 6 Teacher and Professor Emma Renold)

c. A co-produced curriculum: learning with and from children and young people

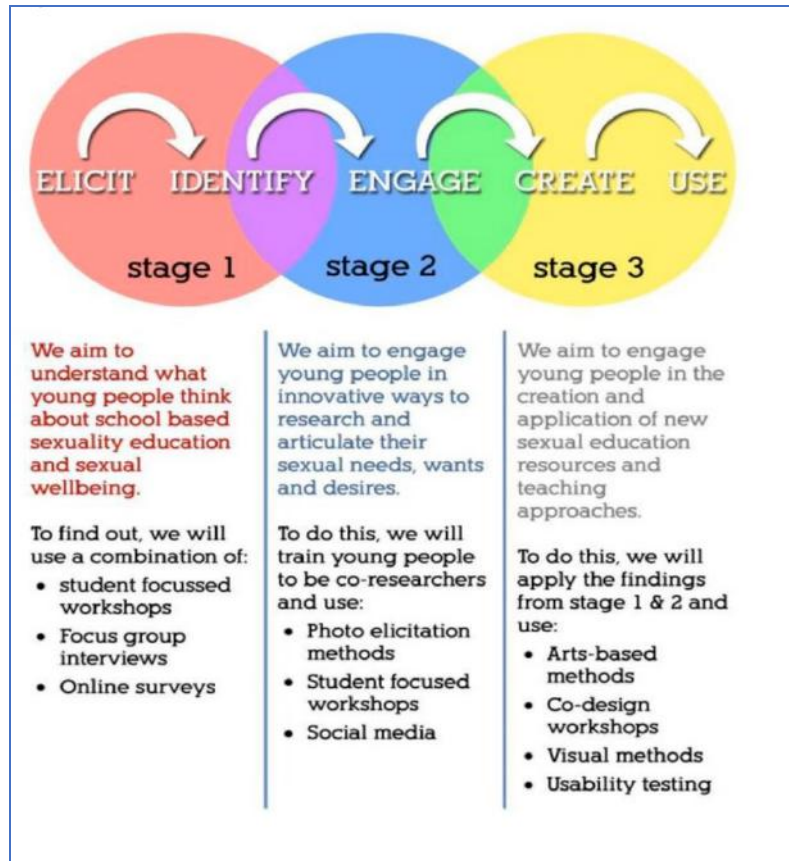
"SRE continues to be criticised for its failure to meet the needs and hold the interest of young people. Although such failures are acknowledged, the power to improve the situation remains with adults who ultimately determine how young people's needs will be met" (O'Higgins and Gabhainn 2010, p.387)

In Chapter 6, Donaldson (2015, p.69) emphasises how “good teaching and learning encourages children and young people to take increasing responsibility for their own learning”. He advocates for the importance of making time and space for children and young people to become “active participants in the learning process” (p.69). An active participatory curriculum directly aligns with research on rights-based approaches to SRE (Forrest and Ellis 2011; Woolley and Mason 2012; Sundaram and Saunston 2016; Blake and Aggleton 2017; ENOC 2017) and will involve designing an SRE curriculum that is co-produced *with* children and young people (see core principles in Recommendation 2).

A child/youth-led co-produced curriculum has the potential to ensure a relevant, experience-near curriculum that can connect directly with what children and young people are experiencing around them, and be “responsive to emerging needs” (Donaldson 2015, p.69). Utilising a range of interactive and critical pedagogies, it will not assume, but attune and be responsive to children and young people’s evolving knowledge and capacities. It will enable ALL children and young people to see themselves and each other (e.g. peers, family, community, world issues) in what they learn and ensure that they are centrally involved in collaboratively planning their own ‘progressive pathways for learning’. Such an approach necessitates that learning encounters are in close dialogue and engaged with children’s own realities and wider learning. However, given the significant knowledge gap that exists between child-student and teacher-adult on many areas of SRE, teachers need to provide safe spaces and activities through which they can, as Pattman and Bhana (2017) suggest learn with and from the learners. As research consistently argues, “students want to have some input into what and how they learn in sexuality and relationships education”, stressing “the importance of continuing to engage with students about these issues” (Johnson et al. 2016).

There are a number of excellent resources available on how schools can support children to realise their rights to inform curriculum development on SRE issues. For example, the Sex Education Forum’s “*Let’s get it right: A toolkit for involving primary school children in reviewing their sex and relationships education*” (Emmerson and Lees 2013, see also Moffat 2015) offers a comprehensive toolkit, with “practical classroom activities for consulting children at KS1 and KS2 about what they learn in SRE, how it is taught and how it could be improved”. However, there are few resources and very little training on safe and ethical ways to learn from and with children and young people in the design and implementation of SRE curricula (O’Higgins and Gabhainn 2010).

One innovative example comes from the Australian Government-funded project, ‘*It’s not all about sex: Young People’s Views about Sexuality and Relationship Education*’ (Johnson et al. 2016). Across three overlapping stages (elicit, identify, engage, create and use) this action-research project is setting out to involve and support young people directly in the creation and application of new SRE resources and approaches - a project which Wales would greatly benefit from in light of the deficit or evidence-based resources and research (see Recommendation 11 on a pan Wales SRE research-practice network and resource hwb).



There are examples in Wales of resources which have been co-produced with children and young people on SRE issues, most notably, the AGENDA resource which is further discussed below (www.agenda.wales). Inside this resource are

DIY **WHAT JARS YOU?**

What you'll need:

- Large glass jar
- Slips of blank paper
- Coloured Marker Pens that can write on glass

- 1 Working on your own or in pairs, write down all the things that jar you about how society is unequal or unfair when it comes to sex, gender and sexuality.
- 2 Fold up the paper slips, and put them inside the glass jar.
- 3 When you've finished, take each comment in turn and think about what **needs to change** to turn what is unfair to fair, for an equal and more inclusive world.
- 4 Decorate the jar with your messages for change.

Jar (verb)

- to jolt, shake, vibrate
- send a shock through something (especially the body)
- strike against something with a vibration or jolt.
- have a disturbing effect.

creative methods (see the stop/start plates and 'what jars you' activities below) which teachers and service providers can draw upon and adapt. These activities have the potential to enable children and young people to generate their own data and begin to map the issues that are important to them to incorporate into their

SRE curriculum. While this is no substitute for drawing upon and integrating children's own data with evidence-based research in both content and pedagogy, research is often playing catch-up in mapping the complex realities of lived lives, most notably in the last few years in relation to advancements in digital technology and gender and sexual identity formation and expression (Meyer 2010; Meyer and Carlson 2014; Lantaffi and Barker 2017; Renold, Bragg, Jackson and Ringrose 2017; Bragg, Renold, Ringrose and Jackson forthcoming 2018).

The two case studies below offer examples of active and participatory approaches to the three stage model that Johnson et al. (2016) identify (see above) in ways that demonstrate collaborative working practices across a continuum of youth-led (The Rotifer Project case study) and research-led (Friends? Case study) knowledge, in the design production and implementation of SRE resources and approaches.

The Rotifer Project was initiated from a staff and student concern that the school needed to do more to raise awareness of gender diversity in the context of gender equity to better support the increasing number of transgender identifying students, and sexism, homophobia and transphobia. From a clear aim to make the school a safer and more inclusive space, a small group of students from the LGBT and feminist school-based youth groups set about creating a resource, sparked from their own experiences, and their own research into the issues. The groups were fully supported by the PSE and safe-guarding lead, inclusion officer and gender and sexuality academic experts:

The Rotifer Project: Educating staff about gender diversity

“In our school some of us are expressing our gender in ways that challenge society’s expectations of what a boy or girl might be or do. Some of us want to change our gender pronouns (e.g. from he to she). Some of us don’t want to be identified as gendered at all (e.g. agender). Some of us are just fed up with how sex and gender norms get under our skin and stop us doing things.

But it’s hard when school rules and cultures reinforce sex ad gender norms everyday, by dividing us into ‘boys’ and ‘girls’ for class quizzes, sitting boys next to girls in tests, or have a gendered uniform policy and gender segregated toilets. We wanted to change this by showing how diverse gender already is and always has been and how damaging it can be for all young people and staff to put us into boxes that don’t fit us”

FACT FINDING

- We researched all the creatures on land and in water that were sex or gender-bending and sex or gender-switching. We also included species that challenged

DIY GENDER-SNAP PAIRS

- 1 Decide which sex-switching or gender-bending worlds you want to explore (e.g. animal kingdom, cartoon characters; historical figures; celebrities; people in power; books; films; jobs etc.) and how many cards you want to make (e.g. 20).
- 2 Do some research using the web resources on this page or elsewhere in this guide. Select an image to go with the fact you want to share.
- 3 Insert the images and text into powerpoint and save as a jpeg. Print two copies of each (e.g. 40).
- 4 Design your own cover. Print enough so you can laminate each card, back to back with your design.
- 5 Lay them out, cover side up. You’re ready to play gender-snap pairs!

GRAYSON PERRY
Grayson Perry, is an prize-winning artist, known mainly for his ceramic vases and TV series on class, gender and identity

RILEY
Riley, in Pixar’s ‘Inside Out’, doesn’t fit into the gender binaries.

SEA-HORSE
male sea horses can give birth

SLEEPER SHELL
a gender switching limpet that can change from male to female

ROTIFER
bacteria that live in an all female world and reproduce by themselves

JAKE AND FINN
Jake and Finn became Cake (female cat) and Flama in an episode from cartoon network’s Adventure Time

traditional gender roles, like the Seahorse and the Anglerfish.

- We then looked for cartoon and TV characters, celebrities and historical figures who are gender diverse in some way.

FUN WAYS TO GET BEYOND THE GENDER BINARY

- Finding a fun way to tackle what is a serious issue was important, so we created two games to play with staff in our workshop, the 'mixed-muffin gender berry challenge' and 'gender-snap pairs'. We created a resource based on the gender-snap pairs.

Evidence: AGENDA: A Young people's guide to making positive relationships matter (2016), page 52 and 53).

The following case study provides an example of children and young people from the youth group DIGON actively and creatively engaging with research findings on issues that are often normalised and consequently remain invisible in many SRE programmes (Meyer and Carlson 2016).

Friends? A drama and resource on the gendered pressures of young relationships

"We had the opportunity to read children's talk about the pressures of gender norms and how they shape and control boy-girl friendships and young boyfriend girlfriend relationships in the Welsh research 'Boys and Girls Speak Out'. We wanted to communicate these findings to a wider audience, so we created the play, "Friends?". One of us wrote the script and our drama teacher helped us bring the script to life in a stage performance.

Every line in the play is a direct quote from one of the children in the research. This makes it really powerful when we tell the audience that the play was based on real children's lives (aged 10, 11 and 12). The play covers and complicates the issue of gender and sexual bullying. Our main storyline is to challenge societal assumptions that everyone is or will be straight (i.e. heterosexual).

We show how many children are teased or pushed together to couple up as boyfriend and girlfriend just because they hang out or share the same interests. We have performed the play in primary schools, secondary schools and at conferences and events for teachers and policy makers"

DIY 30 MINUTE DRAMA

PREPARATIONS

Organise your class or group into small groups (no more than 4 people per group).

- 1 Read the quotes silently.
- 2 Discuss the quotes you feel most strongly about. Each group member highlights one quote each and then chooses a quote to cut out with scissors provided.
- 3 Take it in turns to read out the quotes you have selected.
- 4 Put the quotes on a separate piece of A3 paper allowing spaces in between. Move the quotes around in ways that might help you to make a storyline.
- 5 Think about a storyline that can link the quotes together. Write up your script and ensure everyone can have a turn at reading.
- 6 Develop the reading into a short performance.
- 7 Play around with tempo, tone and volume and think about gesture, expression and movement.
- 8 Act out your script to each other if you want to. Give it a title if you like.



CHILDREN'S QUOTES (AGE 10-11)

At my primary school you just had to go out with someone. It was a virtual rule!

They call the girls who go out with boys, 'tramps' and the girls who don't want to hug and kiss, 'fridge'.

They ask someone to ask the same girl out again and again. They like pass you round.

I'm not really, you know, fussy about girlfriends. I'm not a girl person ... I love horses.

In primary school, me and this girl used to always hang out. We made up a lie that we were cousins, and that lasted for like a year before we told anyone. When it was her birthday, I'd get her Happy Birthday Cousin cards.

Boyfriends are extra time, that I don't want to give

The (dinner staff) go "the more the boys hit you, the more they love you"

For more quotes, go to **Boys and Girls Speak Out**.

MATERIALS YOU WILL NEED

- Print the Girls and Boys Speak Out CHILDREN'S QUOTES for each person, OR collect your own quotes in an anonymous suggestion box or survey on a topic of your choice.
- Scissors for each person
- A3 paper for each person
- Marker pens
- Highlighter pens



WHAT NEXT?

Why not work with what you've created to make your own play. Or offer the scripts to your school drama department, or local drama group to work with and develop into a piece of **interactive physical or forum theatre**.



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Evidence: Agenda: A young people's guide to making positive relationships matter (2016, p.37-39)

For further examples of what a comprehensive guide to a co-produced curriculum (3-16) looks like, with activities on how to make safe and productive spaces which enable teachers to listen, respond and incorporate children and young people's views and interests into a shared vision, see the Australian Sexuality and Relationships curriculum in Victoria, *Catching on Early* (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2011), *Catching on Later* (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2013) and the *Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships* suite of resources (Department of Education and Training 2016). For more inventive approaches to consultation, see the forthcoming launch in the Netherlands of Rutgers and U-Create's hackaton 'Sex education 2030'²² challenge. Here, groups of university arts and technical students have been tasked with considering the future of sexuality education by designing a creative, innovative and high-impact concept of what sexuality means to them.

As Welsh Government consider the future of SRE, the panel anticipate that there will be a range of opportunities to safely and creatively involve children, young people, parents and carers and communities more widely to play a central part as the pioneer schools design the new SRE curriculum.

d. A relevant SRE curriculum is empowering and transformative

²² <https://www.rutgers.international/who-we-are/rutgers-celebrates-50-years> (accessed 29 September 2017)

“Policies that are aimed at empowering young people should include by definition the support of young people’s own ways of knowledge building, formal and informal, offline and online” (Ey et al. 2017, p.725).

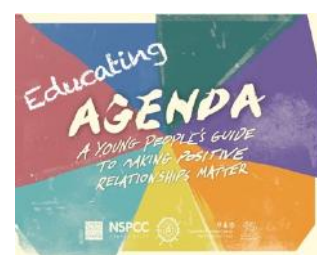
Two of the four purposes of the curriculum in Successful Futures includes *ambitious, capable learners*, who “build up a body of knowledge, have the skills to connect and apply that knowledge in different contexts,” and *ethical informed citizens* who “engage with contemporary issues based upon their knowledge and values” while “understanding and exercising their human and democratic rights” (p.31). The vision for a rights and equity based curriculum which encourages learners to actively apply what they learn to real world contexts and issues, enabling them to “think creatively to reframe and solve problems” (p.31) directly mirrors one of the panel’s core SRE principles for an empowering and transformative curriculum (Wrigley, Lingard and Thomson 2012). This is an SRE curriculum that invites children and young people to advance social justice and equity rights in relation to matters of gender, sexuality and relationship well-being.

Too often in SRE provision children and young people are not encouraged to take an active part in “building up a body of knowledge” that they then can apply throughout their lives. Rather, as research suggests, children and young people tend to learn about sex, gender, sexuality and relationships, especially in formal SRE, through highly gendered, classed, racialized, secularist, ableist and neoliberal discourses of risk, fear, anxiety, shame and blame (Ringrose 2013; Carmody 2015; Allen 2011; Gilbert 2014; Meyer and Carlson 2013 Quinlivan 2017; Rasmussen 2016; Kam-Tuck Yip and Page 2013; Bay-Cheng 2017).

An affirmative, empowering and transformative SRE curriculum makes for a meaningful, interactive and engaged learning experience, and “should include by definition the support of young people’s own ways of knowledge building, formal and informal, offline and online” (Ey et al. 2017, p.275). It is fundamentally non-judgemental, non-stigmatising and anti-discriminatory. It promotes active and collective meaning-making and understanding through critical inquiry into historical or contemporary issues and problems of when, where, how and why things happen and their potential for change.

Examples of a transformative and empowering approach to SRE, and specifically an equity and rights based approach to gender-related and sexual violence can be found in the resource, ‘Agenda: A Young People’s Guide to Making Positive Relationships Matter’ (Renold 2016).

AGENDA provides ideas and resources for young people on how they can safely and creatively speak out about and challenge entrenched gender inequalities and gender-based and sexual violence. Putting equality, diversity, children’s rights and social justice centre stage, the guide supports young people’s rights to speak out and engage as active citizens on issues that matter to them.



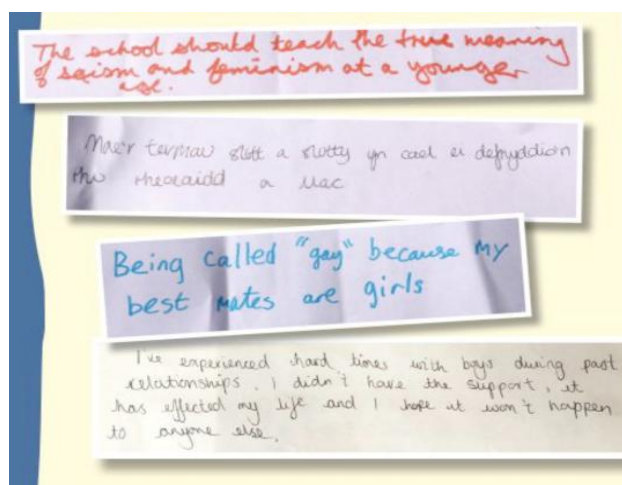
The resource, created with and for young people, includes illustrative case studies on issues that address gender discrimination, gender diversity, consent, LGBTQ+

rights, bullying, street harassment, FGM, sexual exploitation, and relationship violence. It provides a range of innovative and creative starter activities to support young people express what matters to them, and what they would like to change individually and collectively with others. It includes over 100 hyperlinks to organisations and resources of where to find out more about key issues. Below are three case studies, one from the resource (Relationship Matters), one inspired by the resource (#WAM) and one that illustrates what an inclusive and intersectional approach to gender and sexual equalities can look like:

Relationship Matters

The Relationship Matters project tells the story of one youth-led school-based group who used a range of creative media, from poems and films to wearable visual art, to raise awareness of girls' experiences of sexual harassment online, at school and in their community. In a series of listening assemblies they collected comments from over 300 students to influence and shape their own school's whole-school SRE provision and future SRE policy and practice across Wales. Watch their film, "Words Won't Pin Me Down" here: <http://agenda.wales/media/>

Evidence: AGENDA: A Young People's Guide to Making Positive Relationships Matter (Renold 2016, p. 55)



WAM (we are more)

The school-based **WAM (we are more)** group from Mountain Ash Comprehensive



meet every week to discuss what they can do about gender and sexual inequalities. Over 30 students in size they have created short performance pieces from school canteen flashmobs, silent statues and dramas to raise awareness on a wide range of issues including, sexual banter, sexual cyber bullying, the impact of normative make-up cultures; and inclusive SRE in school, on the radio, at 2017 International Women's Day and at international children's rights events. Read more about their activities here: <http://www.macs.uk.net/news/macs-ambassadors-peacejam-uk-conference-2017-reflections> and watch their drama here:

Evidence: Video and Presentation by Siriol Burford on behalf of the WAM group, Panel Meeting 3

An intersectional approach to gender and sexual equalities

Digon (LGBT inclusive youth group), *Newidd-fem* (gender equality and feminist group) and *Bwalch* (anti-racist, multi-cultural equality group) lead on a wider range of awareness-raising activities, debates and campaigns throughout the school year. Collectively, they advance an intersectional approach to addressing gender and sexual inequalities, discrimination and violence. They also co-produce with their teachers training events, peer-mentoring and peer-led workshops with students in their own school, and neighbouring schools.

For example, DIGON offers workshops for teachers and students in primary and secondary schools on friendship, inclusive school cultures and homophobic, transphobic, sexist and heteronormative language. Newid-ffem run Lego workshops with primary school students to debate commercial sexism in toys and TV adverts.



Evidence: Presentation by students from DIGON, Newid-ffem and Balch, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr, Cardiff at Panel Meeting 3

These examples illustrate the potential of what a transformative approach can offer, when students are actively supported by their school structures, school ethos, teachers and each other. Not only does this approach to SRE support children and young people to challenge the impact of harmful social attitudes and expectations in relation to sex, gender, sexuality and relationships whilst recognising their own “responsibilities and rights” (Donaldson 2015, p. 31), it also invites children and young people to identify, forge alliances with others and “seek and enjoy the challenge” (Donaldson 2015, p. 31) of taking action on the injustices in their own and others lives and well-being, core to “respecting the needs and rights of others, as valued members of a diverse society” (Donaldson 2015, p. 31). However, as research argues, an empowering SRE such as this “requires a cultural shift that involves both an openness to young people’s experimentation, and a change in existing power hierarchies based on age” (Naezer et al. 2017) and other social-cultural differences and hierarchies.

e. A holistic curriculum is interdisciplinary and can evolve to address changing issues and knowledge

Donaldson (2015, p.40) states that the six AoLE should not be seen as “watertight compartments” but as a way of “organising the intentions for each child and young person’s learning”. While ‘sex and relationships’ are located in the Health and Well-being AoLE, teachers are encouraged to “make strong connections between the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience and the Expressive Arts, Languages, Literacy and Communication, Humanities, Science and technology

Areas of Learning and Experience” (p.45). This inter-disciplinary approach is to be welcomed in PSE and SRE, given its fundamentally multi-disciplinary nature (Allen and Rasmussen 2017). Moreover, inter-disciplinary approaches have the potential to provide and encourage new perspectives for children and practitioners on what SRE can encompass.

For example, an inclusive rights-based SRE could explore not only the role and impact of gender norms in controlling relationships (Sundaram 2014), but also in the ways science textbooks describe human reproduction (Martin 1991). A segregated disciplinary SRE programme might situate the former in Health and Well-being and the latter in Science. An inter-disciplinary approach, however, might explore their connectivity. For example, a feminist analysis of the story of the fertilisation process in most science textbooks reveals highly gendered tales of “aggressive” sperms meeting “passive” eggs. Such an analysis could lead to a fruitful discussion of ‘objectivity’, the representation of scientific ‘truths’, and wider discussions of how what we come to know about sex, gender and sexuality is always embedded in historical, and contextually contingent social and cultural norms and values. Indeed, the making of sex (Lacquer 1990) is a rapidly evolving field that can only be grasped in its spectacular complexity across the social, environmental and natural sciences (Fausto-sterling 2012, Fine 2012, Janssen 2009, 2015).

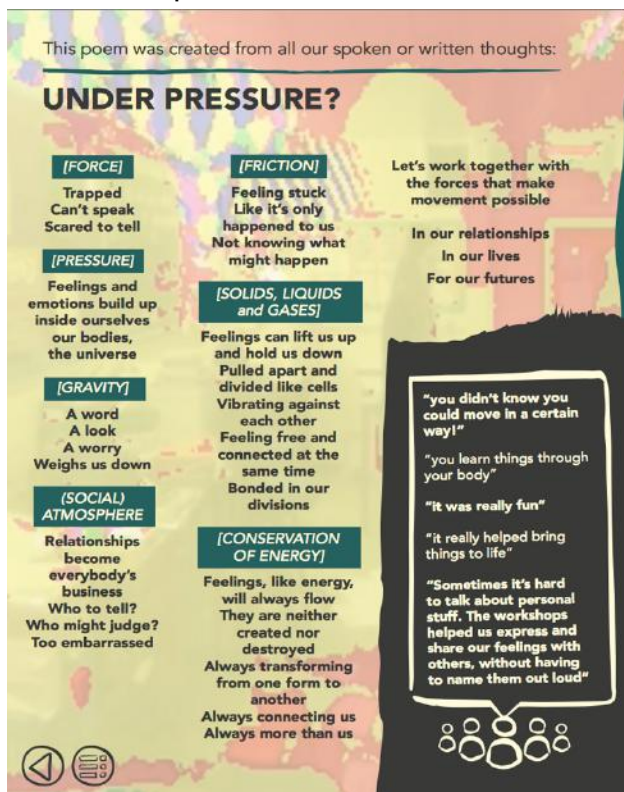
A trans-disciplinary approach, has the potential to explore “the intertwining of the disciplines” in ways that “deepens the response to a single experience and adds an important element of unpredictability and imagination” to learning and experience (Barnes 2015, p272). Consider the following case study which illustrate “opportunistic” (Barnes 2015) inter-disciplinary approaches to specific issues, such as ‘coercion and control in relationships’ (see also The Sex and History Project, Fisher, Grove and Langlands, 2017)

THE UNDER PRESSURE PROJECT: USING ‘FORCES’ CONCEPTS IN THE PHYSICS CURRICULUM TO EXPLORE CONSENT AND COERCIVE CONTROL THROUGH SOUND, MOVEMENT AND A GLITCH-ART APP

A group of Year 11 students worked with a choreographer, a digital story-teller and an expert on young people’s relationship cultures. They met up for 5 weekly 1 hour sessions to experiment with how the ‘forces’ curriculum in physics could help them explore feelings about coercion and control in relationships through sound and movement



“We printed out the physics concepts on ‘forces’. They helped us think about how our relationships and interactions with others make us feel safe and unsafe, happy and sad, controlled and free. We thought about what forces make some feelings or movements possible or impossible. We then moved our bodies and played with sound to experiment with our thoughts and feelings on forces”



They used a glitch app to record each session. This technology provided new ways for them to see and hear their sounds and movements.



They used a glitch app to record each session. This technology provided

new ways for them to see and hear their sounds and movements.

They created a final performance to bring their feelings and concepts to life.

Watch their digital story of the process here: <https://vimeo.com/166068771>

Evidence: Agenda: A young people's guide to making positive relationships matter (2016), Panel Meeting 4.

A holistic SRE offers a trans-disciplinary curriculum for learning and experience. The *Under Pressure?* case study example explores the interconnected ways in which sex, gender, sexuality and relationships can be shaped across the human and natural sciences. It also demonstrates the potential for what an affirmative and transformative *holistic* approach to SRE looks like. Rather than segregating the curriculum into single issue based 'lessons' (e.g. on 'pornography', 'consent', 'gender identity' etc.), a holistic SRE is characterized by its capacity to integrate these issues with reference to how they connect with the wider assemblage of life-worlds (e.g. the biological, cultural, digital, economic, environmental, historical, political, psychological and social domains).

In relation to the new curriculum, a holistic and trans-disciplinary SRE can enable children and young people to explore the dynamic and interconnected ways in which sex, gender, sexuality and relationships are shaped across the six core areas of learning and experience. However, as this report continues to emphasise, teachers, practitioners and service providers, planning for a holistic SRE programme with clear progression pathways requires "a secure understanding of the unique skills and core knowledge of the discipline"²³ (Barnes, 2015: 276) – a significant challenge given the

²³ The two case studies above (*Under Pressure?* and *The Rotifer Project*) for example included practitioners and professionals with M Level and PhD level qualifications in the field of gender and sexuality education.

highly charged and sensitive (Pound et al. 2016), trans-disciplinary nature of SRE, that demands a radical shift in thinking about gender, sexuality and power (Bhana 2016; Haririson and Ollis 2015; Sundaram, Maxwell, and Ollis 2016). However, this challenge must be addressed and is not insurmountable as a long term vision with SRE specialist ITE pathways and an SRE network and a hwb zone for on-going continual professional development (CPD) and support (see Part Five). Short term, the panel would encourage schools and service providers to collaborate and support children and young people to learn together through the 'opportunistic' trans-disciplinary model which responds to a combination of clearly defined manageable learning outcomes and children and young people's own needs and interests (see also the Sex and History project below).

f. An engaging and interactive SRE uses creative & critical pedagogies

Creative pedagogy is a branch of pedagogy that emphasizes the role of creativity for enabling successful learning. It is often discussed in opposition to models of teaching and learning that are based on the transmission of knowledge from teacher to learner (Lin 2009). In SRE this may involve teachers providing children and young people with information about the law in relation to consent and students listening and accepting the information being given. We know that these approaches are limited as they do not create space for critical thinking, discussion, interactivity, and exploring cultural contexts (Pound et al. 2017, Coy et al. 2016).

In SRE, creative pedagogy involves more than including a creative or arts based activity within an SRE session, such as a role-play or a poster making activity. Embedding SRE teaching and learning in a critical pedagogical approach (Wrigley, et al. 2012; Sanjakdar, Allen, Rasmussen, Quinliven and Bromdal 2015) positions creativity as the key strategy for enabling transformational thinking, problem solving and imagining otherwise (Lin 2009, 2011; Sefton-Green, Thomson, Jones and Bresler 2011). This is summarised in Lin's conceptual framework for creative pedagogy (*ibid*):

Creative teaching: imaginative, dynamic and innovative approaches to teaching that inspire children's imagination / new ideas.

Teaching for creativity: strategies that facilitate children's autonomy, agency and engagement to arouse curiosity and motivation to learn.

Creative learning: learning through questioning, inquiring, searching, manipulating, experimenting, play.

A number of researchers have documented the benefits of creative and critical pedagogical approaches to SRE, evidencing the ways in which critical approaches to literature and contemporary art, participatory film-making and theatre, among other methods, can be used to enable a range of empowering and positive outcomes for children and young people (Sandlos 2010, Stanhope 2013; Quinlivan 2014, Helmer 2015, Batsleer 2011, Albury 2013, Addison 2006, McGeeney 2016; Renold 2013; 2017). Based on this body of research, and the over-whelming evidence on how the arts benefits people's health and well-being more widely (see All-Party Parliamentary

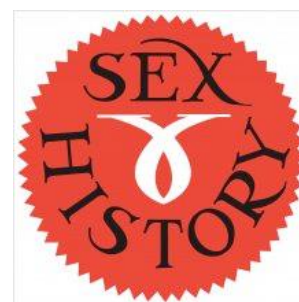
Group report, “Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Well-being, (APPG, 2017) it is possible to identify key advantages and challenges of using creative pedagogies and the creative arts within SRE.

i) Safe spaces

Creative pedagogies can enable educators and participants to create ethical and safe spaces. By using hypothetical scenarios or characters groups can discuss difficult and sensitive issues without having to compromise their right to confidentiality and disclose personal information in a group setting (Senior and Chenhall 2017 p.112).

The Sex and History Project

The Sex and History project uses historical objects from past cultures as a way of sparking conversations about social norms, sexuality, gender, power and relationships today and in the past.



“We have found that encounters with historical material provide eye-opening and empowering examples of cultural diversity which can expand horizons and help build skills in critical thinking about models of sex and relationships which young people encounter today”

[\(http://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/history/research/centres/medicalhistory/projects/sexandhistory/\)](http://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/history/research/centres/medicalhistory/projects/sexandhistory/)

The use of artefacts provide a historical distance through which to explore critically discuss and explore potentially sensitive topics in a holistic, inclusive, participatory and ethical way, as the team set out below:

New perspectives: exploring ideas from outside of their place and time encourages participants to see their own attitudes and assumptions with fresh eyes.

Critical Thinking: a historical context helps to develop ways of thinking critically about models of relationships and sex today.

Distancing: Discussing sensitive issues via historical objects focuses the discussion initially around other cultures, allowing participants to talk more safely.

Confidence: recognising that people have been talking about, thinking about and depicting sex for millennia increases confidence in talking about it today.

Participation: people can interpret the material in different ways, encouraging deeper learning and longer impact.

<http://sexandhistory.exeter.ac.uk/about/>

For example, the project worked with a group of young women from a Pupil referral Unit in South West England creating their own sexual health guides for young people having viewed and discussed a 19th century Chinese ‘trunk bottom’ that is thought to

have possibly been given to newly married couples to instruct them about sexual positions and sexual pleasure. The activity, alongside discussion of other historical objects, led to participants and peer educators sharing their experiences of talking to parents about sex and relationships and reflecting on the benefits of intergenerational relationships in learning about sexuality and healthy relationships.

Evaluation of this and other projects conducted by the Sex and History team have concluded that this work improves young people's knowledge, confidence, and critical thinking skills around sex in our society.

"The participants' engagement with objects enabled them to make more sense of their own (sometimes chaotic or traumatic) lives and their wider communities



and society [...] it clearly demonstrated that the power of museum objects and collections lies in working collaboratively and creatively with people to help them make sense of what can seem a chaotic reality, of who they are and who they want to be, and to move forward in those plans through developing skills and making new connections" (Malone 2013 , p. 3).

One student said:

"We found it inspirational. The historical objects opened our minds to new ideas. It made us more mature in the way we thought about sex. We all discovered things about ourselves"

Evidence: Presentation in Panel meeting 4, project website and publications (Fisher et al. 2016)

ii) Knowledge in context

Creative pedagogies support an experience-near, needs-led approach to SRE as educators are encouraged to develop curriculum content in ways that connect to children and young people's everyday lives and experiences. As discussed above, SRE needs to address not just what children and young people know and need to know, but the contexts within which messages about relationships and sexuality are constructed and circulated. Asking children and young people to create and imagine the scenarios, characters and experiences explored and to set the agenda (see below) helps to ensure that discussions are rooted in children's varied everyday experiences and realities. This dialogic approach to teaching and learning assumes that children and young people of all ages have knowledge and lived experience of sexuality and relationships and that this should be the starting point for any SRE curriculum.

Making Healthy Relationship Keyrings

The Spectrum Keyrings are introduced in the final session on 'Healthy Relationships' with KS2 pupils.

The task is started by explaining that the pupils will be making a keyring. A completed keyring is then shown to the class. Each bead on the keyring represents how they should feel in a healthy relationship. The beads are:

- Smiley Face Bead- Healthy relationships should make us feel happy most of the time.
- Heart Bead- Healthy relationships should make you feel loved and cared for.
- Yellow Bead- Healthy relationships should make us feel glowing and warm inside.
- Star Bead- Healthy relationships help us to shine and be the best we can be.
- Letter S Bead- Reminds us that if we are worried about relationships, we should Speak to someone about it!

The pupils are each given a key ring with two strands of thread on it. They are then given 5 beads, which they have to carefully thread on to the string, and tie off. This task is a lovely and calm way to conclude the sessions. It allows time for pupils to reflect on the sessions and naturally prompts them to discuss aspects of a positive relationship. It is a positive way to end, what can be for some, a personal and thought provoking topic.

It is also a firm favourite of the pupils, who often initially ask, "can we keep them?", when they are told that they will be making keyrings.

On several occasions, when I have returned to deliver the 3rd session, pupils have been quick to show me that they still have their keyrings on their school bags or pencil cases.



Teachers are always very complimentary about this task. One teacher expressed that she thought it was a great reminder of all that we had talked about and it was so nice for the children to have something to keep.

Evidence: Rosalyn Evans, presentation in panel meeting 2, The Hafan Spectrum Project

iii) Children and young people set the agenda

When creative pedagogies interact with critical pedagogy this merger can enable a transformative and empowering approach to SRE by enabling children and young people to identify what is important to them, what they know and what they would like to learn about and change. There are a range of examples from the AGENDA resource in which young people are asked to think about what 'jars' them (above) or what they think needs to change in society through the 'stop and start' plates activity.

iv) Engaging with emotions

Creative pedagogies are sensational pedagogies. They facilitate opportunities to explore some of the emotional, sensual and sensory aspects of relationships and sexualities that are often left out of traditional approaches to SRE, but that are crucial to children and young people's decision making and negotiation of relationships, risk and sexuality (Sandlos 2010, Carmody 2008). Working in the creative mode can privilege children and young people spontaneous, affective and intuitive responses and can help to develop new forms of 'emotional understanding' (Sandlos 2010) about familiar or known ideas, concepts and situations.

For example, 'body mapping' has been used by sexuality researchers and educators in schools, youth groups and community settings to enable and encourage young people to draw life-sized body outlines and populate the outline with feelings, thoughts and responses to situations (Chenhall et al. 2013):

"These methods present significant opportunities for the development of appropriate, accessible and entertaining sex education, where young people feel empowered and that their concerns are being addressed. In the process of painting their body maps or community maps, young people tell their stories. They also ask questions, and these questions provide opportunities to provide information in a non-threatening manner" (Senior and Chenhall 2017, p.112).

Body Mapping with teens: Feeling knowledge, knowing feelings

"We roll out a large piece of paper, big enough for a person to lie on. Even the action of lying down can evoke memories. As they see the paper being rolled out and imagine lying down, young people have often spontaneously commented on being on a hospital bed, on a table, on a rug, on a cold surface. Once prone and



comfortable, another person, with their consent, carefully draws round the body contour. Usually people spontaneously close their eyes. Through the gentle drawing action, a wide variety of feelings can surface; some feel cared for and attended to, some feel hyper self-conscious of their body shape or their breathing. The drawing brings attention into the body as - flesh, skin, hair and limbs.

Body contours are always distortions of body shapes and each body outline will create a new shape that can then be coloured, patterned or filled with words, phrases, stories. This process has the potential to enable young people to explore body image and identity in interesting ways. They can enable people to introduce an

edited version of themselves that can communicate feelings they have inside their bodies in safe, lively and sometimes amusing ways”.

Evidence: Professor Gabrielle Ivinson, Panel Meeting 4.

v) Imagining otherwise

Working creatively and critically enables children and young people to imagine other lives, identities, families, experiences and ways of being in the world. This is essential for enabling personal and social change and through creating collective, affirmative visions of for example, safe relationships, ethical sexual practice, gender identities and expression.

The ‘Good Sex’ project

The Good Sex Project (Brook and The Open University) used extracts from interviews with young people about their sexual decision-making and desires to create short films to be used in SRE programmes with secondary age young people. Extracts were read out and participants were guided through a visualisation task that encouraged them to respond imaginatively to the stories, desires and thoughts of other young people who had different gender, sexual and racial identities. This enabled the group to work in the ‘subjunctive mode’, imagining themselves as *if they were* in relationships and scenarios that may have been distinct and/or overlapping with their own experiences. <https://goodsexproject.wordpress.com/good-sex-the-film/>

The tag cloud below show some of this diversity as well as some of the patterns in young people’s responses to what constitutes ‘good’ and ‘bad’ sex:



vi) Creative pedagogies: some of the challenges

Uncertain and unpredictable outcomes

Engaging SRE with creative pedagogy presents opportunities to offer promising practice SRE that is engaging, critical, holistic and relevant to children and young people's lives. However, there are a number of challenges to adopting this approach.

'It is difficult for us to embrace approaches that might give young people a range of perspectives and allow them to make up their own minds and perspectives about what is best for them'. (McKee, Walsh and Watson 2014: 133 in Hendry 2017: 522)

A key feature of creative pedagogies is that they open up grey areas for discussion and facilitate greater control and responsibility for learning to children and young people. This means that the activities and the outcomes of the activities are less clear cut (McKee, Walsh and Watson 2014, Hendry 2017; Sefton-Green et al. 2012). This can be a source of anxiety for teachers, schools and for children and young people. There is therefore a clear need for teacher training and close partnership working with creative professionals and researchers where possible to ensure that educators are able to confidently create and maintain safe spaces for this work.

Labour intensive and relying on the input of creative professionals

Some of the promising practice examples given in the sections above and in the research literature have depended upon the input of creative professionals such as film-makers, theatre practitioners, choreographers and arts-based researchers whose time has been funded by additional external grant income. These small, targeted projects have produced positive outcomes for children and young people but are often unsustainable due to the intensity of time and resources required. However, many of the methods, ideas and activities from these projects can be used in mainstream settings by teachers to enable creativity, curiosity and critical thinking.

There is not usually the need for high quality resources as camera phones, scraps of paper, pens and studio space can often be sufficient (see Renold 2017, Welsh Government 2015). Through good teacher training and appropriate forums for sharing promising and best practice (see Part Five) methods and ideas can be circulated and implemented at low cost. Further, as detailed above, and in the sections that follow, creative pedagogies are more than a set of arts-based activities. This is an approach to SRE that invites children and young people to share their views on what is important to them and asks teachers to be flexible about how teaching and learning is facilitated. This does not necessarily require skills in the expressive arts and can be done using a range of interactive learning techniques and knowledge/practice of critical pedagogy.

That said, Wales is very well placed to support creative SRE projects, not only with the cross-disciplinary links that the Health and Well-being AoLE will be able to foster with the Expressive Arts AoLE, but in the huge investment of arts in education (Smith 2014) via the Lead Creative Schools Scheme, and the All Wales Arts and Education Offer.

g. An effective SRE curriculum will be embedded in a whole school approach

Recommendation 4: Pioneer schools, supported by Welsh Government and specialist organisations should explore how the SRE element of the Health and Wellbeing AoLE can be embedded in a 'whole school approach'.

“Sex ed is not, nor has it ever been, confined to a teacher standing in front of a room of students, talking about sex” (McClelland and Fine 2017, p. 212).

The expert panel remit as outlined in Part One focuses specifically upon SRE in the new curriculum, with panel meetings and discussions focusing specifically upon the statutory status of SRE; the development of core underpinning principles; training, leadership and resources; and pedagogy and assessment. From the very first meeting the panel were in agreement with 'best practice' literature, and Wales' own SRE guidance for schools (Welsh Assembly Government, 2010) that a whole school approach is the single most important element for effective health and well-being education, including sexuality and relationships education (Flood et al. 2009; Ollis et al. 2000; Gleeson, Kearney, Leung and Brislane 2015). Indeed, a preventative, protective and transformative SRE (see core principles, Part Three) is most effectively achieved with the adoption of a whole school approach which provides the overarching framework within which SRE sessions occur.

A whole-school approach must go beyond the implementation of resources and classroom learning

Primary intervention literature in this field maintains that to effect and sustain significant social and cultural change, “mutually reinforcing activities at all levels from policy, legislative and institutional reform to community and organisational level programs” must take place (Flood et al., 2009, p.43). As, Gleeson et al. (2015, p.14) stress, existing practices of classroom-based learning in SRE can lead to the false assumption that preventative, protective and transformative work in gender-based and sexual violence or sexual health is 'already being done'. However, a whole school approach not only addresses the drivers of change, but promotes and advances the more equitable and respectful attitudes, behaviours, structures and practices across the school culture and wider community. Reviewing the evidence on whole school approaches, Gleeson et al. (2015, p.19) summarise its benefits of enduring change:

“In contrast to the impact of single initiatives, a whole school approach providing students with multiple exposure to key messages across the curriculum and in different areas of the school and community will be more likely to result in sustained changes in attitudes and behaviour at the individual level”

A whole school approach to SRE means that the core principles informing the learning and experience from planned SRE sessions (in or outside the classroom) will be reinforced (and importantly, not undermined) across different areas of the school and community. In relation to prevention, protection and transformation, whole school approaches are not just more likely to result in sustained cultural changes at the level of the individual learner, but across the school staff and the wider school community.

Most whole school approaches to SRE are focused upon prevention and prevention programmes, which as identified in Part 3, is a central element of the protective and preventative core principle of this panel's recommendation for Sexuality and Relationships Education. In their review of whole-school approaches to violence prevention programmes, Flood et al. (2009, p.69) outline the central elements:

Whole school approaches operate across:

- curriculum, teaching and learning
- school policy and practices
- school culture, ethos and environment
- the relationships between school, home and the community.

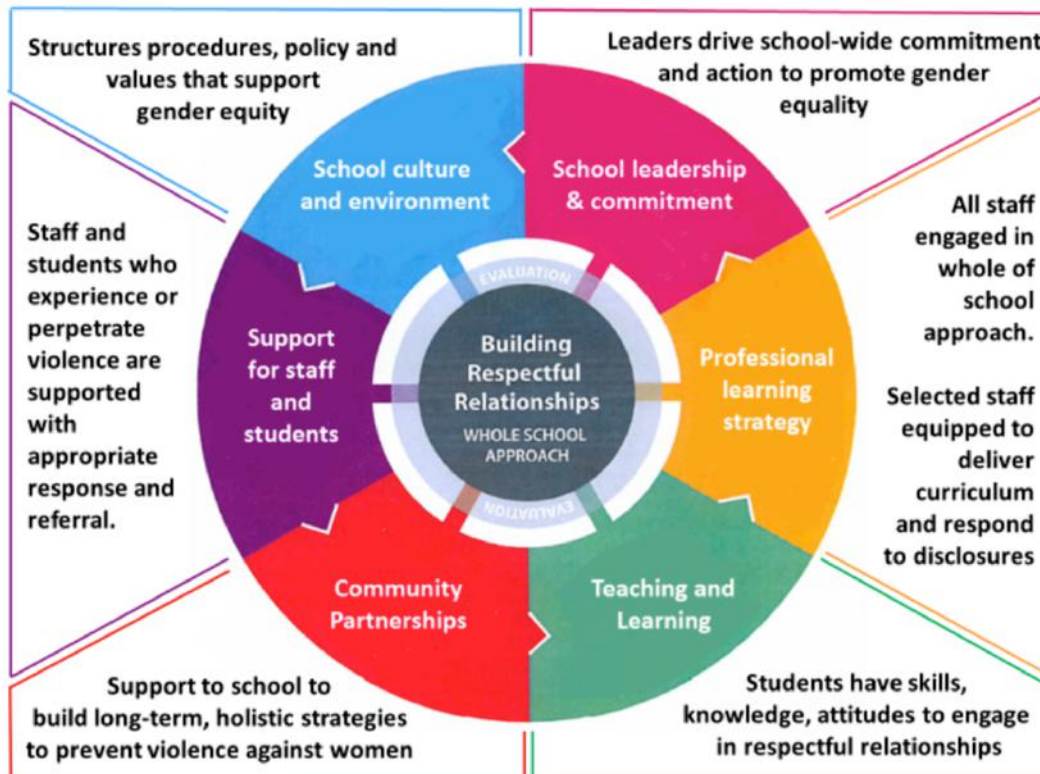
Whole school approaches involve:

- comprehensive curriculum integration
- assessment and reporting
- specialised training and resources for teaching and support staff
- reinforcement of violence prevention programming through school policies, structures and processes

There are many different whole-school approach models. The Welsh Government's (2015a) "A Whole Education Approach to Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence in Wales", for example outlines 9 core elements, with the first relating specifically to the curriculum (which could encompass both the formal and hidden curriculum):

1. Children and young people learn about violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.
2. Staff learn about violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.
3. Parents, care-givers and family learn about violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.
4. Monitoring and evaluation systems are in place to measure impact of this work.
5. Measures are in place to support people who experience forms of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.
6. Active participation of children and young people, staff and parents/care-givers to prevent violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.
7. Taking action to prevent violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence in the wider community.
8. Working in partnership with relevant local experts.
9. Embedding a comprehensive prevention programme

Others, for example, tend to consolidate their models into 6-8 core areas, which are inclusive of all the above. See for example, the model advocated in Victoria's 'Building Respectful Relationships' resource (2014):



Other models, include and emphasise student voice, participation and action, and depending upon the focus, clear and embedded violence prevention programmes (Welsh Government 2015; Against Violence and Abuse (AVA) <https://avaproject.org.uk/ava-services-2/children-young-people/whole-schools-approach/>).

Most models broadly take the following shape and include strategies across seven core domains:

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH CORE DOMAINS

1. school leadership and policy
2. professional learning
3. student learning
4. community partnership building
5. safeguarding and support for staff and students
6. school culture and environment.
7. student voice and participation
8. evaluation and impact

Many comprehensive programmes and resources for whole school approaches to SRE separate out sexuality education from relationships education. 'Healthy relationships' education is usually located in the context of addressing violence against girls and women and service providers can include the VAGW sector and crime, via school police liaison officers (Stanley et al. 2015), and sexuality education, is usually located in the context of health promoting schools programmes (Pound et

al. 2016). Additionally, sexist, sexual, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic harassment, abuse and violence are usually located in the field of anti-bullying (see Welsh Government, Respecting Others 2012) or safeguarding (see Welsh Government, Keeping Learners Safe 2015b). Few comprehensive resources focus specifically upon whole-school approaches to inclusive and holistic sexuality and relationship education, that integrate all of the above, particularly the field of school-based bullying. Anti-bullying literature for example, is rarely in dialogue with the research, policy or practice literature and resources on gender-related and sexual conflict, harassment and violence (Smith and Payne 2016, Fields and Payne 2016 Payne and Smith 2017; Women Equalities Select Committee 2016), with evidence in some studies of how anti-bullying interventions and bully discourses reinforce gender and sexual norms, and thus create conducive contexts in which gender-related and sexual violence thrives (Ringrose and Rawlings 2015; Rawlings 2017; Formby 2015). However, developments in Wales are addressing segregated responses to more joined-up and inclusive resources, practice and policies, particularly within the field of children's rights (see Sam's Story, 2017) and whole school approaches to tackling Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence in primary and secondary schools, with students, teachers and parents/carers (e.g. The Spectrum Project, see case study below).

A case study example of a holistic inclusive whole school approach to sexuality and relationships has been developed and implemented by Shropshire County Council. The project involves "schools advisors for PSHE, Healthy Schools and Mental Health, Domestic Violence, additional specialist services, PSHE co-ordinators network and addressing homophobia in education group. There are close working relationships with the School Nurse service, and TYS (Targeted Youth Support) and the voluntary sector Banardos, Relateen, Samaritans, and Womens' Aid".

The Shropshire Respect Yourself Improving RSE Programme Whole School Approach to Relationships and Sex Education

1. Recognising that staff, not just teaching staff are involved in RSE, in handling playground incidents, responding to use of homophobic language, or questions, anxieties and concerns. Training for whole school staff is being provided. At a practical level the use of a question box has been developed, with some primary schools having an RSE box for the whole school, for use by the dinner time supervisor, Teaching Assistants and teaching staff. The vision is to ensure congruence for young people between the taught RSE curriculum and the lived curriculum.
 2. Within both primary and secondary it is especially important to ensure that incident management, pastoral systems and child protection practice are aligned to and consistent with RSE curriculum delivery. Work is done to support governors and heads to cross reference and amend related policies.
 3. Significant changes have been achieved when whole school training is provided, followed by the PSHE Co-ordinator developing a school action plan, (including a review of policy, consultation with parents and pupils and training to develop a specialist RSE team). This has been supported by the Head liaising with curriculum committee, governors and putting RSE Transition on the area head agenda.
- Evidence: <http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/resources/practice/sex-relationships-education/shropshire-respect-yourself-improving-sre.aspx>

A number of case studies of whole school approaches to healthy relationships are also cited in Estyn's (2017) recent thematic review of healthy relationships education in primary and secondary schools across Wales. See the following example from Pen Y Dre high school:

A whole school approach to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Information about the school

Pen-Y-Dre is an English-medium 11-16 school maintained by Merthyr Tydfil local authority. There are 549 pupils on roll. Around 33% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average of 17.4%. The school serves a catchment area consisting of the Gurnos Estate, as well as a number of valley communities on the edge of the Brecon Beacons. Pupils come mainly from six partner primary schools. Seventy per cent of pupils live in the 20% most deprived areas in Wales. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is around 49%, which is significantly higher than the national average of 25%.

Context and background to the practice

Pen-Y-Dre High School is committed to the wellbeing of pupils, staff and the local community. Leaders, including governors, recognise and understand the important role that education has in promoting healthy relationships and reducing domestic abuse in society. The school has built strong partnerships with specialist agencies, who support the school to implement the nine elements of a whole-education approach to tackling violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence as set out in Welsh Government guidance.

Description of activity/strategy

A senior leader has responsibility for mapping and monitoring the school's actions to implement the nine elements of the whole-school approach. He co-ordinates the school's actions against targets set out in a detailed development plan for healthy relationships education. Actions are set for staff in departments across the school.

The school promotes healthy relationships through a wide range of activities including assemblies, themed days, its website, parent workshops and through lessons across the curriculum. Teachers in a wide range of subjects deliver healthy relationships education to pupils in all year groups to ensure that important messages are revisited regularly across the curriculum.

Pupils take ownership of related issues and how they are delivered. Form groups design assemblies weekly for senior staff to deliver. The Student Parliament present their views to the senior leadership team and are active in promoting healthy relationships across the school and in the local community.

Evidence: Estyn (2017) A Review of Healthy Relationships Education. Page 21

<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/review-healthy-relationships-education>

To ensure a co-ordinated approach to an inclusive and holistic SRE, underpinned by the core principles outlined in Part 3, a clearly defined and comprehensive whole school approach resource needs to be developed, regularly updated and evaluated, and available to all educational providers and practitioners to ensure a consistent and coherent response to the implementation of a statutory SRE. The current Whole Education Approach to Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence in Wales (2105) and its accompanying case study examples and resources, many of which are included in this report, are an excellent and enviable start in this process. However, this guide and suite of resources needs to be integrated inside an inclusive, holistic SRE programme and whole school approach to SRE, and underpinned by the four purposes of the new curriculum.

h. Towards a living SRE assessment that supports and enhances pupil voice and agency

Recommendation 5: The Health and Wellbeing AoLE should have an equal status to other AoLEs. SRE should also have equal status to other areas within Health and Wellbeing and the wider AoLEs, including robust assessment arrangements that support pupil voice.

It is expected and the panel recommends that the Health and Wellbeing AoLE, which incorporates SRE, will have equal status not only to the other 5 AoLEs of the new curriculum but equal status to other areas within the Health and Wellbeing AoLE. Consequently, SRE will develop robust statutory assessment arrangements following and developing the outline recommendations by Professor Donaldson in Successful Futures.

The panel cannot recommend any detailed or prescriptive assessment arrangements until the thematic content, with clear progression pathways and learning outcomes is developed and consulted on. However, for examples of baseline or needs assessment, and summative and formative SRE assessment in education, health and community settings in the UK see Blake et al. (2012) and Martinez et al. (2012). For examples of detailed assessment strategies for inclusive Respectful Relationships Education (from Foundation to age 16) see Victorian Curriculum²⁴. For an example of assessment in relation to peer educators, see Morgan, Robins and Trip (2007).

Example of baseline assessment: Body Changes

Baseline of needs assessment is carried out at the beginning of a piece of work for three specific purposes:

- To determine what is already known
- To clarify learning need

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http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/foundation10/viccurriculum/Respectful_relationships/assessment_strategies.aspx

- To identify whether children and young people have any special educational needs (if not known already)

Practitioners carry out a baseline assessment to determine where to start and to guide them in how the work should be developed, including what language and resources to use. Needs assessment is particularly important in SRE because different groups of children of the same age will have different needs related to this subject. For parents/carers it is reassuring to know that planning has been in response to children's existing knowledge and the questions they have.

Baseline – needs assessment example:

Body Changes

Children's drawings are useful for baseline assessment as they can be used with younger children, although they also work well with older children, particularly more vulnerable young people. An example of a draw and write activity detailed here relates to puberty.

The activity focuses on assessing knowledge of the emotional and physical changes that take place during puberty, and could take place as a baseline assessment prior to a unit on puberty. For example, a Year 6 SRE teacher may want to assess how much pupils have remembered from previous years or learnt from home. The drawings could be analysed prior to the next lesson and used to inform planning.

Method

-For a baseline assessment of the group's needs, children could work in small groups

-Ask participants to draw a picture of a body, draw round a group member or give out copies of the body outline

-Ask them to draw and label the different emotional and physical changes that take place during puberty

- If the group are finding this difficult then ask them to think about: Heart, mind and feeling; Skin and hair; Sex organs; Voice; Good things about growing up; Bad things about growing up

-Take away the pictures to help plan lessons that will address any misunderstandings or gaps in knowledge and understanding. Return to these at the end of the unit – can the children add to and make changes to their drawings as a result of the input

-Make a display to show the work that pupils have been doing

Other topics could include, for example, asking the children and young people to draw what they understand about what is meant by family or keeping safe.

Evidence: Martinez et al. (2012, p.45) Laying the Foundations: A practical guide to sex and relationships education in primary schools. Sex Education Forum/ National Children's Bureau.

Regarding structured formal assessment, and following the advice of Professor Gabrielle Ivinson, who gave a presentation in panel meeting 4 on the history and assessment of SRE in the context of PSE/PSHE, the panel do recommend the importance of a progressive, interactive, meaningful and beneficial project-based style assessment. Professor Ivinson outlined the affordances of creating a “living assessment” for a “living SRE curriculum” *with* and, where appropriate, led by children and young people. Importantly, this approach aligns with Donaldson’s own recommendation to offer opportunities and spaces for children and young people not only to “directly influence decisions about curriculum and pedagogy” but also that of “assessment” (Donaldson 2015, p.23).

A project-based *living assessment* has the potential to connect more directly with children and young people’s own concerns, interests and evolving capacities as they progress through the learning and experience pathways guided by the core principles of the SRE curriculum (see Part 3) accompanied by summative and formative assessments which “draw together different aspects of what they have learned over a period of time” (Donaldson 2015 p. 77). Indeed, Donaldson advocates how assessment needs not only to be manageable and reliable, but meaningful and valid for learners:

“the strength of assessment should always be appropriate to its benefits” (Donaldson 2015, p.75)

Following Donaldson, the panel not only support a structure that enables learners to have more say and control over the mode and content of the assessment, but a clear pathway for what else the product enabled by the assessment can achieve (e.g. its benefit to wider society, which as an outcome would concretely materialise the four purposes of the curriculum: as ambitious capable learners, ethical informed citizens, enterprising creative contributors, and confident, valued members of society).

Professor Ivinson offered examples of assessment outcomes that had real-world impact and consequence, and that would not only support the assessment of student’s social and emotional learning but enhance pupil voice and agency. The examples suggested also supported Recommendation 43 of Successful Futures for “innovative approaches to assessment, including interactive approaches” (p. 80). They included, digital stories, films, artworks (painting, poetry), social change campaigns, products (e.g a new SRE focused resource), performances and presentations to relevant charities or businesses; research projects contributing new knowledge.

The panel considers the new Welsh Baccalaureate as an excellent starting point and model through which a living assessment for SRE (3-16) could be developed and achieved, with its focus on community challenges, global citizenship, and individual projects (see <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/conferences/welsh-baccalaureate-conference-2017/sessions>). The following two case studies provide examples of

Welsh baccalaureate projects which each addressed SRE related issues through Community Challenge briefs.

The idea for the case study, “More Than Our Grades below, originated from students’ own experiences of their schools’ SRE programme. It started as a campaign to raise awareness of the need for better SRE, and then became their community challenge project.

Community Challenge: making a flashcard story to put gender equalities at the heart of our schools and community.

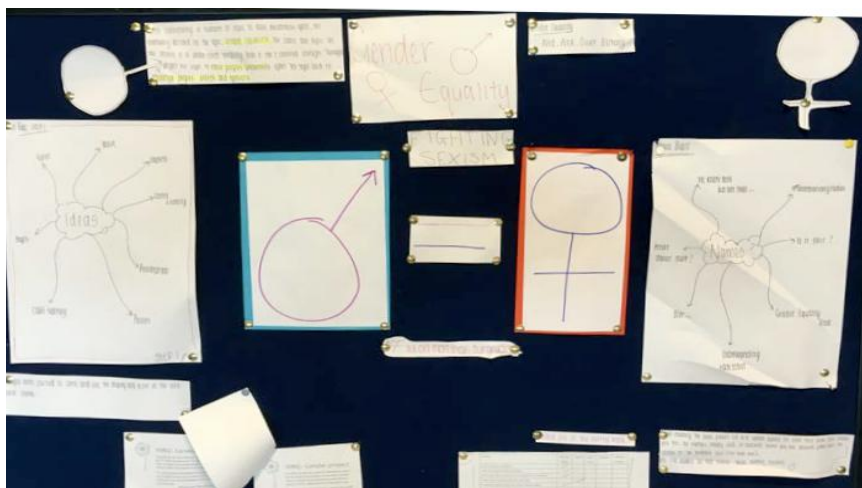
“We are a mixed-gender friendship group in Year 10, and last term, we had a lesson on domestic violence delivered by our local Women’s Aid charity. It was here that we realised how little we knew about this issue and so many other related issues.

We knew loads about every other curriculum subject, but next to nothing about healthy relationships, or on gender well-being and gender equalities. We didn't realize that challenging gender inequalities can help address violence against girls and women. We started to join up the dots and think about gender injustice and how unfair the world can be for boys, girls, men and women.

WHAT DID WE DO?

- 1 Working across the curriculum**
We began working our way through each curriculum subject and took it in turns to speak out loud something we knew or remembered from different subjects, like Maths or P.E.
- 2 Researching what we didn't know**
We mind-mapped all the things we didn't know about gender equalities and gender well-being, and used the AGENDA 'information' web resources to find out more.
- 3 Making don't know/do know pages**
We then created a flashcard story book, with one page highlighting things we 'did know' and one page highlighting things that we 'didn't know'.
- 4 Illustrating**
We illustrated each page, and drew our favourite Disney characters on the front covers. Each character, for us, challenges or is constrained by gender, sexual or racial stereotypes.
- 5 Filming teacher's hands turning the pages**
Using an iPad, we filmed teachers turning the pages that matched their own subject. This became a great way to spread the message about our project across the school. Lots of teachers asked us what we were doing and why. Many, like us, learned new things about gender equality or gender-based violence. A few teachers thought that we were taught enough already which led to some interesting discussions!
- 6 Tweeting #morethanourgrades flashcard story**
We used movie maker to make our film. When it was finished, we played it on our school TV everyday during our Welsh Bacc week. We tweeted each school subject's twitter account and asked them to pls RT (please retweet). We also set a student-staff form group challenge to guess which teacher turned which page. We will show the film again on International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25 Nov) and hope other students will make their own flashcard books next year.

Inspired by YouTube flashcard stories where people hold up signs with hand written messages on for people to read, we decided to create our own story board, and spread the word that we are #morethanourgrades.



#morethanourgrades became our community challenge Welsh Bacc project. We delivered leaflets and talked to community members about gender equality and designed a likert scale questionnaire to find out

what students and staff thought about our flashcard story."

Evidence: Agenda: A Young People's Guide to Making Positive Relationships Matter (2016, p.44-46)

The next case-study illustrates the role that peer-led workshops can play in addressing LGBT issues supported by a whole school approach to positive relationships.

Tackling #LGBT Issues Head On – Welsh Baccalaureate Community Challenge

<http://www.macs.uk.net/news/tackling-diversity-head>

The Welsh Baccalaureate department was invited to play a central part in the school's whole school approach to healthy relationships, supported by the newly formed Positive Relationship Board (PRB) and immediately took on the mantle of tackling LGBT issues. The Community Challenge provided an excellent spring board to encompass whole school approach to an inclusive SRE and LGBT issues in particular. The Challenge would entail Year 12/13 pupils to become experts in certain LGBT issues: Homophobic Bullying; Homophobia in Sport; Same Sex Relationships; Same Sex Parenting; Coming Out as a Teenager and then design and deliver lessons to Year 9/10 supported by the Welsh Baccalaureate lead. This Challenge would continue into the next academic year, whereby Year 12/13 would peer mentor Year 10 as part of the latter's Community Challenge: delivering lessons on the KS3 PSE Day on LGBT issues, focusing on some of the topics above.



So far, so good!!! Year 12/13 have become key advocates in promoting LGBT issues and positive relationships within the school environment and wider community. Both year groups were comfortable during discussion work and it provoked empathy and reflection within their lives and others. They used a range of interactive activities to deliver the lessons from LGBT cross-words to class debates:

'We think it is important to learn and understand the concept of LGBT because every day people get discriminated for liking people of the same sex. The Year 12 made good discussions and highlighted the most important parts of the presentation. They also connected it with things that we like e.g. celebrities.' (Year 10 student)

'Whilst delivering the LGBT lessons I didn't feel awkward. I think that it should be covered more often as it is an important topic and will help kick out stereotypes.' (Year 13 student)

'I think it is important because the younger the person is, the more they can be positively influenced.' (Year 13 student)

'Pupils realised that we are now more than ever living in a diverse society and that diversity needs to be embraced rather than challenged.' (Miss Williams Head of Welsh Baccalaureate)

PART 4 Training, standards, research and support

a. The Urgent Need for Professional Training: a safeguarding issue

Successful high quality SRE in all schools depends upon having a well-trained and confident workforce (Macdonald 2009, Walker et al 2003, FPA and Public Health Wales 2012). SRE provision without specialist training can lead to poor quality programmes and safeguarding concerns (see below). The panel recommends that SRE is embedded in a whole-school approach. This means that the SRE workforce will consist of all school staff, including primary and secondary teachers; teaching assistants; school support staff; school governors; health professionals such as school nurses and sexual health specialists, workers from specialist agencies such as those working in the VAGWDASV, LGBTQ+ and Drugs and Alcohol sectors; youth and community workers; peer and near-peer educators and peer mentors; religious and spiritual leaders.

Currently in primary schools in Wales it is teachers who provide the majority of SRE, with support from health professionals (Estyn 2017). In secondary schools SRE is also mainly provided by teachers, often by form tutors in tutorial time, with support from specialist agencies (*ibid*). Despite the key role that teachers play in SRE provision we know very little about the level of quality of specialist SRE training currently provided in Wales either as part of initial teacher training, or as post-qualification programmes for in-service teachers. Whilst there have been some mapping studies in England (Dewhirst et al. 2014), no such research has been conducted in Wales and the recent reviews of ITT in Wales made no mention of SRE (Furlong 2015). A recent review by Estyn of healthy relationships education in Wales found that only a few (less than 20%) schools have effective arrangements in place to ensure that staff who provide healthy relationships education are 'knowledgeable and confident with the subject content.' (Estyn 2017: 19). Recent school inspection reports show that nearly all schools in Wales do have appropriate arrangements to train staff about safeguarding issues and that the designated safeguarding person (DSP) in nearly all schools had received additional training to make them aware of domestic violence, violence against women and sexual violence (*ibid*). Very few schools however had effective arrangements to share this training with other staff.

Current ITE Programmes enable student teachers to meet the Qualified Teacher Status Standards as part of the requirement to teach in maintained school settings in Wales. The standards ensure teachers are able to teach the curriculum, which could include SRE as part of the Personal and Social Education Framework, but no specialist training is currently required. This current lack of specialist training can be explained in part by the low status of SRE as a curriculum area that is often poorly resourced and given low priority in schools as a non-examined, non-mandatory subject (Allred and David 2007, Allred in press). The lack of training means that teachers who are tasked with providing SRE are rarely equipped with the knowledge, skills and understandings to confidently and competently address sexuality and relationships with their students (Epstein et al. 2009; Leahy, Horne & Harrison 2004; Harrison & Ollis 2011, Ollis, Harrison and Maharaj 2013, Allred and David 2007, Allred in press).

(Teachers) feel underprepared for it. Being under-prepared for it is horrible: I think the biggest fear as a teacher in a situation like that is being asked a question that you just don't know how to answer.

It's not a popular subject! People do it reluctantly, even the staff that don't feel uncomfortable with it ... with the training and planning the way it is ... they feel under-prepared.

'You're a form teacher and you don't just want to go in and suddenly talk about sex'. (Secondary School teachers, Alldred in press)

Each of the case studies provided in this report showcase elements of promising and best practice in SRE. It is no coincidence that the majority of these case studies involve schools working with SRE experts from universities and/or specialist agencies who are able to share their knowledge and skills and support teachers, children and young people to feel confident in their SRE programmes. A successful relevant 'living curriculum' for SRE demands confident and well-supported practitioners who understand that children and young people have a legitimate set of interests and concerns about sexuality and relationships that need to be addressed.

Comparative research with teachers, school nurses and youth workers suggests that there are distinct professional frameworks and philosophies that shape how practitioners view young people (Alldred in press, Alldred and David 2007). Within the school-based teaching profession children and young people are often viewed as 'innocent' or 'pre-sexual', leading to a lack of confidence and considerable anxiety among teachers and school leaders (Alldred in press). This contrasts with other sectors, such as youth work, within which young people are often viewed as sexual citizens whose empowerment might be supported by individual and social/community level interventions. This suggests that radical change will be required within schools and the teaching profession more broadly to support teachers and school leaders to challenge assumptions about sexuality, childhood and relationships and to work with young people and community services to shape and deliver a relevant, inclusive, rights and gender-equity based and transformative whole school approach to SRE (see Section 4).

'Sex is a potent subject that can arouse strong emotions, reactions and feelings—of anxiety, embarrassment and vulnerability among others—yet the prevailing approach within schools appears to be to deny that there is anything exceptional about the topic and to attempt to teach SRE in the same way as other subjects. This negatively affects the delivery of SRE and renders young people vulnerable. (Pound et al 2016, p.4)

SRE is a specialist area of the curriculum that deals with sensitive issues that can arouse feelings of anxiety, embarrassment and vulnerability among teachers, students and parents/carers (Pound et al. 2016). Without specialist training schools may either avoid covering sensitive or challenging topics altogether (Estyn 2017) or deliver SRE in a way that fails to adequately safeguard children and young people (Pound et al. 2016).

The recent Estyn review of healthy relationship education in Wales (2017: 5) found that a minority of primary schools avoid teaching aspects of sex and relationships education, other than puberty and personal hygiene. In many of these schools this is provided by health professionals in one-off sessions, which does not give students ‘the opportunity to raise personal issues with teachers they know’ (*ibid*). Further, where staff in primary and secondary schools had not received specialist training on topics such as FGM or honour based violence, these topics were not covered in the curriculum. The review concluded that in too many schools, particularly in areas where communities are not diverse, violence against girls and women is not recognised as a high priority and students are not sufficiently prepared to live in a diverse society (Estyn 2017). Recent analysis from the SHRN survey data also suggested that “compared to teachers, other modes of delivery of SRE were associated with better sexual health outcomes, including remaining sexually inactive, later age of first intercourse, and condom use” (Young, Long, Hallingberg, Hewitt, Murphy and Moore, in press).

Evidence from a recent review of the international research literature suggests that this situation is not unique to Wales. The review found that the challenges of delivering a ‘potent subject’ are often defused by schools by presenting SRE as a ‘scientific’ topic (Pound et al. 2017), focusing on the health aspects of SRE at the neglects of the emotions, relationships, equalities and rights. Despite the emotive nature of SRE, the review found that many schools adopt an approach that ‘appears to be to deny that there is anything exceptional about the topic and to attempt to teach SRE in the same way as other subjects’ (*ibid*, p.4). This has been shown to have a negative effect on the SRE provision and can increase young people’s vulnerability within sessions. Young people report that they worry about being humiliated by peers if they talk openly in SRE classes (Forrest, Strange and Oakley 2002, Meyer and Carlson 2015); with young men reporting that they don’t want to be exposed as ignorant or ‘unknowing’ particularly when it comes to sex (Hilton 2007, Limmer 2010, Buston and Wight 2006, Allen 2005) and young women fearing that they will be harassed by boys or have their sexual reputations attacked if they speak openly in SRE sessions (Alldred and David 2007, Forrest et al 2002, Measor et al 2000). This is particularly the case when the educator struggles with effective class control and is not able to maintain clear boundaries (Pound et al 2017). Young women also report that educators often fail to address the harassment and shaming that they experience in SRE sessions, or that teachers become complicit in this process (*ibid*). In this way SRE can reproduce - rather than challenge - norms around gender and heterosexuality, silencing LGBTQ+ experiences and gender diversity and inadvertently creating opportunities for displays of misogyny, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia (McGeeney 2013, Formby 2011, 2015, Gilbert 2015).

This is a far cry from the inclusive SRE that students and teachers in Wales are asking for in which the impact of gender and sexual stereotypes are addressed and LGBTQ+ experiences are included without stigma (see case study below for examples of what teachers and pupils want from an inclusive SRE programme, and an experience-near spiral SRE by SRE specialist practitioner, Dr. Tamasine Preece). To provide what teachers and learners are asking for however requires specialist practitioners who are skilled at managing boundaries and experienced in

understanding and challenging gender and sexual norms and inequalities, and their intersection with other norms and inequalities (e.g. ethnicity, social class). Without specialist training many educators will be unable to appropriately safeguard children and young people and respond to any disclosures or harmful behaviours that may emerge as a result of tackling sensitive and challenging topics.

Inclusive Schools: teacher-student LGBT conference with primary and secondary schools

Pledges were collected from primary school pupils, secondary school pupils, teachers and service providers on what they want to see from an inclusive SRE programme at the one day Inclusive Schools conference hosted by Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr on 30 June 2017. Here are some of their comments, some of which were read out by Cabinet Secretary for Education Kirsty Williams at the conference, *Educating Agenda: supporting young people in making positive relationships matter*²⁵.

“Gender equality and sexuality to be taught and implemented into the curriculum as being ‘normal’ with no stigma.”

“All students to feel safe and happy in a completely inclusive school.”

“Teacher training and consistent school policy.”

“Performance/presentations tackling the issue, not shying away from it.”

“The Welsh Assembly need to take account the amazing work that is already happening schools to tackle homophobia and transphobia and help train other schools. The expertise is in schools and yet this expertise is not capitalised on. Please take this expertise seriously.”

“addysgu'r athrawon fel eu bod nhw'n delio gyda homoffobia effeithiol.” (educating teachers so that they are dealing with homophobia effectively).

“More training/awareness for school staff and parents together with resources to develop this ethos more effectively.”

Source: Marc Lewis (teacher) and DIGON students, invited presentation, panel meeting 3.



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in

²⁵ <http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/cascade/files/2017/04/EDUCATING-AGENDA-Conference-5th-July-2017.pdf>

Specialist led, research informed holistic SRE

Bryntirion Comprehensive School employs a designated Head of Personal and Social Education, a full-time school nurse and two part-time counsellors. This core team of well-being professionals carries out classroom-based research into current youth contexts, particularly with regards to sexual health, social media use and emotional well-being, as well as pupil profiling, to identify behavioural trends in relation to general well-being themes, as well as sexual health and behaviours. The evidence that is collected through this research and profiling is drawn on to create bespoke lessons and resources according to needs of individual teaching groups, and, where necessary, specific vulnerable groups. Information is disseminated to relevant staff and developed into whole-staff training and guidelines. Parents/carers are able to access information regarding specialist PSE lessons and health interventions as well as downloading resources for follow-up work in the home via a PSE and Health Twitter Feed.

The PSE schemes of work at Bryntirion Comprehensive School follow the thematic and skills guidance of the Welsh Assembly Government 2008 Framework, but use pupil voice to ensure that relevant contemporary issues and concerns are addressed through the framework objectives. Specific work relating to sexual health and behaviour has focused on constructions of gender through media, where students have examined perceptions of hyper-masculinity and 'laddism,' as well as violence and sexual violence against women, as portrayed in pornography, gaming and popular culture, to include corresponding health-related topics such as 'bigorexia,' eating disorders and mental health issues. Discussion regarding new norms and values has also created opportunity to address initiatives such as breast-feeding and self-examination for male and female cancers. The theme of sexual consent runs throughout SRE schemes of work from Years 7 to 11, underpins all work and is revisited during all PSE lessons. Students are given opportunities to analyse a range of media representations of relationships, and consider sexuality as only one of many ways of showing love and affection. Students discuss power balance within relationships and the notion of enthusiasm with regards to consent.

Evidence: Estyn (2017) A Review of Healthy Relationships Education. Page 21
<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/review-healthy-relationships-education>

b. Developing new training pathways

Recommendation 6: Welsh Government to establish a SRE professional development pathway, differentiated for stage of education, to be incorporated into ITE and professional learning courses.

This pathway would provide an opportunity to further progress their professional development and specialise in SRE, allowing scope for the workforce to achieve a Masters level SRE qualification.

“I wouldn't do this kind of work without specific training. A good value base is essential. Also need to have knowledge of communication strategies, exercises and games. Need to be comfortable talking about sex. Need a certain level of charisma in front of a group. It's very easy to transmit the wrong message, guilt and insecurity to group of people simply by the attitude

of the worker, even with the best of intentions” (FPA and Public Health Wales 2012 p.19)

To ensure that SRE is delivered by a confident and skilled workforce, the panel recommends that the Welsh Government develop specialist national SRE training and professional development pathways for teachers and other professionals involved in the delivery of SRE (see above). New pathways will need to be incorporated into Initial Teacher Education training programmes and professional learning courses for in-service teachers and other professionals involved in the delivering of SRE. This would include the opportunity for some members of the workforce to achieve a specialist qualification and have the opportunity to professionally develop and achieve a Masters level SRE qualification.

i) Training pre-service teachers through ITE

It is widely acknowledged that targeting pre-service teacher education remains the most sustainable and effective strategy to improve the knowledge, confidence and skills of teachers (Carman et al. 2009, Ollis, Harrison and Maharj 2013). Given the challenges to successful teacher-led SRE, high quality teacher education is vital to the success of any school-based SRE programmes (Smith et al. 2011; Carman et al. 2009; Schaalma et al. 2004; Wight 2007; Wight & Buston 2003; Levenson-Gingiss & Hamilton 1989; Ollis 2003; Goldman 2010; Smith et al. 2005; Walker, Green & Tilford 2003; Warwick, Aggleton & Rivers 2005; Sinkinson 2009). Scoping research on international pre-service teacher education programmes suggests that it is uncommon for programmes to include a focus on sexuality (Ollis, Harrison and Maharj 2013). Other than recent work in Australia (*ibid*), there are few examples of pre-service teacher education sexual health or SRE units. Evaluation and research on those programmes that do exist suggest that trainee teachers’ experiences of specialist SRE programmes are broadly positive. It suggests that, when provided, teacher education can address two of the most common barriers to successful teacher-led SRE; familiarity with the subject and curriculum content and increased levels of personal comfort and confidence (Warwick et al. 2005; Thomas & Jones 2005; Ollis 2010, Ollis, Harrison and Maharj 2013). In particular professional education for teachers that specifically addresses broader areas of knowledge and attitudes to sexual diversity and gender – both teachers’ own knowledge and attitudes, as well as those in broader society – can be effective in addressing inequalities issues (Ollis 2010; Sinkinson 2009; Mills 2004; Wight & Buston 2003).

An example from Australia (see below) shows how pre-service teaching training can provide the opportunity for trainee teachers to explore the theoretical and practical aspects of teaching inclusive, rights based SRE. This seven day intensive unit explores critical and creative pedagogies, inclusivity, gender and power and has been assessed through observation and evaluated through research (Ollis 2015, Harrison and Ollis 2015). Research on students experiences of this unit suggests that it was a positive and challenging experience, enabling trainees to reflect on their personal values and the social contexts within which relate to others and deliver SRE (Harrison and Ollis 2015, Ollis 2010).

The current overhaul of ITE in Wales in light of the Donaldson and Furlong reports presents an opportunity to make changes to the ways in which trainee teachers are

prepared to plan and deliver an SRE curriculum. The panel recommends that the Government support the development of an ITE SRE pathway in addition to post-qualification pathways for in-service teachers.

Initial Teaching Training Module in Australia: Teaching sexuality in the middle years.

Provided by education researchers at Deakin University

Duration: 7 days

Content:

- Setting the context: inclusivity, safe classrooms, current research, pedagogies ‘taster’, sex, sexuality and gender as lens for teaching about sexuality education
- Discourses in sexuality education: Current discourses for SRE and implications, using discourse analysis to teach, pedagogies for puberty and reproduction.
- Frameworks and policies: best practice frameworks/policies/planning, teaching about gender and sexuality.
- Gender and sexuality: diversity and inclusion, heteronormativity and inclusive practice
- Dealing with challenges: Gender and power, Gender-based violence/consent, Pornography
- Bringing it together: sex positive approaches, communication/respectful relationships, whole school approaches

Assessment: Micro teaching assessment

Source: Personal communication with Dr. Debbie Ollis, also see Ollis (2015)

ii) Training in-service teachers through a national professional development programme

Research suggests that in-service specialist SRE training can bring an increase in knowledge and confidence to teachers who have not received any formal education in SRE (Walker et al 2003, Wight and Buston 2003). There is some suggestion that there may be limitations to what can be achieved however, with one evaluation suggesting that teachers respond very well to elements of training that meet educator expectations around increasing knowledge and confidence and much less to theories and practices that challenge them to think or act differently in the classroom (Wight and Buston 2003).

There has never been a certified national professional development programme for in-service teachers to support SRE or PSE in Wales. In England the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department of Health funded a certificated national programme of PSHE Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for primary and secondary teachers and for school nurses between 2004 and 2010. Evidence from this case study (see below) suggests that the successful take up of the national training programme depended upon the programme being publically funded and the subject having equal status to other curriculum areas (HoCESC 2015). This evidence is supported by wider research which suggests that a lack of time, funding and belief in the low-priority of SRE / health and wellbeing contributes

towards low take up of available teacher training and development programmes (Formby et al 2011, Dewhirst et al 2014).

The National PSHE CPD Programme: a case study from England

Provided by Babcock 4S in partnership with the University of Roehampton and the Sex Education Forum.

Duration: 3 days

Content:

- the theory and concepts underpinning PSHE and its specialist areas
- guidance and appropriate laws which support and impact upon PSHE
- assessment and evaluation in PSHE
- being a reflective practitioner
- inclusion and equalities
- normative education

Assessment: a 3,000-3,500 word assignment, a reflective lesson plan, a scheme of work and a lesson observation.

Source: <https://www.babcock-education.co.uk/4S/PSHE-CPD>

In England the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department of Health funded a certificated national programme of PSHE Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for primary and secondary teachers and for school nurses between 2004 and 2010. The course was free to participants, and was later expanded to include teaching assistants, youth workers, fire safety officers and police community liaison officers. The Government’s intention in 2004 was for there to be a certificated PSHE teacher in every secondary school by 2006 and in 2009 the government announced its (later unsuccessful) intention to make SRE compulsory in all schools.

Funding for the CPD programme was withdrawn in 2010 but the programme is still provided by Babcock 4S in partnership with the University of Roehampton, at a cost of £700 to participants for a three-day course. Data submitted to the DfE shows that the move towards a market based model and the decision not to make PSHE statutory in England, as was anticipated, affected the number of participants completing the training. For example, there were 1,937 registrations in 2009-2010, dropping to 334 in 2010-2011. Numbers have remained low and falling (see Table 1).

Table 1: Participation figures for the National PSHE CPD Programme.

Source: Life lessons: PSHE and SRE in schools, House of Commons Education Committee, 2015.

Year	Registrations	Completions
2007-08	1,723	1,356
2008-09	1,471	978
2009-10	1,937	1,331
2010-11	334	282
2011-12	202	170
2012-13	175	145
2013-14	175	141

iii) Specialist training professional development programmes

As noted above, a range of professionals and young people are involved in SRE provision, including peer educators, health professionals, youth workers and educators from specialist agencies. We know very little about what training is currently being provided for educators working for specialist organisations and community services in Wales and whether this is meeting current need. We do know that there are a number of existing training programmes in Wales which need to be considered when mapping current practices and building future training pathways (see case study X below).

Across the UK, specialist SRE training is provided by a range of third sector, public sector and private organisations offering both face to face and online training. There is limited research on the efficacy of short professional training courses in SRE, with most research focussing on more intensive professional development programmes as discussed above. One recent evaluation of series of anti- homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HB&T) bullying programmes funded by the UK government was able to compare the effectiveness of face-to-face and online professional training programmes (Mitchell et al. 2016). The evaluation found that whilst some aspects of online training were welcomed by school staff, online training could not be regarded as an appropriate substitute for face-to-face work. Staff were found to prefer face-to-face training for three main reasons:

- * They had a key role in challenging HB&T bullying at their school, which required a greater depth of understanding than online training could offer.
- * They welcomed the more direct input from the trainer during face-to-face training and the opportunity to ask questions there and then;
- * They had benefitted from interacting with other staff during the training and hearing about the work other schools had implemented. (*ibid*, p.66).

There were also significant technical problems with the roll-out of online training across different initiatives, although when these were overcome organisations were able to provide training that school staff found useful. In particular online training was welcomed by staff who were less directly involved in challenging HBT bullying on a day-to-day basis and where they had difficulties being released from teaching. In these situations the online training helped them develop a basic understanding in 'manageable chunks' (*ibid*). Staff also reported that they liked the interactive features of online training, the use of video stories and their knowledge being tested.' (*ibid*).

Providing Sexual Health Education for Children and Young People (CYP) in Wales - Level 3.

Purpose and Aim:

To equip the workforce with the knowledge and skills to facilitate sex and relationship education for children and young people.

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The learner will:	The learner can:
1. Know legislation and policy for	1.1 Identify local and national (Welsh Government)

<p>providing sexual health education and advice in Wales.</p>	<p>policies and standards for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advice and guidance for sexually active children and young people (CYP) • sexual exploitation risk assessment framework (SERAF) • child protection • sex and relationships education (SRE). <p>1.2 Outline current legislation relating to sex and relationships, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNCRC • the Fraser guidelines • confidentiality and disclosure • consent.
<p>2. Know the aims and purpose of the Wales condom distribution scheme.</p>	<p>2.1 Explain the Wales condom distribution scheme.</p> <p>2.2 Outline the minimum standards of the Wales condom distribution scheme in one setting to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of the scheme • monitoring of registrations in the scheme • delivery of the scheme • publicity and promotion of the service • training requirements for the scheme.
<p>3. Know how to communicate with CYP about sexual health.</p>	<p>3.1 Explain how to communicate sexual health messages to CYP using the condom distribution scheme, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one to one consultations with CYP • group work • respecting cultural identity • supporting language preference • active listening skills • strategies for overcoming embarrassment • anti-discriminatory practice.
<p>4. Understand human sexual development.</p>	<p>4.1 Describe male and female sexual development.</p> <p>4.2 Describe how emotions are affected by the changes during sexual development.</p>
<p>5. Understand attitudes towards sex in society.</p>	<p>5.1 Analyse attitudes towards sex in society.</p>
<p>6. Understand safer sex.</p>	<p>6.1 Identify myths about contraception and sexually transmitted infections (STI's).</p> <p>6.2 Define safer sex.</p> <p>6.3 Describe how alcohol and substance misuse may lead to unsafe sex.</p> <p>6.4 Describe a range of sexually transmitted infections.</p>
<p>7. Understand contraception.</p>	<p>7.1 Describe methods of contraception.</p> <p>7.2 Identify local services young people can access</p>

	for advice, guidance and contraception support.
8. Know how to deliver a sex and relationships (SRE) workshop.	8.1 Plan a SRE workshop .
9. Be able to deliver an SRE workshop.	9.1 Lead a SRE for CYP. 9.2 Evaluate personal practice in delivering SRE.
Assessment Methods:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical demonstration 	

iv) Peer education programmes

Peer education and peer-mentoring programmes are one way in which SRE is currently provided in schools, as part of a whole school approach (see case study below).

Peer Education: healthy relationships and domestic abuse

Ty Hafan Spectrum Project supported a group of Year 12 students in offering a series of workshops on the topic of 'Bullying at Home' as a vehicle to introducing Year 7 pupils to the concept of domestic abuse. A facilitator from the Spectrum Project worked with the sixth form students to devise a range of fun activities during which the younger students were able to explore aspects of the topic as well as signposting to support agencies. The Spectrum Project staff worked closely with the sixth formers over a series of weeks: Preparation for the event, held to coincide with National White Ribbon Day, included training on how to close down and refer potential disclosures. The evaluation of the event invited the students to reflect on their attitudes and feelings regarding abuse.

Source: Rosalyn Evans, panel member, Ty Hafan Spectrum Project.

Research suggests that peer education SRE programmes may be more successful at modifying norms than teacher-led programmes, but less successful at improving knowledge (Mellanby et al., 2001). Evaluation of RIPPLE – a peer education programme in which year 12 pupils were trained in participatory methods to work with year 9 pupils on relationships, STIs and contraception – found that peer led sessions were most effective when they were participatory and skills-based (Wight 2011). Peer-educators were less effective than teachers at engaging young people at greatest sexual risk (Oakley et al., 2006) and there was some evidence that the lack of robust discipline in peer-education sessions was positively experienced by boys but at the cost of girls' sense of comfort and safety (Strange et al., 2003).

There is emerging evidence from innovative 'near-peer' projects that involve training university students to work with young people in local schools, often using a 1:1 ratio of peer educator: young person (University of Exeter / University of Sussex). This suggests that near peers are able to establish safe, trusting and bounded relationships within which empowering and transformative SRE can take place (Gordon and Gere 2016, see also Malson, Phillips and Halliwell 2017). These projects draw on education, performance and social theory to inform the development of participatory and creative pedagogies. Like all practitioners offering

SRE, near-peer educators require high quality training and support. An example of one near peer training programme is provided below.

It is important to note that input from peer and near-peer education programmes and external agencies should only be included as part of a comprehensive whole school approach to SRE. This is to ensure that learning from near-peer/peer led programmes or external agencies is reinforced and embedded across the school curriculum, policy structure and pastoral support programme. This work will need to be co-ordinated by the SRE lead within each school, who has the training, protected hours and access to resources to develop and maintain a whole school approach to SRE (see below).

Neer-peer Education: Role Models Project

A near-peer education elective at University of Sussex. University students are trained to facilitate workshops with local secondary school students. The workshops have a 1:1 ratio of peer educator: young person and emphasise/encourage critical engagement and open discussion about personal, social and political issues.

Twelve week educator training programme:

Week one: Communication, active listening and participatory facilitation skills. Exploring personal values, skills, strengths and experience. Theory around practical social pedagogy.

Week two: Introduction to theme (mental health OR sex and relationships), self-reflection, theory around pedagogic approaches, developing a framework.

Week three: What makes a good role model - with focus on genuineness, vulnerability, and using personal stories. Theory around emotional intelligence.

Week four. Working with young people - behaviour, practice and theory on reflective practice (looking at group work and 1-1).

Week five: Child protection training, disclosure training and establishing boundaries. Observation and listening to students at secondary school.

Week six: Theory on citizenship and social agency. Begin workshop development.

Weeks seven - twelve: Workshop development sessions and delivery in secondary schools.

Assessment: The first term leads to a 2,000 word reflective portfolio and the second to a small group presentation – each worth 15 credits.

More information:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dixmEkOsLHo&feature=youtu.be>
(2017)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0hTZQr0mol> (2015)

Evidence: personal communication with Natasha Mansley, Role Models Project Coordinator at University of Sussex.

c. Leadership, monitoring and support

i) A dedicated SRE specialist school lead with protected hours.

Recommendation 7: All schools should have a specialist trained SRE lead with access to resources and guidance to co-ordinate a rights and gender-equity based curriculum. Hours for delivery across the key stages should be equitable with other curriculum subjects. This role should involve embedding SRE in a whole school approach.

The panel recommends that every school, including faith schools, has a dedicated SRE lead with protected hours and access to resources and guidance to co-ordinate a whole school approach to SRE. This role will involve researching and promoting emerging, promising and best practice, facilitating peer to peer training / mentoring alongside collaborating with specialist organisations and incorporating pupil voice into a high quality SRE offer as part of a whole school approach.

The SRE lead will require specialist training, guidance and support. A good support system is invaluable for SRE practitioners and essential for SRE leads; 'it is the nature of the work that interesting and challenging new situations constantly arise and it is healthy to seek support and guidance from colleagues and line managers.' (FPA and Public Health Wales 2012 p.19). The panel recommends that this support is provided by:

- Strong leadership support within schools
- A local authority lead, working within the consortia
- A national SRE research, practice and training Network and SRE Hwb zone

Each of these support mechanisms is further explored below. Practitioners may also benefit from the support of professional supervision to ensure they are able to respond professionally and effectively to challenging and evolving sensitive issues and be supported by a skilled supervisor so that they can regularly reflect upon and evaluate their practice.

Evidence from Walker, Green, and Tilford (2003, p. 325) suggests that where whole school teams are involved in professional development for SRE, coordinators feel less isolated and the team's overall capacity for high-quality SRE is improved. Similarly evaluation of a sexual assault prevention programme in Australia found that the programme was most effective when *all* teaching and support staff in a school receive specialised training and resources (Flood et al. 2009, Ollis and Harrison 2016). The introduction of specialist trained SRE leads in each school will therefore

need to be accompanied by cross school training and support that includes senior leaders and school governors as part of a whole school approach.

Research suggests that senior managers and school governors can have a powerful influence on the SRE provision. In some instances school leaders can obstruct high quality SRE, often due to perceived concerns about parental reactions or 'outdated notions of childhood innocence' (Halstead and Reiss 2003: p, 52, see also Mason 2010). Case study research on two rural primary schools in England for example found that practitioners who were experienced and confident in teaching SRE, were inhibited by the views of their Head Teachers.

'... we did not want to get into trouble with the head. We did the bare minimum. We did not want to say anything wrong.' (Primary School Teacher, Mason :167).

A recent pilot of initiatives that aimed to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in UK Schools included examples of training for school governors and senior leaders (Mitchell et al. 2016). The evaluation found that while some governors and SLT members were already committed to tackling HB&T bullying in their school, the training significantly changed the views of others. For example, one governor reported that others at his training had initially questioned whether discussing HB&T bullying was age-appropriate in primary schools. By the end of the training one delegate who had queried this left the training asking what more he could do to help on the issue. Further junior staff who had attended training alongside governors or SLT members described how the presence of senior staff suggested they were 'on board' with attempts to tackle HB&T bullying and that it was acceptable for them to challenge HB&T bullying at their schools. Conversely, where SLT members missed training, this was felt by junior staff to convey a lack of support.

It is essential therefore that school leaders, including governors, are involved in the development of the SRE curriculum at the school and that leaders are able to access appropriate training to enable this to happen effectively (see case study below). Schools will be able to access support to enhance their SRE provision from specialist providers as well as the national advisor for violence against girls and women and other forms of gender based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The Importance of Leadership in Implementing Whole-School Initiatives - 'Building Positive Relationships' at Mountain Ash Comprehensive School

At Mountain Ash Comprehensive School (MACS) we have implemented a whole-school approach to developing positive, healthy relationships with the aim of improving the wellbeing of pupils and staff and raising standards across the school.

About the school: MACS is an 11-18 co-educational community school . There are currently 892 pupils on roll which represents a significant increase following a

number of years of declining pupil numbers. Pupils come from the town of Mountain Ash and the adjacent villages in the lower Cynon Valley. The area is typical of ex mining communities and is economically and socially disadvantaged. Around 34% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, this is amongst the highest in Wales and is double the national average. Although the area is clearly economically disadvantaged it is a proud community which is working hard on regeneration. Within this social and economic context, pupils face a number of barriers to achieving their full potential. With this in mind, we believe that building positive, healthy relationships and wellbeing are the key to success. A lot has been accomplished in a short space of time at MACS.

Setting up a positive relationships board: In December 2016 we invited Mrs Siriol Burford, a positive relationships expert with proven success in this field, to school to advise us on the best way forward. Following this meeting we established a 'Positive Relationships Board' (PRB) consisting of members of staff from several departments including English, the Welsh Baccalaureate, Drama and PSE, PE, Religious Studies and the school's ALN co-ordinator and Rights Respecting School's co-ordinator.

Implementing a well-being Survey: Members of PRB carried out an audit of provision for positive relationships and developed a number of whole-school action points. At the same time all KS3 and KS4 pupils completed a wellbeing survey to identify further priorities and all of these were incorporated into an action plan for developing positive, healthy relationships across the school.

A youth-led holistic approach: The work of the PRB has been instrumental in pushing forward the positive relationships agenda at MACS. A number of key groups have been established to deliver this agenda, including 'WAM' - We are More, Men of Macs/Meibion Macs male voice choir and KARM, a group of year 12 girls who offer a 'drop-in' advice and counselling service for younger pupils. The WAM group was established to challenge gender stereotypes and to motivate girls to overcome barriers to success. We are particularly proud of two of our WAM ambassadors who were selected to represent Wales at a European Forum to promote healthy relationships in Paris in July 2017. At this forum one of our ambassadors was selected to represent Europe at a conference in Helsinki in September 2017, accompanied by the Children's Commissioner for Wales, Sally Holland.

Rights and Gender and Sexual Equity: A vast amount of work has also been carried in other areas. MACS has recently achieved Level 1 of the Rights Respecting Schools Award, the first school in Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT) to do so, in recognition of our work to promote the UN charter on children's rights. The PE department has tackled gender stereotypes in PE through the introduction of girls' rugby and Year 12 pupils have delivered sessions to Year 10 pupils on LGBT in sport in one of our whole-school PSE days. In English, KS4 pupils have been examining gender issues in literature and Year 9 pupils have recently participated in the prestigious 'First Give' programme where they competed with each other to gain money for their group's chosen charity. The winning group have been invited to a national 'First Give' event at the O2 arena in October 2017. During the autumn term this year, MACS pupils will also be working with pupils from Ysgol Gyfun Plasmawr in Cardiff to create a programme of activities to promote positive relationships. This

will involve the creation of bilingual resources and a drama workshop to be delivered at both schools.

A whole school approach: In addition to the work of the PRB, opportunities to challenge stereotypes and foster respect are being incorporated across the whole-school and form key elements of our school improvement plan, departmental schemes of work, whole school assemblies and the whole-school PSE programme. We have also re-written our whole-school behaviour policy to focus on positive reinforcement. In short, building positive, healthy relationships is at the heart of everything we do as a school.

We are still at the start of our journey but already we have seen a marked improvement in pupils' behaviour and attitude to learning. Pupils are more tolerant of each other and relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are extremely positive. Fixed-term exclusions have decreased and the number of achievement points is far exceeding behaviour points for the first time ever. In the long-term we expect to see a sustained improvement in pupils' behaviour, attendance, attitude to learning and academic progress.

Source: Siriol Burford, Panel Member and Mountain Ash Comprehensive PRB.

ii) A dedicated SRE local authority lead working with Consortia

Recommendation 8: Each Local Authority, working with Consortia, should have a dedicated SRE lead to provide external support, co-ordinate CPD and ensure consistency and quality recognising that specialist external organisations of educationally trained providers, including FE and HE sector, can enhance SRE curriculum content and its implementation in a whole school approach.

SRE cannot be provided by school staff alone (see case study below). There are large numbers of in-service teachers in need of SRE training. It will also take time before any changes made to ITT will have a large scale impact on the capacity of the teaching profession to offer high quality SRE as set out above. Collaborating with external agencies that can bring expertise, skills and effective educational approaches to SRE, is not only valued by young people and school staff (Estyn 2017), but vital in the short and long term.

Further, as noted in the recent Estyn review of healthy relationship education (2017) the health and youth work professions can bring specialist knowledge, skills and effective educational approaches to SRE school-based which is valued by young people and school staff (Pound et al. 2016, Alldred in press).

Schools are crying out for youth workers to do sexual health work, because they don't feel they have the right experience or training to do it themselves and they acknowledge it's a better approach that youth workers take.... [Our approach is] More informal, more fun, using different tools, more games and more input from young people. More responsive. (Youth worker, in Alldred in press)

A review of preventative work in schools and other educational settings in Wales to address domestic abuse (National Foundation for Educational Research, 2011) concluded that specialist agencies had an important role in schools in raising awareness of domestic abuse and signposting pupils to sources of help and support. However, the report noted that too often the provision in schools for teaching about domestic abuse was one of a themed day, a stand-alone lesson or small block of sessions. As a result, schools do not deliver essential messages often enough to ensure that students understand them fully (*ibid*). The 2010 Welsh SRE guidance makes it clear that ‘the most effective SRE programmes are found in those schools who work cooperatively with external agencies’ (4.9, p.27) and that it is the responsibility of the school to manage the SRE programme and to plan carefully the involvement of community partners in the delivery of lessons.’ (Welsh Assembly Government, 2010: 4.9, p.27).

To support schools to manage the involvement of community partners the panel recommends that each local authority has a dedicated SRE lead, supported by the consortia and the national research, training and practice network.

BAWSO’s school engagement work on female genital mutilation (FGM)

Bawso is an all Wales accredited support provider, delivering specialist services to people from Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) backgrounds who are affected by domestic abuse and other forms of abuse, including female genital mutilation, forced marriage, human trafficking and prostitution. Bawso also engages with education settings around preventative work, including both secular and religious primary schools and high schools.

Below is an example of some of the partnership work with Fitzalan High School in Cardiff:

1. Workshop for teachers

The aim of the workshop was to raise awareness of FGM and discuss how teachers could provide support to students. The workshop aimed to enable teachers to identify the risk of FGM amongst pupils in a safe way. Content of the workshop included in-depth knowledge about FGM including the background of the practice, types of FGM and the health impact, how to spot the signs of students at risk and how to deal with the situation. The workshop also discussed ideas about how teachers and pupils can work together to promote FGM awareness in their school.

2. Awareness session with pupils at Fitzalan

Bawso delivered 5 sessions to 130 pupils in year 9. The sessions consisted of a presentation, workshop and ideas generator of how young people can raise awareness about FGM and help to end the practice. The presentation content included information of FGM and the background of the practice, where it is practiced, the types of FGM, FGM and the law, FGM and human rights and how young people can get involved in awareness raising to end the practice. The workshops explored how to identify signs of a friend who might be at risk, how to deal with the situation and who to speak to or to whom they could go to for access to support and advice. At the end of the session, Bawso played a video about a young

people's group working on a drama project to raise awareness of FGM and asked the pupils to sing a song together about fighting against FGM.

Evidence: Estyn (2017) A Review of Healthy Relationships Education. Page 13
<https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/review-healthy-relationships-education>

The role of the local authority lead will be to provide external support, co-ordinate training and professional development opportunities and ensure the consistency and quality of input from local community partners that can support schools to embed SRE in a whole school approach²⁶. In some local authorities there are already strong local SRE networks that provide local training and support. Neath Port Talbot for example has established a local authority working group that brings together professionals from schools, youth services and colleges, the local school health nursing team and the local health schools co-ordinators (Presentation by Corrine Fry, Panel Member). The working group has a role in reviewing the quality of local SRE provision and sexual health services for young people, providing specialist training, carrying out local consultations with young people and practitioners and establishing a local action plan with an area wide approach to SRE.

Limited information is currently available as to how many local authority areas in Wales have similar networks and what training, monitoring and support they are currently providing. Evidence submitted to the Department for Education (England)'s enquiry into PSHE noted that there was a link between levels of assistance from local authority advisers and the take up of CPD. In Bristol for example, the support of local authority advisers had led to 95% of secondary schools and 83% of primary schools having at least one trained teacher in SRE / PSHE (HoC 2015).

iii) Monitoring and quality improvement: a whole school approach

As part of a whole school approach to SRE schools will need to regularly review, reflect and revise the SRE curriculum (see Figure 8 below). This will involve self reflection by teaching and support staff and collecting information from children, young people, parents / carers and the wider community about the programme. There are a number of evaluation and reflective practice toolkits (<http://rse.fpv.org.au/the-program/review-reflect-and-revise/>, <http://www.dosreforschools.com>) available to support schools to collect information and involve the school and wider community in evaluating and reflecting on the SRE curriculum. Schools will also be able to draw on support from local authority SRE leads, the consortia and the national SRE network hwb to review, evaluate and revise their SRE programmes and implementation of the whole school approach.

²⁶ Guidance is available from the Sex Education Forum on the use of external visitors in schools:

http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/media/3458/external_visitors_and_SRE_10.pdf

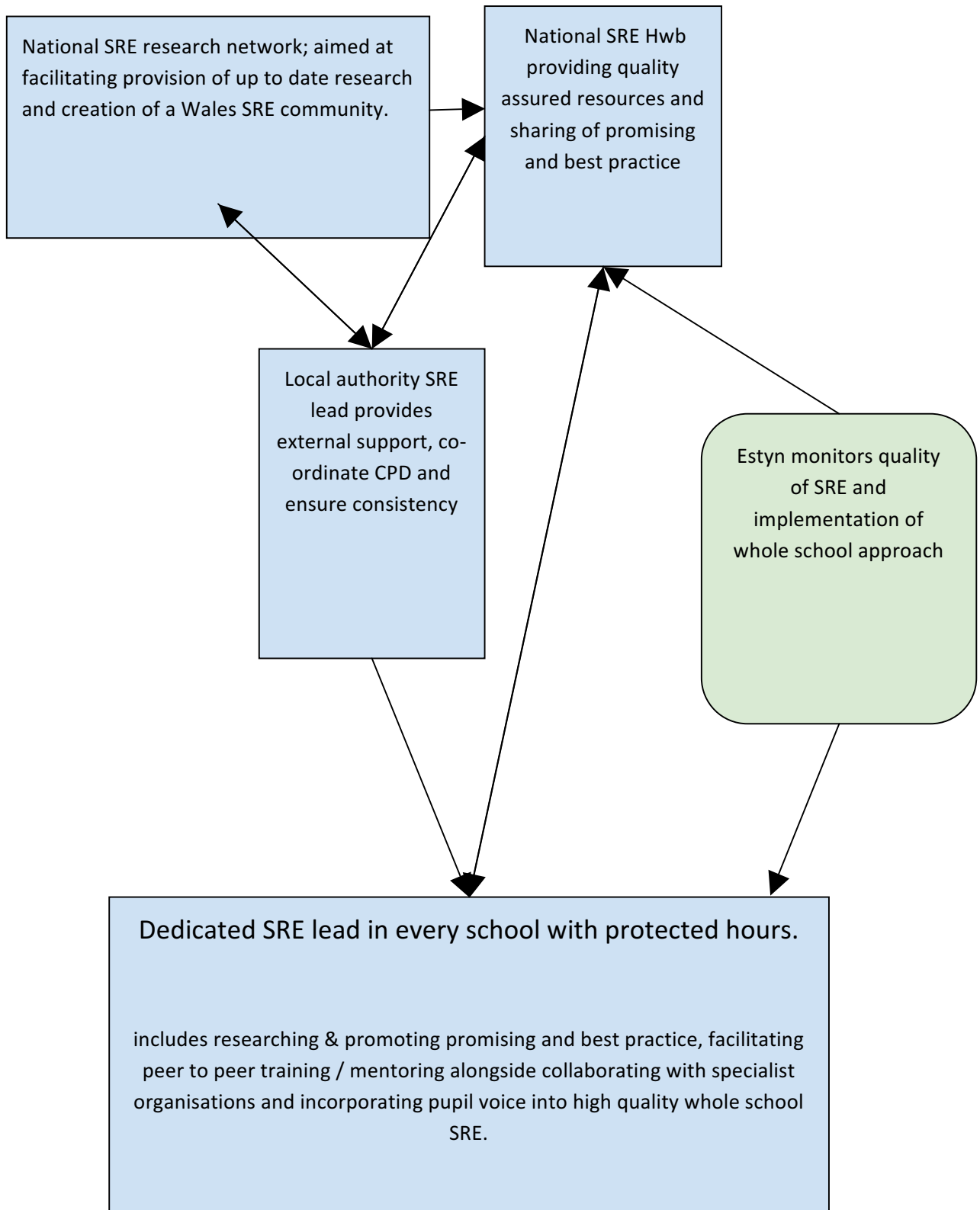


Figure 7: Leadership, monitoring, quality improvement and support

iv) Estyn's role in effectively monitoring the quality of SRE provision and use of whole school approach

The panel also recommends that Estyn play a key role in inspecting the SRE curriculum, including the effective use of the whole school approach, as part of new inspection arrangements which will be developed to align to the new curriculum. Estyn staff will require training to ensure that they are able to effectively monitor and report the quality of SRE provision.

Recommendation 9: For Estyn to build on recent changes to the inspection framework to consider the inspection of SRE as part of aligning new inspection arrangements to the new curriculum.

The panel also note that Estyn's reviews of Healthy Relationships Education (2017) and Sex and Relationships Education (2007) have provided the panel with a valuable overview of SRE provision in Wales. It is recommended that Estyn provide a bi-annual report on SRE to support its effective implementation in the initial stages. The panel recognises that this will not be required for other areas of the curriculum but that it may be necessary to provide extra scrutiny to SRE provision as it will be a new area of the curriculum for some schools and an area of significant change and development for some others.

Figure 8: Relationship and Sexuality Education: A Whole School Approach. Family Planning Victoria



d) An SRE research, practice and training network and SRE Hwb zone

There are a wealth of resources available online and offline to support schools to provide high quality SRE. The challenge for schools is that it can be time-consuming to identify appropriate resources and difficult, without the necessary expertise, to judge what counts as a good quality resource. As we have seen above this can lead to feelings of reluctance, resentment and anxiety among teachers with regards to the planning and provision of SRE. It also means that many excellent resources remain unused as schools are unaware of their existence or lack the resources, confidence and expertise to put programmes into place. The recent Estyn review (2017) found that most school leaders are not aware of Welsh Government guidance and toolkits to support healthy relationships education and implement a whole-school approach to preventing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. More generally the review found that ‘there are too many guidance documents for schools outlining aspects of personal social education, sex and relationships education and equality and diversity’ (Estyn 2017; 6).

To support schools with the challenge of staying up-to-date and accessing high quality resources and expertise, the panel recommends that the Welsh Government establish an SRE Hwb zone and SRE research, practice and training network.

Recommendation 11: Welsh Government to establish a SRE Hwb Zone to support high quality SRE in school and to service a SRE research, practice and training network, aimed at facilitating provision of up to date research and training opportunities and creation of a Wales SRE community of practice.

The Sexuality and Relationship Education Hwb zone would be an interactive online space where educators, researchers, schools and other organisations could access up-to-date guidance, resources and ideas and share news and examples of emerging, promising and best practice. This would be similar in format to the successful Welsh Government supported Online Safety Zone <https://hwb.gov.wales/onlinesafety> and which could be supported by national research, practice and training network.

A key function of SRE research, practice and training network would be to work with research partners to facilitate up to date research for the Welsh SRE community. As noted in part two, there are a number of gaps in the research literature that limit knowledge of existing provision, experience and what works well in Wales. This includes a lack of robust quantitative and qualitative research on:

- What SRE is currently provided in Welsh schools, how it is delivered, in what contexts and with what aims / objectives.
- The quality of the SRE experience for students and teachers.
In particular there is a lack of research on SRE provision and quality in faith schools; early years; primary schools; special schools and mainstream schools for students with disabilities.

- What professional training is currently delivered for pre-service and post-service teachers.
- The quality of professional training for in-service and post-service teachers, health professionals and community workers involved in delivering SRE.
- What children, young people, parents, carers and wider communities in Wales think about school-based SRE provision.

The role of the network would be to address these gaps and build upon the work of the expert panel in bringing together, scrutinising and showcasing emerging, promising and best practice. The network should also look to connect with the many formal and informal support networks available to SRE practitioners in Wales who work in community settings such as the *All Wales Sexual Health Network*, which provides support to sexual health practitioners across Wales (FPA and Public Health Wales, 2012).

In the short term the network will play a vital role in supporting schools and local authority leads to identify high quality resources and training opportunities and to support with responding to challenges as the SRE curriculum is developed and implemented. Currently researchers in Wales support the delivery of SRE in a number of ways. Here are some existing examples that could be included in the remit of the research network:

- A teacher contacts an academic researcher for advice on an SRE session they are going to deliver (e.g. consent, abusive 'sexting', LGBTQ+ relationships, feminism)
- Academic researchers and Masters and PhD students help facilitate workshops at a feeder primary school transitions day, working alongside teachers, students and specialist providers (see also Malson, Phillips and Halliwell 2017)
- University organises a conference where teachers can learn about research methods to enable them to support students to carry out independent research projects as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate and /or to have greater confidence in analysing and interpreting data collected using wellbeing surveys / student questionnaires.
- University co-hosts and co-produces SRE related events, with practitioners and third sector agencies.

Co-producing a Gender Well-being and Healthy Relationships PSE Transitions day

GIRLS & BOYS SPEAK OUT
A conference for children and teachers on gender well-being and healthy relationships

FRIDAY 11TH JULY
9.30-3.30
UNIVERSITY HALL
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES,
CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

Practitioners places are limited. To find out more and reserve your place contact: D.Watson@cd.ac.uk

Background: This one-day event drew upon the findings of a Welsh research project that explored what pre-teen (age 10-12) children had to say about growing up as ‘girls’ and ‘boys’ in the 21st Century. One of the key findings was how angry children felt about having live in a sexist and sexualised peer culture and society. Many children said that they wished they could talk more freely about the pressures that they were facing at age 10 and 11 and

not just talking or learning about what might happen in the future. This was especially the case in relation to early relationship cultures and body image.

Aim: The day was specifically designed to provide a platform, via a series of creative and participatory workshops, which enabled children to have *their say* and learn what other children think about gender inequalities and gender stereotypes, including gender-based and sexual bullying, friendships and relationships in school, in communities and online.

An important outcome of the day was to bridge the silence between children's worlds, and between student-children and teacher-adult worlds. It was also a prime opportunity to experiment with co-producing and delivering a PSE transitions day, with academics, teachers, young people and artists.

Structuring the day

All the children from the feeder primary schools interacted with each other through a series of creative and participatory workshops. Some of these were peer-led by the host secondary school's feminist and anti-homophobia youth groups, and others were run by university students and artists with an interest and expertise in gender equalities and sexualities education. While the children participated in their workshops, their primary school teachers participated in a separate inset-style workshop on 'Challenging Gender Stereotypes in Primary Schools'.

The day began students from the host secondary school, Ysgol Plasmawr, delivering presentations, poems and a short drama inspired by the key findings from the 'Girls and Boys Speak Out' research. At the end of the day students were reunited with their teachers and shared their creations, including their "Wall of Thoughts" of what they would like to change (see attached image) in the walk-about, read and watch session.

FOR students

Body Talk (a movement workshop with choreographer, Jen Anghared, Canolfan a Theatr Soar)

This workshop invited children to explore how the body communicates through movement in everyday routines. With music, and based around the theme, "in their shoes", children (in small groups) had the opportunity to experiment with micro movements they see around them in their peer cultures. They could also incorporate 'gendered' objects (e.g. heeled shoes, scarves, lipsticks, combs, mirrors, baseball caps) into their practice.

Staying safe and having fun online (Prof Andy Phippen, University of Plymouth)

This workshop invited children to talk about the risk and opportunities of online cultures and social media.

Just good friends?: a peer-led PSE lesson on relationship cultures (with DIGON and Marc Lewis, Drama Teacher, Ysgol Plasmawr)

Based upon the 'just good friends' drama performed in the morning session, children were encouraged to explore the gendered dynamics of mixed and single-sex friendships and the complexity of young relationship cultures.

Crushing corporate gender stereotypes (Lego workshop on gender stereotypes in the media with NEWID-FEM and Victoria Edwards, Cardiff University).

Children brainstormed all the ways in which the media creates and challenges gender stereotypes. They then made their own 'gender stereotype smashing machines' with lego and post-its.

Camping Out (Making gender feel-good shelters in a tent decorating workshop with Catt Turney and Dr. Honor Young)

Children decorate small pop-up tents with words and pictures of 'when a body worries' and 'when a body feels good'.

FOR Teachers

Challenging Gender Stereotyping in Schools (Mark Jennett, Education Consultant, and Co-ordinator of 'Breaking the Mould'²⁷ project)

Recommendation 10: Welsh Government to consider establishing a SRE excellence mark to highlight exemplary whole school approaches to gender equality and equity and Sexuality and Relationships Education.

In the longer term the network will have a role in ensuring that local authorities and schools are able to develop and share emerging, promising and best practice and stay up to date with findings from emerging research. This will include establishing an SRE excellence mark that highlights exemplary whole school projects to, for example, gender equity and equality and SRE (e.g. addressing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence)

Here the network can build on existing initiatives, such as the Public Health Network Cymru which supports all practitioners, organisations and sectors involved health promotion, health improvement and community health development initiatives in the fields of sexual health, nutrition and physical activity and mental health promotion. The scheme consists of a good practice database, quality mark, awards and provision of support. It rewards good practice and provides a systematic approach to sharing information about initiatives on the scheme in order to prevent duplication, enhance learning and enable decisions about what initiatives to adopt or develop (FPA and Public Health Wales p.40²⁸).

In the short and the long term the network will play a key role in enabling collaborative work between researchers and practitioners and across the different sectors that have an important role to play in providing school based SRE. As the many examples in this report testify, promising and best practice in SRE is rarely achieved without collaborations with specialist educators, specialist services, researchers and other collaborators (e.g. creative arts).

²⁷ <https://www.teachers.org.uk/educationandequalities/breakingthemould>

²⁸ <https://www.publichealthnetwork.cymru/en/topics/sexual-health/>



Summary of Recommendations

Key Area 1: Status and Definition

Recommendation 1: Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) should incorporate a name change from Sex and Relationships Education to Sexuality and Relationships Education. This new definition will draw upon the World Health Organisation's (WHO) definition of 'sexuality', with an emphasis on rights, health, equality and equity.

To make the Sexuality and Relationships Education (SRE) a statutory part of the new curriculum for all schools (age 3-16) and underpinned by the core principles in recommendation 2.

To develop new statutory guidance for Foundation Phase, Primary and Secondary Schools underpinned by the core principles in recommendation 2.

Key Area 2: Curriculum Content, Pedagogy and Assessment

Recommendation 2: SRE Curriculum should be guided by the following core principles and thematic areas with clear learning outcomes that can evolve to meet changing biological, social, cultural and technological issues and knowledge. Core principles include: Rights and Gender Equity-based; Creative and Curious; Empowering and Transformative; Experience-near and Co-produced; Holistic; Inclusive; Protective and Preventative

Recommendation 3: The SRE Curriculum should be engaging, relevant and developmentally appropriate with clear progression pathways for learning and experience.

Recommendation 4: Pioneer schools, supported by Welsh Government and specialist organisations should explore how the SRE element of the Health and Wellbeing AoLE can be embedded in a 'whole school approach'.

Recommendation 5: The Health and Wellbeing AoLE should have an equal status to other AoLEs. SRE should also have equal status to other areas within Health and Wellbeing and the wider AoLEs, including robust assessment arrangements that support pupil voice.

Key Area 3: Training and Standards

Recommendation 6: Welsh Government to establish a SRE professional development pathway, differentiated for stage of education, to be incorporated into ITE and professional learning courses.

This pathway would provide an opportunity to further progress their professional development and specialise in SRE, allowing scope for the workforce to achieve a Masters level SRE qualification.

Recommendation 7: All schools should have a specialist trained SRE lead with access to resources and guidance to co-ordinate a rights and gender-equity based curriculum. Hours for delivery across the key stages should be equitable with other curriculum subjects. This role should involve embedding SRE in a whole school approach.

Recommendation 8: Each Local Authority, working with Consortia, should have a dedicated SRE lead to provide external support, co-ordinate CPD and ensure consistency and quality recognising that specialist external organisations of educationally trained providers, including FE and HE sector, can enhance SRE curriculum content and its implementation in a whole school approach.

Recommendation 9: For Estyn to build on recent changes to the inspection framework to consider the inspection of SRE as part of aligning new inspection arrangements to the new curriculum.

Recommendation 10: Welsh Government to consider establishing a SRE excellence mark to highlight exemplary whole school approaches to gender equality and equity and SRE.

Key Area 4: Research and Support

Recommendation 11: Welsh Government to establish a SRE Hwb Zone to support high quality SRE in school and to service a SRE research, practice and training network, aimed at facilitating provision of up to date research and training opportunities and creation of a Wales SRE community of practice.

ANNEX 1 Terms of Reference

The panel were tasked to consider the following objectives, which provided the terms of reference for the group:

- ❖ To consider the core principles and key areas for ‘high quality²⁹’ comprehensive and inclusive Sex and Relationships Education.
- ❖ To identify examples of effective and innovative practice³⁰ for ‘high quality’ comprehensive and inclusive Sex and Relationships Education.
- ❖ To identify the barriers to effective and innovative practice for ‘high quality’ comprehensive and inclusive Sex and Relationships Education.
- ❖ To identify teaching and learning resources and training opportunities that support schools to create ‘high quality’ comprehensive and inclusive Sex and Relationships Education.
- ❖ To identify progression steps for schools to create ‘high quality’ comprehensive and inclusive Sex and Relationships Education.
- ❖ To identify effective ways for children and young people to inform the future SRE curriculum, as part of the Health and Wellbeing AoLE.
- ❖ To identify effective ways for education professionals to inform the future SRE curriculum, as part of the Health and Wellbeing AoLE.

Two additional objectives were also part of the terms of reference for the panel. Both have been explored by the panel and/or by the chair via dedicated agenda items in panel meetings or with the relevant civil servants outside of the panel meetings.

- ❖ To contribute to the development of the refreshed anti-bullying guidance (Respecting Others) – see Annex 6 in Renold and McGeeney 2017)
- ❖ To contribute to the development of the future Sex and Relationships Guidance.

If the expert panel are asked to continue their role to inform the development of the new SRE curriculum and guidance, then these items can continue to be addressed.

²⁹ “High-quality SRE, delivered as an integral component of a well-planned whole school PSE programme, contributes positively to learners’ well-being” (Welsh Government, ‘Sex and Relationships Guidance for Schools’, 2010, para 2.9, p.9)

³⁰ Practices include approaches (e.g. whole-school approach) and pedagogies (e.g. using the creative arts).

Alternatively a dedicated task and finish group for each item will be the most appropriate way forward.

ANNEX 2 Membership of the Sex and Relationships Expert Panel and External Consultation

Panel Membership

Siriol Burford	RCT / Health and Well-being consultant
Eleri Butler	Welsh Women's Aid
Mary Charles	Public Health Wales
Mwenya Chimba	BAWSO
Sam Clutton	Barnados Cymru
Rosalyn Evans	Hafan Cymru (The Spectrum Project)
Corinne Fry	Principle Youth Officers Group Wales
Ellen Jones	National Union of Students
Vivienne Laing ³¹	NSPCC Cymru
Paul Lewis	Office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales
Faith McCready	All Wales School Liaison Core Programme
Anthony Mulcahy	Estyn
Cressy Morgan	Health and Wellbeing lead (ERW Consortia)
Jan Pickles	National Safeguarding Board
Dr. Tamasine Preece	Brynterion Comprehensive School
Andrew White	Stonewall Cymru
Samantha Williams	Learning Disability Wales
David Wright	South West Grid for Learning (SWGFL)
Dr. Honor Young	Cardiff University (Schools Health Research Network)

Welsh Government

Heather Temple-Williams	Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Branch
Nia Griffiths	Curriculum Reform Health and Wellbeing lead
Lloyd Hopkin	Curriculum Reform Digital Competency Framework lead
David Sargent	Curriculum Division

Additional consultation/meetings with:

Lisa Drury-Lawson	Initial Teacher Education Training and Furlong implementation Branch
Ceri Dunstan	Terrence Higgins Trust
Mark Isherwood	Education Workforce Council
Rev Dr Philip Manghan	Catholic Education Service, Adviser for Wales
Kate Murray	Support for Learners Division
Gemma Nye	Initial Teacher Education Training and Furlong implementation Branch
Dr. Debbie Ollis	Deaken University, Melbourne, Australia.

³¹ Ruth Mullineux represented NSPCC in Vivienne Laing's absence.

Averil Petley
Fr Bernard Sixtus

Support for Learners Division
Cardiff Archdiocesan Director of RE

ANNEX 3 Sex and Relationship Expert Panel: Process and Meeting Agendas

The group organised the meetings with clear themes. The chair provided accompanying research evidence where appropriate. Internal discussions were populated and enriched by invited presentations from panel members, and where possible teachers, students, academics and service providers. The chair and David Sargent (Welsh Government) also attended the RSE's Healthy Sexuality Development symposium to connect with the most up to date research and practice in the SRE field³².

Panel membership was reviewed throughout, with new members joining from the first panel meeting (see Annex 2 for full panel membership and other individuals consulted during the course of the review).

Panel Meeting Overview

Meeting 1 Introductory Meeting

Meeting 2 Mapping Effective Practices for comprehensive and inclusive, whole-school approaches to SRE (2): panel members' expertise and experience

Meeting 3 Mapping Effective Practices for comprehensive and inclusive, whole-school approaches to SRE (2): front-line expertise and experience from teachers and students.

Meeting 4 Exploring Creative and Cross-Curricular approaches for holistic and inclusive Sexualities and Relationships Education

Meeting 5 Draft Final Report and Recommendations

Meeting 1 – 30 March 2017

Healthy Relationships Expert Panel

30 March 2017

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions

2. Where are we at?

³² <http://www.rsehub.org.uk/news/2017/april/healthy-sexual-development-symposium/>

- a. Current policy status of Sex and Relationships Education in Wales
- b. Current developments of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act, as it relates to children and young people
- c. Estyn thematic Review of Sex and Relationships and Changes to Inspection criteria update
- d. Current developments of Health and Well-being core area of learning and experience.
- e. Connected policy contexts (Respecting Others, Safeguarding, UNCRC, Future Generations and Well-being Act)

3. Imagining a future Healthy Relationships Education for Wales:

TASK: Please come prepared to share your vision of what a future healthy relationships education might look like.

4. Discuss and confirm remit for the group

5. Additional Members

6. Dates of next meetings and location

7. AOB

Meeting 2 – 15 May 2017

Mapping Effective Practices for comprehensive and inclusive, whole-school approaches to SRE: panel members' expertise and experience.

Agenda:

9.00 – 11.00

- 1. Welcome and introductions to new panel members**
- 2. Minutes of next meeting (to follow)**
- 3. Overview of agreed remit and the rationale for focus and organisation of future sessions.**

Reading:

- Short Section on 'comprehensive', 'inclusive' and 'high quality' SRE (Brook, PSHE, Sex Education Forum 2015, 2 pages),
- Short Section from *Emerging evidence, lessons and practice in comprehensive sexuality education: a global review* (UNESCO 2015, 2 pages)

4. SRE in Wales: What do/n't we know?

Presentation: Rosalyn Evans (Spectrum Hafan Cymru)

Presentation: Dr. Honor Young (School Health Research Network)

Reading:

- *Respectful Relationships Education in Schools*

<https://www.ourwatch.org.au/getmedia/4a61e08b-c958-40bc-8e02-30fde5f66a25/Evidencepaper-respectful-relationships-education-AA-updated.pdf.aspx>

- *SRE: The Evidence*

<http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/media/28306/SRE-the-evidence-March-2015.pdf>

- *Pound et al. (2015) What do young people think about their school-based sex and relationship education? A qualitative synthesis of young people's views and experiences (1 page summary) AND*

<http://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2017/03/10/pandora-pound-how-should-mandatory-sex-education-be-taught/>

- <http://decipher.uk.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/D1-posters-FOREST.pdf>

11.15-13.00

5. Overview of panel members' practice overview submissions* (Task 1), and any related additional evidence submitted by panel members, of how their practice and/or service supports comprehensive and inclusive, whole-school approaches to SRE.

*Panel members can offer 5 minute presentations based on their submission.

6. Populate whole school approach matrix with examples of what supports or limits 'effective practice' informed by panel members' submissions. The aim is to begin to build a picture of current SRE practice in schools across Wales, and identify gaps in knowledge (KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4).

13.00 – 13.45 Lunch

13.45 – 16:00

7. Consider current and future core values and key areas of a comprehensive and inclusive SRE (using *Welsh Government's Sex and Relationship Guidance for Schools*, and *Sex and Relationships Education for the 21st Century* documents as starting points for discussion)

4.00 – 5.00

8. Identify key teachers/groups of young people to invite to the panel to provide oral evidence in relation to 'effective' practices of inclusive and comprehensive whole school approaches to SRE.

9. Reflections on panel progress, and focus for next meeting.

10. Date of next meeting

11. AOB.

Meeting 3 – 15 June 2017

Mapping Effective Practices for comprehensive and inclusive, whole-school approaches to SRE (2): front-line expertise and experience from teachers and students.

Agenda:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 9.30 – 10.00 | 1. Welcome, outline of the day, minutes. |
| 10.00 – 11.00 | 2. Invited presentations from front-line practitioners and young people

Catrin Pallot (Assistant Deputy Head Teacher, Health, Well-being and Equalities Lead), Marc Lewis (Drama Teacher) and students, Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Plasmawr, Pioneer School) |
| 11.00– 12.00 | <i>Dr. Tamasine Preece</i> (SRE/PSE lead practitioner, Bryntirion Comprehensive School)
<i>Corrine Fry</i> (Senior Youth and Community Officer, Workforce Development and Health, Education Leisure and Lifelong Learning Department, Neath Port Talbot Youth Service) |
| 12.00 – 13.15 | Richard Byng, Deputy Head-teacher, Ysgol Hendre Felin, Pioneer School
Siriol Burford (speaking on behalf of) Mountain Ash Comprehensive.
Emma Renold, (speaking on behalf of) Ysgol Golwg y Cwm Community Primary School. |
| 13.15– 14.00 | LUNCH |
| 14.00 – 14.20 | 3. Updates from the chair
a. New Respecting Others Anti-Bullying Guidance for Schools
b. Initial Teacher Training and building SRE expertise
c. Health and Well-being Core Area of Learning and Experience
d. External support to the chair |

14.20– 3.30	4. Consolidating and contributing to the draft recommendations (open discussion, group work and option of 5 minute presentation)
3.30 – 3.45	Break
3.45 – 4.30	5. Comments on core values of future SRE Comments on draft thematic content of future SRE
4.30– 5.00	6. Reflections on panel progress, and focus for next meeting. 7. AOB.

Meeting 4 – 24 July 2017

Exploring Creative and Cross-Curricular approaches for holistic and inclusive Sexuality and Relationships Education

Agenda:

9.31 – 10.00	1. Welcome, outline of the day, minutes.
10.00 – 10.30	2. Update: New Respecting Others Anti-Bullying Guidance for Schools
10.30 – 13.15	3. Invited presentations from experts in creative, cross-curricular and youth-led approaches to SRE

Introduction: Professor Emma Renold and Dr. Ester McGeeney
(see Appendix A for position paper)

10.45 – 11.15 The use of creative methods in the development of “AGENDA: A Young People’s Guide to Making Positive Relationships Matter”
(www.agenda.wales, see also <https://vimeo.com/224546331>)
Professor Emma Renold, Cardiff University.

11.15 – 11.45 Re-Imagining risk, resilience and the ACES³³ agenda for future SRE with youth-led arts-based pedagogies
Professor Gabrielle Ivinson, Manchester Metropolitan University.

³³ Adverse Childhood Experiences (see <http://gov.wales/newsroom/people-and-communities/2017/170119-adverse-childhood-experiences/?lang=en>)

11.45 – 12.15 Beyond words: Body pedagogies and the “Under Pressure?” project.

Jên Angharad, POSSIB: Lleisiau Mewn Celf - Voices in Art.
(View digital story here: <https://vimeo.com/166068771>)

12. 15 – 12. 45 Sex, history and objects: how ancient artefacts can support sexuality and relationships education.

Professor Rebecca Langlands and Professor Kate Fisher (Exeter University)

(Project overview: see <http://sexandhistory.exeter.ac.uk>)

12.45 – 13.15 Digital creations: exploring local and global relationship cultures with children in multi-cultural primary schools.

(Background reading)

<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/women-and-equalities-committee/sexual-harassment-and-sexual-violence-in-schools/written/33555.html>)

13.15– 14.00	LUNCH
14.00 – 15.00	4. Thematic content of future SRE curriculum
15.00 – 15.15	Break
15.15 – 16.15	5. Finalising draft recommendations
16.15 – 16.45	6. Structure of full report
16.45– 17.00	7. Focus for next meeting and AOB

Meeting 5 – 14 September 2017

Draft Final Report and Recommendations

Agenda:

9.32 – 10.00	Welcome, outline of the day, minutes.
10.00 – 10.45	Panel response to Estyn’s Recommendations within the Thematic Review of Healthy Relationships
10.45 – 11.00	Introducing the draft final report: content, publication, launch. (Emma Renold and Ester McGeeney)
Break	

11.00 – 12.00	Final discussion and panel agreement of recommendations (section 9)
12.00 – 12.45	LUNCH
12.45 – 13.45	Section One and Two (Introduction and Evidence) 15 mins break
12.45 – 13.45	Section Three (Core Principles & Thematic areas)
15 mins break	
14.00 – 14.45	Section Four and Six (Pedagogy, Living Curriculum and Assessment)
15 mins break	
15.00 – 15.45	Section Five (Training, Leadership, Resources, Support)
15 mins break	
16.00 – 16.30	Section Seven (Research Network and Resources)
16.30 – 17.00	Virtual panel support, sign off and submission

ANNEX 4: Key Concepts Glossary: working definitions used by the Panel

Sexuality

The World Health Organisation (WHO) definition of sexuality is used in this report.

The WHO³⁴'s working definition of sexuality is:

“...a central aspect of being human throughout life encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors.” (WHO 2006, 2010).

For further WHO definitions of sexual health and sexual rights, see

http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/sexual_health/sh_definitions/en/

Relationship

Working definition of relationship developed by the panel

The world is made up of all kinds of relationships that shift and change over time. For example, they can be platonic, romantic, non-sexual and sexual.

Who we are is defined to a great extent by our relationships with others and the world around us. They can be formed with and between people, communities, deities, place and nature (e.g. caring for pets or the environment). We are all inter-connected and shaped by each other in one way or another.

Interpersonal relationships, that is relationships between people, are formed in the context of social, cultural, technological and other influences (e.g. ecological, historical). They can be made up of two or more people, and range in duration and intensity, from the very brief to life-long commitments. Inter-personal relationships can include a range of consensual and non-consensual associations and bonds between, for example, strangers, peers, friendships, families/kinship relations, partnerships, civil partnerships and marriage.

Relationships can encompass a range feelings (e.g. affection, attraction, closeness, care, fear, love, obligation, power, powerlessness, respect, trust).

Relationships are formed and experienced across diverse spaces and places (e.g. from playgrounds and places of worship, to schools and social media) that increasingly traverse any simple online/offline divide as digitally networked and enabled relationships proliferate. Relationships are often regulated by law, custom, ritual and mutual agreement, and operate in the context of shifting, uneven, unequal or abusive power relations.

Sexuality and Relationships Education

Working definition of Sexuality and Relationships Education developed by the panel:

An inclusive, holistic, rights and gender equity based SRE aims to gradually enable and empower children and young people to build the knowledge, skills and ethical values through which they can explore and understand how sex, gender, sexuality and relationships have shaped and continue to shape people's lives around the world.

³⁴ http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/sexual_health/sh_definitions/en/

Needs-led and experience-near, it aims to enable ALL children and young people to see themselves and each other in what they learn and encourage children and young people to identify, and speak out on the injustices that impact on their own and others' lives and well-being.

Preventative and protective, it will also aim to support children and young people's rights to enjoy equitable, fulfilling, safe and healthy sexual lives and relationships over their life course, including the ability to recognise and understand discrimination, abusive relationships and gender-based and sexual violence, and know how and where to seek support, advice and factual information (e.g. on sex and gender equality/equity, sexual health, LGBTQ+ issues, VAWDASV)

Sex

'Sex' is used in this report to refer to the biological processes and attributes that societies use to assign sex categories (e.g. male, female, intersex). These biological attributes include chromosomes, hormones and internal and external physical sexual and reproductive anatomy.

Gender

'Gender' is used in this report to refer to how sexed bodies are *lived* (e.g. as identity, as expression, through social interaction), *represented* (e.g. in language, media, popular culture) and *regulated* (e.g. by socio-cultural norms, such as the stereotypes of 'masculinity' and 'femininity', and in law). While the concept gender can include the different ways societies assign chromosomes or body parts to sex categories, it is not synonymous with sex, and does not only refer to gender identity or gender expression. It is a concept that allows for analyses of gender as an organising principle of society (e.g. how gender shapes and is shaped by economic, environmental, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors). As a concept, it also enables an exploration of how different societies address the intersection of biological, socio-cultural and psychological processes.

Gender identity

'Gender identity' is used in this report to refer to a person's inner sense of self. Gender identity does not necessarily relate to the sex a person is assigned at birth. Feelings about gender identity start early, around the age of 2-3.

Gender Expression

'Gender expression' is used in this report to refer to the outward signs that people use to communicate their gender identity (i.e. inner sense of self). This can include, for example, preferred pronouns, choice of name, style of dress and appearance, mannerisms and behaviour.

Transgender

Transgender or Trans is used in this report as an umbrella term to refer to people who identify differently with the sex or gender assigned at birth. Transgender can include a wide spectrum of gender identities and expressions. Not all people who are questioning or who don't identify with the sex or gender assigned at birth define themselves as transgender (e.g. non-binary, gender-queer, gender-fluid).

Queer

The term 'queer' is used in this report as an umbrella term to refer to non-conforming gender and sexual identities, expressions and orientations.

Gender Equality and Gender Equity

Gender equality is used in this report to mean that regardless of sex group assigned at birth, gender identity or gender expression people enjoy the same social, economic and political rights, resources, opportunities and protections. *Gender equity* is used in this report to refer to the different needs and interests that people require to ensure and achieve gender equality. Gender equality and gender equity are often used interchangeably, but the two refer to different, yet complementary strategies that are needed, for example, to address and reduce gender-based and sexual violence.

Bullying

Bullying is used in this report to mean the inter-personal abuse of social and cultural power relations that are persistently directed towards targeted people or groups of people over time. It can be covert or overt and expressed in verbal, physical, psychological, material, or technological ways (see also Annex 7 in Renold and McGeeney 2017).

Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence refers to:

- (a) *violence, threats of violence or harassment arising directly or indirectly from values, beliefs or customs relating to gender or sexual orientation*
- (b) *female genital mutilation*
- (c) *forcing a person (whether by physical force or coercion by threats or other psychological means) to enter into a religious or civil ceremony of marriage (whether or not legally binding).*

as defined by the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse, also referred to as domestic violence, is the exercise of control by one person over another within an intimate or close family relationship; the abuse can be sexual, physical, financial, emotional or psychological. The abuse can happen in the home or elsewhere.

It is usually a pattern of behaviour, and happens regardless of sex, sexuality, age, carer responsibility, class, disability, gender identity, immigration status, ethnicity, geography or religion. However the gender of the victim and of the perpetrator influences the severity, risk, and harm caused.

There are many different forms of domestic abuse, these include but are not limited to:

- coercively controlling behaviour (a pattern of control, isolation, degradation, intimidation and the use of threats)
- emotional / psychological abuse
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- financial abuse
- harassment and stalking

The cross UK government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality³⁵

Violence against Women

Also known as violence against girls and women. Violence against women is a violation of human rights and both a cause and consequence of gender and other inequality between women and men, and is connected to wider patterns of sex and other intersectional inequalities, including ethnicity, class, gender identity, age, ability, sexuality, religion and belief. It happens to women because they are women and women are disproportionately impacted by all forms of violence³⁶.

It includes all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological, or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. This encompasses, but is not limited to:

(a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;

(b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;

(c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State³⁷.

Sexual violence

Sexual violence is used in this report to refer to '*sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, or threats of violence of a sexual nature*' as defined by the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

For additional specific definitions on abuse, female genital mutilation and harassment, see Welsh Government's National Strategy on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence³⁸ : 2016 – 2021

³⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-definition-of-domestic-violence>.

³⁶ <http://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/commsafety/161104-national-strategy-en.pdf>

³⁷ <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>

³⁸ <http://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/commsafety/161104-national-strategy-en.pdf>

Annex 5 SRE and Safeguarding: key facts and figures

Many children and young people are struggling with the complexities and contradictions regarding sex, gender, sexuality and relationships.

Whilst current safeguarding procedures are addressing some of the negative impact of these issues in schools, many of these practices do not help children and young people to understand and seek support and advice in relation to these issues (ENOC 2017).

A holistic, rights and equity based Sexuality and Relationship Education curriculum can help children and young people understand what they are learning and experiencing, by creating engaging and safe learning environments through which they can share their questions, needs and concerns.

An empowering and transformative SRE would also invite children and young people to raise awareness of and address these issues, in their own lives and communities and in the lives and communities of others around the world.

NB. The list is intended to provide accessible information about certain aspects of children and young people's lives that are pertinent to SRE, particularly, although not exclusively, in relation to potential safeguarding concerns. It was gathered rapidly to assist some of the discussions in the expert panel and is by no means a comprehensive list of all the relevant research available and may contain gaps and omissions particularly in relation to the vast research base on children and young people's health and well-being in relation to gender, sexualities and relationships, and specifically in relation to younger children.

Sexual activity and sexual health

First sex: Most people in Britain have sexual intercourse for the first time aged 16 and above, and a third of young people have sex under 16.

Data from NATSAL tells us:

- The age at which people in Britain first have sex is mostly 16 and above. This has changed very little over the past decade. This data is based on the largest survey of sexual behaviours and attitudes in Britain (NATSAL) which is conducted every ten years with over 15,000 people aged 16-74.
- 16% of women and 7% of men aged 16 - 54 report having a same-sex experience at some point in their lifetime (NATSAL 2013).
- 29% of girls and 31% of boys in Britain aged 16-24 report having sexual intercourse with someone of the opposite sex before they are 16. (NATSAL 2013).
- In another European-wide study 32% of 15 year old girls and 21% of 15 year old boys in Wales reported having had sexual intercourse. This was the 4th highest out of 40 European countries or regions (HSBC survey data 2013-14, WHO 2016).

- In Wales approximately 25% of year 11 students report having had sexual intercourse. This rises to approximately 40% for young people in years 12 and 13.³⁹ This is based on the School Health Research Network's survey of over 35,000 secondary school students in over 87 schools in Wales (*SHRN, 2015*).
- 57% of 15 year old girls and 68% of 15 year old boys in Wales report using a condom at last intercourse according to a European study involving 1500 young people from each country or region. Wales was ranked 30 out of 39 countries in terms of frequency of condom use at last intercourse (*HBSC survey data 2013-14, WHO 2016*).
- 35% and 38% of 15 year old girls / boys respectively reported using the contraceptive pill at last intercourse. Wales was ranked 8 out of 27 countries in terms of frequency of pill use at last intercourse (*ibid*).

Pregnancy and conception: the rate of teenage conceptions is the lowest it has been for nearly 50 years. The UK continues to have the highest teenage birth rates in Western Europe.

- The under 18 conception rate in 2015 in England and Wales was 21.0 conceptions per thousand women aged 15 to 17; this is the lowest rate recorded since comparable statistics were first produced in 1969.
- There has been a long-term rise in the percentage of conceptions (and births) occurring outside marriage or civil partnership, reaching 57% in 2015 in England and Wales.
- The UK has the highest percentage of live births to 15-17 years olds in Western Europe⁴⁰.

Source: Office for National Statistics 2016

STIs: Young people are disproportionately affected by STIs, and STI rates in Wales are increasing

- Since 2012, there has been a general increase in the number of STIs diagnosed in Wales.
- Young people are disproportionately affected by STIs. In 2014, 71.1% of all Chlamydia diagnoses in Wales were among 15-24-year-olds.
- A high percentage of STI and HIV diagnoses are among men who have sex with men (MSM). In 2014, 61% of syphilis and 30% of gonorrhoea diagnoses were among MSM.
- Between 2012 and 2014, in males, there were increases in the rates of syphilis (59%), gonorrhoea (31%), genital herpes (10%), and chlamydia (9%). Among females, there were increases in chlamydia (20%) and genital herpes (9%). Part of the increase in STI diagnoses may be due to increased testing.

Source: Data on STIs in Wales is collected from a range of sources, including the Sexual Health in Wales Surveillance system (SWS), which extracts data from

³⁹ Data from year 12 and 13 (KS5) students are collected from sixth forms within schools, whose pupils are unlikely to be representative of all 16-18 year olds in Wales.

⁴⁰ Data from year 12 and 13 (KS5) students are collected from sixth forms within schools, whose pupils are unlikely to be representative of all 16-18 year olds in Wales.

laboratories across Wales. SWS also receives SHHAPT (sexual health and HIV activity property type) data (formerly KC60) electronically submitted from integrated sexual health (ISH) clinics in Wales. Data has been collated by FPA 2016.

HIV: The UK has a relatively small HIV epidemic but more needs to be done to increase early diagnosis

- An estimated 101,200 people in the UK are living with HIV in 2015. In the same year, 6,095 people were newly diagnosed with HIV and 594 people died of AIDS-related illnesses.
- The number of people unaware of their HIV infection remains high. An estimated 13% of people living with HIV are unaware of their infection.
- HIV incidence among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men remains high
- Wales has relatively high rates of late diagnosis of HIV. In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, 31%, 51% and 29% of people were diagnosed late, respectively.

Source: Public Health England. HIV in the UK Report: 2016. NB Although produced by Public Health England the report includes data from Wales.

Sexual, relationship and gender based violence

Most secondary school young people have a romantic / dating relationship and children of all ages experience bullying.

- The majority of children and young people in key stage 3 - 5 have been 'seeing' someone, 'dating' or 'going out with someone, according to a survey of over 35,000 students from 87 schools in Wales; 60% of KS3 students, 68% of KS4 students and 72.5% of KS5 students (SHRN 2015)⁴¹
- Almost 20% of younger KS3 school students in Wales have experienced verbal abuse (hurtful comments made by a partner) once or more. This rises to almost 40% of KS5 students.⁴ Up to 20% of students of all ages have experienced physical abuse from a partner (a partner pushing, shoving or slapping them) (*ibid*).
- Large proportions of children aged 7 - 11 report that they have been hit, left out or called nasty names by other children and young people at school. (Children's Commissioner for Wales 2015)
- 55% of 7-11 year olds and 53% of young people aged 11+ said that stopping children being bullied was the most important issue to them. (Children's Commissioner for Wales 2015)

LBGT Bullying in schools: There are high rates of LBGT bullying in Welsh schools

- More LBGT students in Wales (54%) have been bullied because they are LBGT than in any other region in the Britain. *Source: Stonewall Schools Report 2017.*
- In Wales, three in five LBGT pupils (60 per cent) 'frequently' or 'often' hear homophobic language in school. 49 per cent hear biphobic language, and

⁴¹ Data from year 12 and 13 (KS5) students are collected from sixth forms within schools, whose pupils are unlikely to be representative of all 16-18 year olds in Wales.

51 per cent hear transphobic language frequently or often.

- Nine in ten LGBT pupils (90 per cent) regularly hear phrases such as 'that's so gay' or 'you're so gay'.
- Nearly half of LGBT pupils (47 per cent) who experience homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying never tell anyone about it.

Source: Stonewall School Report Cymru 2017.

Sexual and gender based violence; young people, girls and women are more likely to experience sexual violence

- One in 71 men and one in ten women report having sex against their will at some point in their lives, according to a survey of over 15,000 16-74 year olds in Britain (NATSAL 3).
- Young people are disproportionately likely to have non-consensual sex. The average (median) age at which people reported having sex against their will (most recently) was 18 for women and 16 for men (*ibid*).
- Between 10-20% of girls at secondary schools in Wales report they have been unwantedly touched or groped or kissed by a boy **whilst in school** at least once. Data from the School Health Research Network survey of 35,071 students from 87 secondary schools in Wales (SHRN, 2015).
- A recent Pan European survey of over 4500 young people (age 14-17) on the incidence and impact of experiencing Interpersonal violence and abuse (IPVA) in young people's intimate relationships, including sending and receiving sexual images found that:
 - Between a half and two-thirds of young women aged 14 to 17 years-old and between a third and two-thirds of young men from the five countries reported experiencing IPVA.
 - The majority of young women reported a negative impact to their experiences while the majority of young men reported an affirmative impact or no effect.
 - In all countries, young people who reported experiencing IPVA in their relationships were at least twice as likely to have sent a sexual image or message compared to young people who had not been victimised.

Source: Barter et al (2016) Safeguarding Teenage Intimate Relationships (STIR) Connecting online and offline contexts and risks, Briefing Paper 2.

Sexual offences: sexual offences against under 16 year olds are increasing

- Similar to the trend seen in other nations, sexual offences against under 16 year olds in Wales have increased significantly over the past five years. The rate of recorded offences per 10,000 under 16 year olds has tripled over the past decade from 13.7 in 2005/06 to 41.9 offences in 2015/16. (Home Office 2017)
- There were 2,329 recorded sexual offences against under 16 year olds in 2015/16. This is a rate of 41.9 sexual offences per 10,000 children aged under 16 a 25 per cent increase on the previous year (Home Office 2017)
- A study of 16,607 respondents found that the majority of women globally

experience their first street harassment during puberty. (Hollaback 2015⁴²)

Source: England and Wales: Home Office (2017) Police recorded crime and outcomes open data tables. London: Home Office, cited in NSPCC (2017) *How Safe are our Children?* <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/how-safe-children-2017-report.pdf>

Use of technology: digital technologies are integral to young people's relationships with others

Finding health information

- Online sources of information about sexual health are important to all youth, and especially to low income, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) and homeless youth, according to an expert review and consultation (Livingstone and Mason 2015).

Sexting and sending 'nudes'

- In Wales 25% of KS5 students, 17% of KS 4 students and 4% of KS 3 students report that they have sent a sexually explicit photo of themselves at least once (SHRN, 2015). Approximately 11% of KS 4 and 5 students have had someone sent, forwarded or shared a sexually explicit image of them to other people, with their consent. (SHRN 2015)⁴
- Girls face greater pressure to send 'sexts' and much harsher judgements when those images are shared beyond the intended recipient (Livingstone and Mason 2015).
- Young people send nude and sexual images to partners, friends and peers for a range of reasons including; to flirt with someone they are interested in, to a friend for fun, because they feel pressured to send one to a peer, friend, partner or potential partner (McGeeney and Hanson, 2017, Barter et al. 2016).

Relationships online

- Digital Technologies are integral to every stage of young people's relationships from flirting and getting together, maintaining and communicating in relationships, breaking up and post break up experiences. This is according to a study involves over 2000 young people in the UK.
- This survey of over 2,000 15-25 year olds in the UK found that 38% of participants had met a partner online. 6% had met up with someone they met online face to face and they weren't who they said they were.
- Higher proportions of LGBT young people had met someone online and had met someone who wasn't who they said they were.

Source: Digital Romance, McGeeney and Hanson 2017.

Online bullying

- In 2010, 16 per cent of children reported being bullied face to face, 8 per cent on the internet and 5 per cent via mobile phone. By 2013, this ratio had

⁴² <https://www.ihollaback.org/cornell-international-survey-on-street-harassment/>

reversed, making cyberbullying (12 per cent) more common than face-to-face bullying (9 per cent) – most cyberbullying occurs on SNSs. (*Livingstone et al. 2014.*)

- Research suggests that, both offline and online, victims are more likely to come from minority ethnic or LGBT groups, to be disabled or facing mental health, emotional or familial difficulties (Livingstone et al. 2016⁴³).
- **Nearly half** of LGBT young people (46 per cent) in Wales have been the target of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic abuse online. (*Stonewall Cymru Schools Report 2017*).
- **Nearly all** LGBT young people (97 per cent) see homophobic, biphobic and transphobic content online (*ibid*).

Mental Health

- Almost two in five children and young people (38%) aged 7 - 11 said that if they were feeling sad or worried about something they would keep the issue to themselves (Children's Commissioner for Wales, 2013)
- Experiences of poor mental health remain high for LGBT young people. Three in five trans young people in Wales (77%) have self-harmed, as have three in five (61%) lesbian, gay and bi young people who aren't trans. (Stonewall Cymru 2017).
- Two in five trans young people in Wales (41 per cent) have at some point attempted to take their own life. For lesbian, gay and bi pupils who are not trans, one in four (25 per cent) have tried to take their own life. (Stonewall Cymru 2017)
- Violence in young people's intimate relationships has been linked to mental health problems, depression and suicide (Stanley et al. 2011)
- Mental and emotional health and family relationships remain the most talked-about issues in Childline counselling sessions with children and young people in 2016/17 (NSPCC 2017, How safe are our children?)

Witnessing Domestic violence and child abuse

- 1 in 5 children and young people have experienced maltreatment (Radford et al 2011)
- 1 in 5 children will witness domestic abuse (*ibid*)
- 1 in 20 children have been sexually abused. Over 90% of sexually abused children were abused by someone they knew (*ibid*)
- 13 per cent of girls (n=91) and 9 per cent of boys (n=58) have experienced violence from an adult within their house or family, according to a UK survey of young people (Barter et al. 2009).
- By the time they reach 18, almost one quarter of children will have been exposed to domestic violence NSPCC (2017 How safe are our children?)

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ANNEX 6 – Respecting Others for Respectful Relationships: panel statement on addressing bullying cultures in schools

Respecting Others for Respectful Relationships: Addressing bullying cultures in schools

This statement was submitted by Chair to the Welsh Government following panel meeting 4 (see Annex 3).

Understanding what bullying is and what schools can do about it is in need of a critical overhaul.

Proposed working definition:

Bullying is the inter-personal abuse of social and cultural power relations that are persistently directed towards targeted people or groups of people over time. It can be covert or overt and expressed in verbal, physical, psychological, material, or technological ways.

Understanding the roots of bullying acts

Individual or group-based bullying acts are expressed within the context of and sustained by, wider social and cultural inequalities. In brief, bullying acts tend to replicate these inequalities.

Bullying acts frequently reinforce what is socially and culturally acceptable (e.g. what a 'boy' can wear or where a child should live). Individual or groups of children and young people who are perceived as 'different' from the 'norm' are frequent targets of bullying.

What can schools do?

Schools need to understand bullying behaviours as the micro-expression of wider persistent social inequalities. Only then will interventions be targeted at creating conducive contexts for addressing the root cause and consequence of bully cultures and making safer schools environments for all.

To achieve actionable and sustainable change, we need to shift the focus solely from individual bullies and victims, and work towards interventions that address bullying cultures in the context of rights, equalities and social justice (e.g. how can we support students and all staff understand the root causes of power and inequality in school and the wider world; what we can do to identify and change the conditions and contexts which enable bullying cultures to thrive)

What is best practice?

Best practice will encourage school policies and practices to work with children, parents/carers and the wider community to develop affirmative interventions that:

- Advance awareness of children's rights to be safe and free from discrimination and harm
- Celebrate (not tolerate) difference and diversity, and understand how bullying acts and cultures related to protected characteristics are interconnected
- Situate anti-bullying work in the wider context of an equalities and social justice approach to respectful and healthy relationships and violence prevention.
- Measure progress of successful proactive and affirmative⁴⁴ activities that promote difference, diversity, rights and social justice more widely, as part of their whole-school equalities plan.
- Support and celebrate whole-school student-led action campaigns research projects to evaluate progress (NB. student ownership is paramount to successful interventions, and allows them to raise areas of change that matter to them)

To achieve the above, **training and workshops** for school staff need to focus on:

- **understanding** the root causes and consequences of bully cultures: that is, how individual or group-based bullying acts are expressed within the context of and sustained by, wider social and cultural inequalities.

- how they can **co-produce activities that address the root causes and consequences** with children through a whole school rights-based approach as part of their equalities plan

Professor Emma Renold, July 2017

NB. The panel, via the chair, can provide references drawn on to support the approach above at a later date if required.

⁴⁴ An affirmative approach to address bully cultures is vital in supporting schools who fear stigma by raising awareness of these issues. If bullying acts and cultures are understood as signs and symptoms of living in, and struggling with the uneven and unequal power relations that exist in society, this might alleviate the stigma of schools of proactively addressing bullying acts and cultures.

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Image: Ruler-skirt, from the film 'Graphic Moves'⁴⁶ (see Libby et al. 2018)

⁴⁶ <https://www.productivemargins.ac.uk/outputs/>