

PE1526/A

**Glasgow City Council Response
PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF PE01526
October 2014**

Questions to be considered

- What are your views on what the petition seeks and the discussions that took place at the meeting on 30 September 2014?
- How has the current Scottish Government guidance on sex and relationship education been implemented in your local authority?

Glasgow City Council Response

1. Glasgow City Council (GCC) acknowledges the importance placed on school-based Relationship, Sexual Health and Parenthood Education (RSHPE) in this petition. The Council recognises that RSHPE should be delivered at all stages in Primary and Secondary schools, that it should be delivered by trained and confident teachers and that programme contents should be accurate, comprehensive and relevant to children & young people's lives. It would also agree that parents should be fully informed about the programme delivered to their children.
2. Where GCC would diverge from the views expressed in this petition is that it does not believe that the delivery of RSHPE requires to be put on a statutory basis. It takes this position on the basis that the existing arrangements e.g. Curriculum for Excellence and Guidance from Scottish Government (currently being reviewed) place a clear expectation that schools will deliver on this subject area. RSHPE, as part of the Health & Wellbeing strand of Curriculum for Excellence, is also subject to inspection by Education Scotland. Rather than place RSHPE on a statutory basis, the Committee may wish to consider increasing the monitoring of delivery through the Education Scotland inspection process.
3. All schools within Glasgow City are expected to deliver a comprehensive RSHPE programme. Non-denominational schools deliver a bespoke programme known as Sexual Health & Relationships Education (SHRE) whilst denominational schools follow national guidance developed through the Scottish Catholic Education Service. At Secondary level the Catholic programme is 'Called To Love' and the recently developed Primary programme is 'God's Loving Plan'.
4. Focusing on the approach to SHRE for non-denominational schools, the programme has been developed over a number of years, is wide-ranging and has a systematic support structure to ensure its sustainability into the future. Picking up on some of the features

mentioned in the petition, some of the key aspects of the approach in Glasgow include:

- The SHRE programme is wide-ranging in its scope. It is a P1 to S6 programme that is delivered in mainstream and Additional Support for Learning establishments: this session will see the roll-out of the programme to Complex Learning Needs establishments. Moving away from a traditional 'sex education' approach that concentrated largely on sexual activity, contraception, STIs, menstruation etc the programme re-frames sexual health as a child-developmental issue and, as such, learning should take place in an age-and-stage appropriate way throughout childhood. It has strong themes on, amongst other things, personal and family relationships, gender, rights, protection and addressing inequality. Programme materials are very discursive in nature and it is acknowledged that they have to move and change to reflect children and young people's lived experiences. With this in mind, a thorough-going review of the primary programme is currently underway and will be followed by a similar process for the secondary sector.
- The programme in Glasgow is teacher-led which ensures a greater measure of consistency and sustainability. It also serves to 'normalise' discussions and to move away from the idea that delivery in this area should be done by 'experts'. Teachers delivering the programme attend a 2-day training course and there is annual maintenance-training to ensure that schools have sufficient staff to deliver the programme on an on-going basis. Children and young people have fed-back positively on the teacher-delivery model, particularly on the fact that the programme is delivered by someone with whom they have an on-going relationship.
- Consulting and taking feedback from children & young people, parents and teachers has been woven throughout its development. City-wide consultations were undertaken with these groups from the outset (2005-6), and subsequent evaluations have taken place (2007-8, 2011 and 2014). The most recent evaluation undertaken with secondary pupils from early-adopting schools indicates the relevance of the approach to young people's lives and the comprehensive nature of the topics covered.
- In addition, the programme seeks to involve parents in their children's learning by ensuring that parents are made aware of the programme and can view materials, by including home-activity tasks (P6 – S4) and through the development of a supporting material that can promote discussion between children and their parents. A recent review suggests that this aspect needs greater emphasis. Glasgow also has a service, Talk 2, which actively seeks to encourage the involvement of parents on this subject matter.

6. In summary, Glasgow City Council acknowledges its responsibilities in relation to RSHPE and has implemented a comprehensive approach at primary and secondary levels. Regular reviews and evaluations allow for the approach to be amended and updated so that it remains relevant to the lived experiences of children and young people. It views existing guidance and expectations as sufficient for local authorities to implement comprehensive, high quality programmes on this subject matter.