



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref TO/KW/01847/21

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Chair
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29 March 2021

Dear Kimberly,

Thank you for your email of 8 March in response to the Minister's letter following on from your recent Campaign regarding Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE). I have been asked to reply.

You have asked what is classed as age and developmentally appropriate of each child in each classroom including those with additional needs as well as the assessment tool which will be given to teachers to determine what is classed as age/developmentally appropriate. The Welsh Government is working with Welsh teaching professionals and experts to develop clarity on what should be taught within RSE ('the RSE Code') and statutory guidance sitting alongside this to support high quality teaching and learning. The Code is important as it will set out clearly what children should be taught at different ages, to ensure that learning is developmentally appropriate.

We have always maintained that RSE will need to be developmentally appropriate for children and young people – for example a child in the Foundation Phase is currently taught about relationships with parents, family and friends. This will continue. The aim is to gradually build learners knowledge, skills and ethical values as they develop - but only at the appropriate times and ages.

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

In developing the draft RSE code and statutory guidance, the Welsh Government is talking to a range of different groups, including faith groups and groups representing the interests of children and young people. The guidance on RSE is being co-constructed with these professionals and representatives to develop a shared understanding of the issues and the sensitivities. This is vital to enable everyone to have trust in how this will be implemented.

The draft RSE code and statutory guidance will be published as soon as possible.

There is further evidence demonstrating the link between social and emotional education programmes and academic attainment showing that this learning improves academic performance. A whole-school approach to preventative education ensures that the curriculum, school policies, pastoral support and the school ethos complement each other to create an environment that helps to prevent negative behaviours.

You have also written in through Welsh Government's Freedom of Information service requesting when Welsh Government informed school governors that parents no longer have the right to opt out of RSE. I can confirm that in October 2019 the Minister for Education made a Written Statement which launched the consultation on Ensuring Access to the Full Curriculum, seeking views on the implications of removing the parental option to prevent Children from studying RSE. Following that Statement and consultation, in January 2020, the Minister for Education made a further announcement confirming that there will not be a right to withdraw from RSE as part of the new curriculum. All statements were made available publically to everyone.

Yours sincerely,

Curriculum and Assessment Division
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