

# **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

## **REPORT TO: Children & Families Scrutiny Committee**

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**Date of Meeting:** 22 March 2010

**Report of:** John Weeks Strategic Director of People

**Subject/Title:** Sex and Relationship Education

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Paul Findlow

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### **1.0 Report Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline the current position of Cheshire East Council in relation to Sex and Relationship Education in schools and colleges.
- 1.2 Personal, Social and Health Education and particularly Sex and Relationship Education are recommended to become statutory for all schools from September 2011. This report outlines how Cheshire East will prepare for this requirement and how we will develop delivery mechanisms to support schools to implement this effectively.

### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Cheshire East Council should work with the Healthy School programme to develop Sex and Relationship Education through the National Healthy Schools programme and the newly launched Enhanced Healthy Schools Model.
- 2.2 Cheshire East Children's Trust should develop a model of linking effective Sex and Relationship Education with on site health services, including sexual health services, on school and college sites.
- 2.3 Actively involve children and young people in an evaluation of their Sex and Relationship Education and sexual health provision.
- 2.4 Train the children's workforce to deliver the recommendations in 2.1 and 2.2.
- 2.5 Work with parents and carers, using effective Sex and Relationships Education programmes, to enable them to talk to their children and young people in order to raise their aspirations.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 There is considerable evidence that when young people receive age appropriate, effective Sex and Relationship Education they delay their first sexual experience and are more likely to use contraception.
- 3.2 Young people report that they want to learn from, and talk to, their parents/carers about sex and relationships. They also say that the information, advice and guidance that they get from their school/college is important.
- 3.3 The provision of Sex and Relationship Education and its quality is inconsistent and difficult to monitor. We need to develop a more consistent and evaluated model for all our schools. This can be achieved by using the Healthy Schools Enhancement model.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

All

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

All

### **6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health**

- 6.1 Schools are required by law, Education Act 1996, to make and keep up to date a separate written statement of their policy with regard to the provision of sex education. Cheshire County Council issued guidance to schools in 2009 on relationships and sex education. This document will require updating as a result of changes to national policy and guidance and the advice which will be provided by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

### **7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

- 7.1 N/A

### **8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

- 8.1 Funding is provided to the Local Authority via Area Based Grant for Teenage Pregnancy and Healthy Schools.

### **9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

- 9.1 N/A

### **10.0 Risk Management**

- 10.1 The key risk is that the Children's Trust will not be able to meet the targets in reducing the under 18 conception rate. This means that the significant cost in financial terms to the LA and the PCT will continue and that the cycle of poor outcomes for teenage parents and their children will remain a significant factor. To minimise the risk and reduce under 18 conceptions requires effective partnership working and a structured plan in line with our identified priorities.

## **11.0 Background and Options**

- 11.1 Under 18 conception rates are of concern nationally and Cheshire East rates, though lower than the national and North West rate, have remained stubbornly difficult to reduce.
- 11.2 Cheshire East received a National Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Support Team visit in June 2009. They made a number of recommendations to improve our strategy and accelerate our progress. This included a strong and effective delivery of Sex and Relationship Education in schools colleges and other settings.
- 11.3 Monitoring the delivery and quality of Sex and Relationship Education is achieved by using the national Healthy Schools Standard and the new Healthy Schools Enhancement Model in which schools choose a local priority on which to work. This priority may be for example 'the under 18 conception rate'. Using a health and well being improvement tool on line, they set meaningful outcomes and monitor their progress against them. Legislation is in process to make Sex and Relationship education statutory for schools in 2011 as part of a planned curriculum of Personal, Social, Health and Enterprise education.
- 11.4 There is a strong emphasis on the need to place information, support and guidance for young people on sex and relationships firmly in the context of loving relationships, and to help young people resist the pressure to make decisions that are not right for them and to stay healthy when they do choose to become sexually active.
- 11.5 Using the 'Are We Getting It Right' toolkit with all our young people will evaluate the impact and quality of the Sex and Relationship Education they receive.
- 11.6 A workforce development strategy for Sex and Relationship Education is being developed and there will national standards published as part of the new refreshed 'Teenage Pregnancy strategy 2010 and Beyond'. Tiered training will be given to the children's workforce.
- 11.7 Work with parents and carers will be developed further through a range of the parenting programmes for example local programmes such as 'Speak Easy' in our Children's Centres, schools, and voluntary sector organisations.

## **12.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues**

- 12.1 A quarterly review of action planning against the recommendations given by National Support Team (NST) and the Sex and Relationship Education plan

### **13.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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