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Dear Headteacher,

Relationship and Sex Education

I am sure like all of us you will have been disturbed by the recent scenes in Birmingham and the pressure that some schools there, and elsewhere, have come under to abandon inclusive Relationships Education. In Hackney, we know how important inclusivity and tolerance are to a supportive school environment, to the vast majority of our residents and to the borough's reputation as a beacon of diversity where all of our communities are supported and celebrated.

We are aware of the wide range of excellent work you and your teams already do in helping to foster pupil wellbeing and develop character and personal attributes that are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society.

As you will know, the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 were approved by the House of Commons last Wednesday (27 March).

We welcome these proposals, which will put Relationship Education on a statutory footing and have written to the Government asking them what support they are putting in place to ensure implementation.

Under these proposals:

- All secondary schools in England will be required to teach inclusive Relationships and Sex Education.
- All primary schools in England will be required to teach Relationships Education.



- It is recommended that all primary schools have a program of sex education tailored to the age appropriate needs of their pupils.
- Health Education will be introduced as a compulsory subject in all state funded schools in England. Independent schools, who are already required to teach PSHE, will not be required to teach Health Education as a new subject.

The new arrangements are intended to be in place for teaching to start in September 2020, with schools able to begin with the relevant teaching a year earlier if they wish. We are aware that for many of you this will be a welcome evolution of what your school already does; we have seen much of the excellent work that you already do. But, as we said, we are also aware that a number of schools in other local authority areas have encountered difficulties in seeking to introduce an inclusive curriculum. It has clearly had an impact on staff and school communities and as a Council, we would like to offer our full support to you and your staff as you put these arrangements in place. We are proud that we have a diverse family of schools in Hackney, which includes faith schools from many different traditions as well as different types of status.

London and Hackney are brilliant, diverse places, where people from all backgrounds – different nationalities, religions, belief systems, genders and sexualities – share streets, schools, parks, halls, workplaces and, crucially, our common values of tolerance and respect. We are proud to be an open, tolerant and diverse borough. In Hackney, we take our responsibility as a Council to promote all equalities extremely seriously and we are committed to doing everything we can to assist schools to implement these changes sensitively. We can't have a situation where schools are intimidated when complying with the law nor if they are seeking to support our young people to flourish whatever their identity. We know this is an issue that has recently come at the Council's Children and Young People's Scrutiny Commission, where members heard from young LGBT students about their experience of the education system in the borough as well as some of the support on offer.

Officers will be working to build on the new guidance: [Department for Education's draft statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#). This supplementary information will be with you in May. Please do not hesitate to contact James Sykes, Quality Assurance and Training Officer, Hackney Learning Trust on james.sykes@learningtrust.co.uk or 020 8820 7285 if you would like to request any assistance or if you wish to discuss the draft guidance further.

In the meantime if you or any of your staff have any concerns or if we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely



Philip Glanville
Mayor of Hackney



Cllr Anntoinette Bramble
Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Education, Young
People and Children's Social Care