



Children's Services

Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) Health Through Education Team

1. Executive Summary

Schools and PRU's must work within their statutory duties with regard to the delivery of SRE. It is their responsibility to provide comprehensive, accurate and honest Sex and Relationship Education; and every child's entitlement. The Department of Education and Skills (DfES) recommends that school SRE be firmly rooted in the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum. SRE needs to be:

- Relevant and accessible to all children in all learning environments
- Appropriate for all levels of understanding.

The function of the Local Authority is to provide schools with clear guidance, advice and support with regard to SRE, and to ensure that schools and PRU's are meeting young people's SRE needs as one component of a broad and balanced curriculum.

Tower Hamlets has made reducing the rates of teenage pregnancy a key target in its strategic plan. Since 1998, the London Borough of Tower Hamlets has successfully met Central Government targets in reducing teenage pregnancy locally.

This has been achieved through Tower Hamlets Local Authority working in partnership with schools and pupil referral units (PRU's), governors and families. An important factor in reducing Teenage Pregnancy is the role of an educational setting in delivering a comprehensive and relevant program of SRE.

Tower Hamlets has three areas of activity which are concerned with reducing Teenage Pregnancy:

Tower Hamlets Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Action Plan

The Tower Hamlets Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Action Plan is a multi-agency plan aimed at reducing the number teenage pregnancies within a policy of inclusion and a continuum of support. There is an emphasis on appropriate education, prevention and early intervention and management through consistency and partnership. The plan sets out local actions to address the strategic objectives for teenage pregnancy under each of the five Every Child Matters outcomes. These local actions aim to be specific, measurable, agreed, realistic, timed, evaluated, and reviewed. All actions are informed by the most up to date data analysis, to ensure targeted work reaches young people in the most relevant and appropriate settings.

Tower Hamlets Sex and Relationship Education Guidance

The rationale behind the guidance document is to support the standardisation of Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) throughout the borough and to clarify school responsibilities for statutory and non-statutory guidance. It clarifies a schools' responsibility to provide comprehensive, accurate and honest Sex and Relationship Education and every child's entitlement to it.

The Department of Education and Skills (DfES) recommends that school SRE be firmly rooted in the PSHE and Citizenship curriculum and that SRE needs to be relevant and accessible to all children in all learning environments and appropriate for all levels of understanding.

Tower Hamlets Health Through Education Team

The Tower Hamlets Health Through Education Team provides support for schools and PRU's, to achieve and maintain National Healthy School Status. This includes supporting schools and PRU's to produce high quality policy and deliver exemplary practice in PSHE, including SRE and drug education.

2. Data Collection & Consultation

Data Collection

In England there are approximately 39,600 conceptions a year to teenagers. The national '*Teenage Pregnancy Strategy*' aims to reduce the under 18 conception rates by 50% in 2010 from its level in 1998. Teenage pregnancy rates are higher in more deprived areas and teenage mothers are less likely to finish their education, less likely to find a good job, and more likely to end up bringing up their children alone and in poverty. Teenage parents have poorer ante-natal health, low birth-weight babies and higher mortality rates among their infants. Table 1 below shows the known conception rates by Tower Hamlets PCT and national rates up to 2004 and projected rates to 2010 in under 18's. These rates are set against the LDP trajectories. Progress has been made in Tower Hamlets. In 2004, the teenage conception rate was 43.2 (25.3% reduction from 1998 baseline).

Teenage Conceptions

Table 1: known local and national conception rates up to 2004 and projected rates to 2010

Year	Under 18 Conceptions				
	Tower Hamlets rates	% Change in rate from baseline	London rates	England rates	% Change in rate from baseline
1998	57.8	0	51.1	46.6	0
1999	45.5	-21.3	50.5	44.8	-4.1
2000	48.5	-16.2	50.4	43.6	-6.4
2001	55	-4.9	50.3	42.6	-8.9
2002	46.5	-19.6	52	42.6	-8.6
2003	43.2	-25.4	50.8	42.1	-9.8
2004	43.2	-25.3	41.8	41.5	-11.1
Trajectories					
2005	40.3	-30.3	-	38.5	-17.5
2006	37.5	-35.2	-	35.4	-24
2007	34.6	-40.2	-	32.4	-30.5

2008	31.7	-45.1	-	29.4	-38
2009	28.9	-50.1	-	26.3	-43.5
2010	26	-55	-	23.3	-50

Schools and PRU's who have achieved National Healthy School Status (NHSS) must have met all criteria for the PSHE standards which include SRE. Table 2 below shows the total percentage of schools and PRU's in the borough that have been quality assessed and awarded the status. The data runs from April to March for each year.

For NHSS to be awarded schools and PRU's must evidence that PSHE including SRE;

- contributes significantly to all five national outcomes for children: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and economic wellbeing
- provides pupils with the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to make informed decisions about their lives

National Healthy Schools data for Tower Hamlets

Table 2: Local data for total percentage of schools and PRU's who have achieved National Healthy School Status

Year	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09
Target percentage of schools/PRU's achieving NHSS for year April to March	-	50%	75%	100%
Actual percentage of schools that have achieved NHSS for year April to March	29%	52%	-	-

Consultation

The following groups were consulted prior to final publication of the SRE Guidance. This was done through meetings to agree content and a draft document being distributed as a paper copy and electronically. All feed back was integrated in the Guidance where appropriate.

- Council of Mosques
- Head Teachers
- Independent consultants with expertise
- Key Local Authority staff (Social Services and Education)
- Options Young Persons Sexual Health Clinic
- SACRE (questionnaire completed and e mailed back)
- School aged parents
- School PSHE/Healthy School Coordinators
- School survey which evaluates the service of the TPRO
- Step Forward
- Support for Learning Services
- Sure Start (now Children's Centres)
- The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Westminster
- Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust-Health Promotion and School Health Service including the Health Visitor forum

3. Key Findings

A strong recommendation of the policy is that SRE provision in schools includes all pupils, whatever their faith, sexuality, race, gender or disability.

Greater weighting is given to supporting pregnant school aged pupils/school aged mothers, there is a potential gap in the level of advice schools are being given in supporting school aged fathers.

The Guidance document contains an appendix on 'Faith Considerations' which gives an overview of perspectives and guidance from the main faith groups represented in Tower Hamlets. As faith leaders were consulted as part of the process, the policy was successful in ensuring dialogue ensued between the Local Authority and faith groups about SRE in the borough.

The Guidance does not unlawfully discriminate.

4. Conclusions & Recommendations

Consult with identified schools in order to assess impact

Identify financial and personnel capacity for supporting school age fathers

Ensure adequate provision/home tuition during maternity leave/ No onsite crèche *provision*

Ensure there is no conflict of interest between the needs of school aged mothers and fathers in the provision of support services

Action Plan:

Recommendation	Key Activity	Progress milestone
Consult with schools	All schools e-mailed key questions asking them to comment on the usefulness of the SRE Guidance	50% response to the questionnaire by July 2007
Support school aged fathers	Assess need for service provision for school aged fathers	All school aged fathers supported by the TPRO complete a service user questionnaire