

Press release: Schools to teach 21st century relationships and sex education

□□The government has today (1 March 2017) tabled amendments to the [Children and Social Work Bill](#) which will make it a requirement that all secondary schools in England teach relationships and sex education (RSE).

The amendments also allow the government to make regulations requiring personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) to be taught in all schools in England – primary and secondary, maintained and academy – in future.

Relationships education, RSE, and PSHE are designed to ensure pupils are taught the knowledge and life skills they will need to stay safe and develop healthy and supportive relationships, particularly dealing with the challenges of growing up in an online world.

Currently only pupils attending local-authority run secondary schools – which represent around a third of secondary schools – are guaranteed to be offered current sex and relationships education, and PSHE is only mandatory at independent schools. Neither are currently required to be taught in academies.

The government is proposing the introduction of the new subject of ‘relationships education’ in primary school and renaming the secondary school subject ‘relationships and sex education’, to emphasise the central importance of healthy relationships. The focus in primary school will be on building healthy relationships and staying safe. As children get older, it is important that they start to develop their understanding of healthy adult relationships in more depth, with sex education delivered in that context.

The statutory guidance for RSE was introduced in 2000 and is becoming increasingly outdated. It fails to address risks to children which have grown in prevalence in recent years, including online pornography, sexting and staying safe online. As a result now is the right time to address these issues.

The government is already taking action to address this with the introduction of a new internet safety green paper later this year, which will set out a series of steps to make the internet a safer place for young people.

This will be complemented by a comprehensive programme of engagement by the Department for Education (DfE) with stakeholders to set out suitable, age-appropriate content on RSE which focuses on mental wellbeing, consent, resilience, age-appropriate relationships and sex education, and keeping safe online. Regulations and statutory guidance will then be subject to full public consultation later this year, and we expect to see children and young

people being taught this new curriculum in schools as soon as September 2019.

Schools will have flexibility over how they deliver these subjects, so they can develop an integrated approach that is sensitive to the needs of the local community; and, in the case of faith schools, in accordance with their faith.

Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

RSE and PSHE teach children and young people how to stay safe and healthy, and how to negotiate some of the personal and social challenges they will face growing up and as adults. These subjects form part of the building blocks young people need to thrive in modern Britain. At the moment, too many young people feel they don't have the RSE they need to stay safe and navigate becoming an adult.

It is time to make this change to ensure all children and young people have access to these subjects and to update the current statutory guidance for RSE which was introduced nearly 20 years ago, in 2000. We need high-quality, age-appropriate content that relates to the modern world, addressing issues like cyber bullying, 'sexting' and internet safety.

We will now begin a review and gather expert opinions to ensure these subjects really have a positive impact on young people.

Both young people themselves and parents are calling for a consistent approach on RSE. A survey of 16- to 24-year-olds carried out by the Terence Higgins Trust in July 2016 showed that 99% of young people thought RSE should be mandatory in all schools; and 1 in 7 had not received this education.

The amendments will continue to allow parents a right to withdraw children from sex education, and schools will be required to publish a clear statement of their policy and what will be taught, so that parents can make informed decisions. As is already the case where sex education is currently mandatory, schools will also have flexibility over how they teach these subjects so they can ensure their approach is sensitive to the needs of the local community and, in the case of faith schools, in accordance with the tenets of their faith.

Russell Hobby, General Secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT), said:

NAHT have long advocated age-appropriate sex education and PSHE for all pupils in all schools, to help prepare young people for the challenges they will encounter in their adult lives and the current challenges they will face beyond the school gates. We welcome the duties set out today and look forward to playing our part in ensuring RSE/PSHE delivers for young people.

Barnardo's Chief Executive, Javed Khan, said:

We are thrilled the government has listened to our campaign to provide all school children with age-appropriate school lessons on sex and healthy relationships to help keep them safe. Barnardo's has long campaigned for this vital education so children can better understand the dangers in the real world and online. We believe this will give children the knowledge and skills they need to help prevent them being groomed and sexually exploited.

Sarah Green, Co-director of the End Violence Against Women Coalition, said:

This is a real step forward in ending violence against women and girls and we commend the government for listening to experts and responding. It opens the door to high-quality RSE that will let young people have the essential conversations about consent, respect and LGBT equality. Quality RSE is a chance to talk with young people about how men and women treat each other, and to challenge the attitudes which minimise or make excuses for abuse of women and girls. It is a chance to emphasise such violence is always unacceptable, whether on our streets or in our schools.

1. The government has today (1 March 2017) published a policy statement which sets out the topics that the regulations and statutory guidance will need to reflect, and which the work of DfE will therefore consider.
2. We expect to see children and young people being taught the new curriculum in schools as soon as September 2019.

[Speech: Greg Hands' speech at the Civil Nuclear Showcase 2017](#)

Introduction

Thank you to Paul [Howarth] for that introduction and let me welcome you to the second day of the Civil Nuclear Showcase 2017.

Yesterday, the Secretary of State for International Trade spoke about how the UK nuclear sector remains open for business.

He outlined the huge investment opportunities across the length and breadth of the UK.

And he spoke of Brexit not as a retrenchment of our civil nuclear capability, but quite the opposite.

So, let me be clear.

Our nuclear safeguarding and safety regime will continue to be forward looking.

Our nuclear R&D expertise will remain pride of place.

And, we will enter into new trade agreements that will allow our nuclear programme to excel.

Later this afternoon, you'll hear country briefings on China, France and Central Europe.

You'll see the impressive level of opportunity out there which British expertise can fulfil.

So my message today is simple.

The UK will become the leading international partner of choice in the civil nuclear field – exporting our expertise right across the nuclear life cycle and right across the world.

We will do this by seizing the global opportunity out there, harnessing the UK's world leading capability.

We will ensure that very capability continues to develop and strengthen at home – underpinned by a robust industrial strategy.

And finally government, and in particular my Department for International Trade, will double-down on our support to ensure the UK's nuclear sector continues to grow.

Global opportunity

The very make-up of this room reflects a truly global industry.

From fuel services and waste management companies, to regulators and reactor builders – nuclear spans continents.

In the next 13 years, the overseas market for building new reactors will be worth £930 billion across 30 countries, and around £250 billion will be spent on decommissioning old ones.

In fact by 2030, the UK will be sizing a potential export market of £240 billion.

The opportunity, although impressive in size, should always be seen through

the lens of international standards and values.

The UK is rightly guided by our international non-proliferation obligations in relation to exporting nuclear-related items.

The UN's International Atomic Energy Agency provides a stable global framework, under which UK companies should have the confidence to take advantage of a world of opportunity.

And this confidence is well deserved.

UK export capability

Our world class nuclear supply chain capability is the product of over 60 years of experience and research.

It started with Calder Hall in Cumbria in 1956 – the world's first civil nuclear programme.

From this strong base, UK industry has plans for new nuclear reactors amounting to up to 18 gigawatt of new capacity over the coming years.

It has led some to claim the UK has become the focus of a nuclear renaissance.

Even though we do not have a nuclear reactor vendor of our own, UK companies possess experience in all existing technologies – and even some future ones.

So we're ideally placed to supply and impartially advise global partners on all aspects of nuclear new build.

Our firms have worked on some of the most challenging waste management and decommissioning programmes in the world, including the safe clean-up of nuclear sites from Japan to Germany to the United States.

We are specialists in the fuel life cycle, plant life maintenance and extension, and are also providing the other key skills required to support a nuclear programme – from education and training to financial and legal consultancy.

And this is translating into export success.

From the UAE, to Turkey and Central Europe, British companies have been winning contracts.

But our ability to look abroad depends on being strong at home.

We are focussing on innovative and high quality nuclear manufacturing through our Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre, which operates a 'Fit 4 Nuclear' programme to ensure a strong supply chain.

Cutting edge R&D is being developed in centres such as the Dalton Nuclear Institute at the University of Manchester, and plans are now being put in

place for the China-UK Joint Research and Innovation Centre.

And we are ensuring we have the right number of people with the right skills at the right time, through organisations such as the National Skills Academy for Nuclear and the National College for Nuclear.

But it's all very well having a business policy, an infrastructure policy, and a skills policy, but if they don't work together, we'll hit a ceiling.

Our Industrial Strategy joins these up and will unleash our potential.

Where we see opportunities overseas, we encourage UK companies to work together to win these contracts and where there are gaps, we will redirect investment in those areas.

All this shows a capability that is constantly being strengthened, that continues to set global standards, and that will ensure the UK becomes the international partner of choice in nuclear.

Government support

Before I close, I want to talk about the support available that underpins this ambition.

My department's nuclear team in London and our commercial officers based around the world – from Berlin to Beijing, will continue supporting UK businesses operating overseas, whether through operational support or via strategic government to government discussions.

I was in China earlier this year where I met with the China General Nuclear following their investment in the UK last year.

This investment stands to open many opportunities for UK companies throughout the supply chain.

I am pleased to hear that my department and CGN are also holding a related workshop this afternoon, to discuss how to develop a win-win approach to UK-China supply chain collaboration.

But it isn't just support at the diplomatic level.

Financing is being provided by UK Export Finance, the UK's export credit agency which is part of my department.

Just look at Wales based Flamgard Calidair, who, thanks to UKEF, will now provide fire and shut off dampers to the Chernobyl site – demolishing the previous containment building, whilst securing the remaining radioactive material.

And my department will be leading a supply chain mission to Hungary and the Czech Republic in March, as well as missions to the US Waste Management Symposia and the China International Nuclear Exhibition in Beijing.

We want companies from across the UK and across the supply chain signing up.

The level of tailored support on offer for UK companies is as much unprecedented as it is effective.

And the outcomes speak for themselves.

The Department for International Trade has already helped UK firms win hundreds of millions pounds worth of civil nuclear export contracts and we have ambitious targets for the next 5 years.

Conclusion

In conclusion, few industries will have a greater impact on our way of life in the coming decades than nuclear.

I am both delighted and proud that the UK is already seen as a world leader in this sector.

The UK will always be forward looking; we will always allow our companies to excel.

We will truly be the international partner of choice in nuclear.

Over 60 years ago, we helped lead the world in civil nuclear capability. Let's look to reclaim that mantle, starting today.

Thank you.

[BCC comments on government's Digital Strategy](#)

Commenting on the publication of the government's Digital Strategy, Marcus Mason, Head of Business, Education and Skills at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), said:

"The UK is still some way behind delivering access to a world-class digital infrastructure to businesses in all parts of the country. The rollout of superfast broadband needs to focus on new and existing business parks as their lack of connectivity remains a huge concern, and rectifying this would go some way to boosting business confidence.

"This strategy needs to have a focus on urgently addressing poor mobile coverage, which is particularly important for the businesses in rural areas, as our members confirm they struggle to get access to a stable mobile

service. Commitments should be taken to provide better access to information and increase coverage, and to ensure mobile operators offer a suitable service.

“Businesses will appreciate the commitment to developing digital skills, which can help boost productivity. A thriving digital economy however, needs to be underpinned by a pragmatic immigration system which allows firms to access the high and low skilled workers they need, where there are local labour shortages.

“We would welcome the opportunity to engage with the Business Connectivity Forum, and ensure the specific connectivity needs and interests of the UK’s business communities are represented.”

Ends

Notes to editors:

The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) sits at the heart of a powerful network of 52 Accredited Chambers of Commerce across the UK, representing thousands of businesses of all sizes and within all sectors. Our Global Business Network connects exporters with nearly 40 markets around the world. For more information, visit: www.britishchambers.org.uk

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[Good quality relationship and sex education in schools is key to the prevention of child abuse and violence in teenage relationships – Angela Rayner](#)

Angela

Rayner MP, Labour’s Shadow Secretary of State for Education, commenting on the Government’s plans to introduce statutory age-appropriate relationships

education from Key Stage One, said:

“I am absolutely delighted with the Government’s announcement that they will seek to introduce statutory, age-appropriate relationship and sex education for every child from Key Stage One.

“This is the culmination of years of campaigning by the Labour Party, charities and MPs across the House, and I’m pleased the Minister has listened to the arguments and acted appropriately.

“Good quality relationship and sex education in schools is key to the prevention of child abuse and violence in teenage relationships. It provides children with the knowledge, resilience and confidence they need to challenge exploitative relationships.

“Relationship and sex education is most effective when it sits as part of a whole-school approach embedding across the curriculum with well-trained staff. The Government must now ensure schools have the resources to deliver this.”

Website maintenance UPDATE

Over the last few days we have made some considerable changes to the infrastructure of our main website (www.bgs.ac.uk) and its hosted sites. We thank you for your patience while we fix any remaining issues. Found a bug? Please let us know!