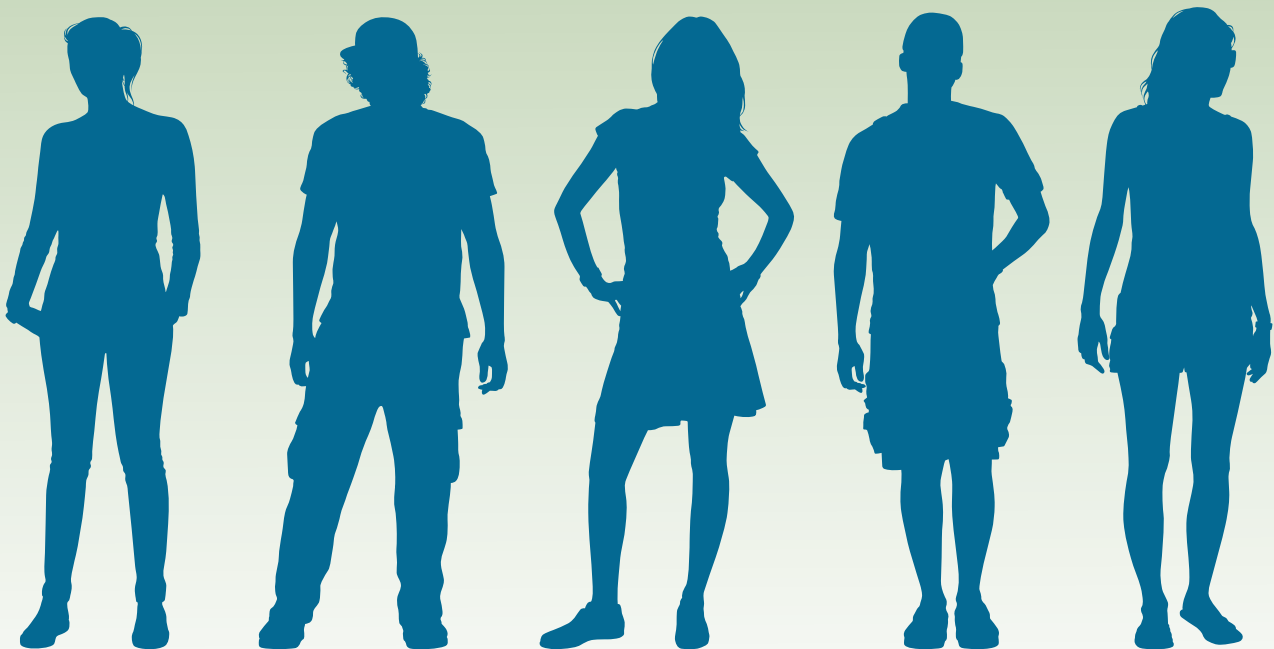

Evaluation

of the Sexual Health & Relationships Education Programme in East Dunbartonshire and Inverclyde





Who was this work conducted with and for what reason?

Both Inverclyde and East Dunbartonshire Council adopted a similar model of delivery of RSHP as Glasgow City had done, with both authorities taking the opportunity to update and localise some of the content. The evaluation targeted 3 main groups:

- **Pupils (P6 to S5)**
- **Parents/Carers**
- **Teachers (deliverers of the programme)**

The purpose of targeting all three groups was to:

- Gauge the experience of the delivery of the programme from the perspective of all 3 target groups in relation to content and implementation.
- To assess how well prepared each of those groups were in terms of the delivery of the programme, e.g. was training and provision of information and materials sufficient to allow all groups to contribute effectively to the implementation of the programme.
- To evaluate how well the content of the materials met the needs of the pupils

Pupil numbers:

- **16 mini discussion groups**
- **1,737 self complete questionnaires**

Parents/Carers:

- **9 in depth interviews (telephone)**
- **85 self complete questionnaires (online)**

Teachers:

- **13 in depth interviews (telephone and face to face)**
- **106 self complete questionnaires (online)**



What are the key findings of this report?

It is worth noting some limitations of the evaluation:

- Delay in implementation of the programme across both Council areas meant that stakeholders have not had the benefit of year on year delivery so in this instance it is not possible to measure longer term impact.
- Not all pupils contributing to the evaluation had experienced their full year stage at the time of the research, and the older year groups are underrepresented in the sample due to the constraints relating to school exams
- The self-selecting nature of the teacher and parent sample means that it is possible that those who were most positive/engaged were most likely to take part in the evaluation, and their views may not represent these audiences as a whole

Pupils – recall and knowledge of content

Recall of lessons at primary level was very high across both areas; however the P7 lesson that introduces that some families may have LGBT family members was an exception. Analysis of class returns forms indicate that a number of schools had not delivered this lesson at the time of evaluation. This could indicate some ongoing teacher discomfort with the lesson content.

Pupils in secondary schools recalled delivery of lessons around the more biological areas of the curriculum however they were less likely to recall lessons on consent, assertiveness, avoiding sexual harm, discrimination and media influences. This indicates that some elements of the programme had not been delivered.

Perhaps unsurprisingly the levels of pupil knowledge about aspects of relationships and sexual health, match what has been delivered in class. Therefore, pupil's levels of knowledge were highest for the subjects with highest levels of recall of delivery in classroom. This means knowledge was higher at primary stage than secondary with a majority claiming to know 'a large amount' or 'quite a lot' about each of the topics covered.



Lower levels of knowledge were found for subjects that seemed to not have been delivered. This reinforces the importance of school based RSHP as a source of knowledge.

Pupils – delivery

Pupils were very positive about the way the lessons had been delivered with more than 92% stating that the teacher had explained things well and that they understood most of the lessons. 91% of pupils agreed that the lessons were useful and 83% agreed that the lessons made them think about their actions and their consequences on others. It was noted that the lower the year group, the more likely the pupils were to agree with the positive statements.

Pupils – home links

The majority of primary pupils reported that they had talked to a parent/carer about their RSHP lessons, most commonly their mother or female carer. In secondary school it became increasingly less likely to talk to a parent/carer the higher the year group. Half of S1 pupils talked about the lessons at home compared to only 13% of S4 and S5 pupils. As found in other reports boys were less likely to talk to a parent.

61% of primary school pupils reported completing home activities compared to 14% of secondary pupils.

Pupils – Wee Books

The majority of those who had read the booklets provided a very positive appraisal, describing them as easy to read and understand (87%). However, although recall of 'The Wee Books of Life Love and Living' was high amongst primary pupils (72%) it seems they are less utilised by secondary schools where only (39%) recalled seeing them.

Parents/Carers – communication with school

Overall, 79% of parents knew their child was receiving RSHP at school. The majority (66%) had received notification from the school with 87% for primary dropping to 48% for secondary.

Over half of notified parents (59%) had been invited to a meeting or presentation by the school and around half of those reported that it had helped to inform and reassure them about the lessons.

Of the 79% who had been notified by the school, 76% reported that they had been provided with sufficient information; however,

parents would have liked more detailed information about the content and timetable.

Parents/Carers – communication with child or young person

Overall, 40% of parents reported seeing any RSHP home activities and a similar number (41%) reported having seen 'The Wee Books of Life Love and Living'. These figures were higher among parents of primary school pupils. The parents that mentioned homework activities and 'the wee book' did report that these helped to generate discussion with their child about sexual health and relationships

The findings suggest that RSHP lessons have had some influence on discussions at home with 38% stating that they talk either a little (27%) or a lot (11%) more about RSHP issues as a result of the lessons.



Parents/Carers — Programme

Overall satisfaction with lesson content (89%) and how the lessons were taught (86%) was high but again, higher from primary than secondary.

Teachers — Training

The majority of participating teachers (69%) had received RSHP training with (31%) receiving training in school and (42%) externally. Feedback on the external training by those who attended showed a very high level of satisfaction with the way in which it helped prepare staff for delivering the RSHP syllabus: 58% stated that the externally provided training was very helpful and a further 38% saying they found the training quite helpful. Overall, a majority of respondents (90%) said they felt well prepared for the lessons, with 34% stating that they felt very well prepared. Although qualitative feedback was generally positive, some teachers would have liked more specific training on delivering the lesson plans. However, overall the teachers sampled felt confident in delivering the lessons, with 90% of those who gave an opinion stating that they were either quite or very confident.

Teachers — Parental Engagement

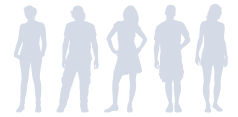
Whilst the majority (74%) of respondents stated that their school had invited parents to an information evening, this figure is bolstered by the primary school contingent (85%) rather than the secondary school group (7%). Overall, teachers were positive about the effectiveness of this parental engagement, with around half (53%) of secondary school teachers and 82% of primary school teachers reporting the engagement process to be quite or very effective.

Teachers — Delivery & Content

Teachers viewed the materials positively; highlighting their flexibility and ease of use, although some noted that they felt the lesson plans are too long.

Teachers rated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements regarding the lesson content and materials. There was strong agreement with the following statements: The content of the RSHP lessons support the experiences and outcomes expectations of Curriculum for Excellent (95% agreed slightly or strongly), The material helps promote discussions with/among pupils (93%), The lesson plans are helpful for teachers (92%), The RSHP programme will provide pupils with the building blocks for healthy and responsible attitudes towards both relationships and sexual health (90%), The content for each year is age appropriate (86%), Pupils enjoy the RSHP lessons (82%)

Possible improvements to the programme identified by teachers included updating/improving some of the resources, support from external agencies in delivering some of the lessons, and a need to communicate the importance of the RSHP programme to all relevant staff.



What are the implications of the findings?

Implementation and extent of delivery

The process of conducting the evaluation itself identified some issues in relation to the extent of implementation and delivery in some of the schools across the two local authorities. Although local authority and NHS GG&C staff believed the programme was being implemented, the reality 'on the ground' was in fact slightly different, with delays in delivery experienced across several schools. Various reasons were provided for this, including staffing and timetabling issues, particularly in the secondary schools. Even once the programme was being delivered, some teachers leading the implementation noted that not all staff within the schools were delivering all of the lesson content. Both of these issues indicate the importance of communication from the top (from local authority level), through to head teachers and onwards to teaching staff themselves to highlight the importance of the RSHP programme and ensure it is delivered as intended.

Experiences of delivery & content

Views from each of the key stakeholder groups were generally positive in terms of their experiences of the programme.

Pupils

Good levels of recall of the lessons were highlighted in the quantitative survey, and reports that they had found the lessons interesting and felt they had learned from them.

Pupils understood the importance of the topics in preparing them for later life, and felt that issues such as puberty, online safety, contraception and STIs were particularly important for them to learn about.

Parents

There is a high level of support for the programme among parents, although our qualitative sample also requested a greater level of engagement from schools in terms of informing them about the content and timing of the lessons



Teachers

Feedback from teachers indicated that the majority had felt prepared to deliver the lessons. Almost seven in ten had attended some form of training (either in-school or externally) and, although viewed positively, some issues in relation to the training available were raised, including examples of training being cancelled and some requests for a greater focus on specific lesson plans. Teachers also emphasised the importance of collaboration within their schools and generally felt well supported to deliver the lessons.

The involvement of external agencies

One area that was highlighted by all three stakeholder groups was the potential input of non-teaching professionals in the delivery of specific content (e.g. puberty, contraception and sexual health services). Although the programme was designed to be delivered by teaching staff rather than external agencies, all audiences suggested that there can be benefits of 'specialists' delivering some of the lesson content.