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**To: Education and Children's Services**  
**Date: 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

**Subject: Relationships and Sex Education in Coventry: Current Situation and Future Plans**

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## **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To inform the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board of the current situation and current plans for Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board are recommended:
- 1) To note the contribution that high quality Relationships and Sex Education can make to improve the lives of children and young people, support the plans to put forward RSE as a priority for the consideration of the newly established Primary and Secondary Partnerships, and promote RSE with fellow members and governing bodies of schools, through placing it on the agenda/supporting the work of Officers at school governors' meetings.
  - 2) To support ongoing lobbying to include Personal Social and Relationships Education as a statutory requirement for schools.
  - 3) To request case study presentations from Headteachers of schools where high quality Relationships and Sex Education is being delivered to be brought to a future Scrutiny Board meeting.
  - 4) To recommend the Cabinet Member considers including questions on Relationships and Sex Education as part of schools safeguarding audit s175/s157 audit providing challenge to schools when appropriate.

## **3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 Personal, social and health education (PSHE including relationship and sex education) is not currently a statutory requirement for schools. Primary schools can decide not to deliver RSE (Relationship and Sex Education) outside of the National Curriculum Science but must have an RSE policy stating this intention (applies to local authority maintained schools only). RSE is statutory in maintained Secondary Schools (DfE 2014) and schools must teach about HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted infections.
- 3.2 The DfE has also published [supplementary guidance](#) on PSHE education which reiterates previous Government policy on the subject. It states that while PSHE education remains a non-statutory subject, it is 'an important and necessary part of pupils' education. It goes on: *'Schools should seek to use PSHE education to build, where appropriate, on the statutory content already outlined in the national curriculum, the basic school curriculum and in*

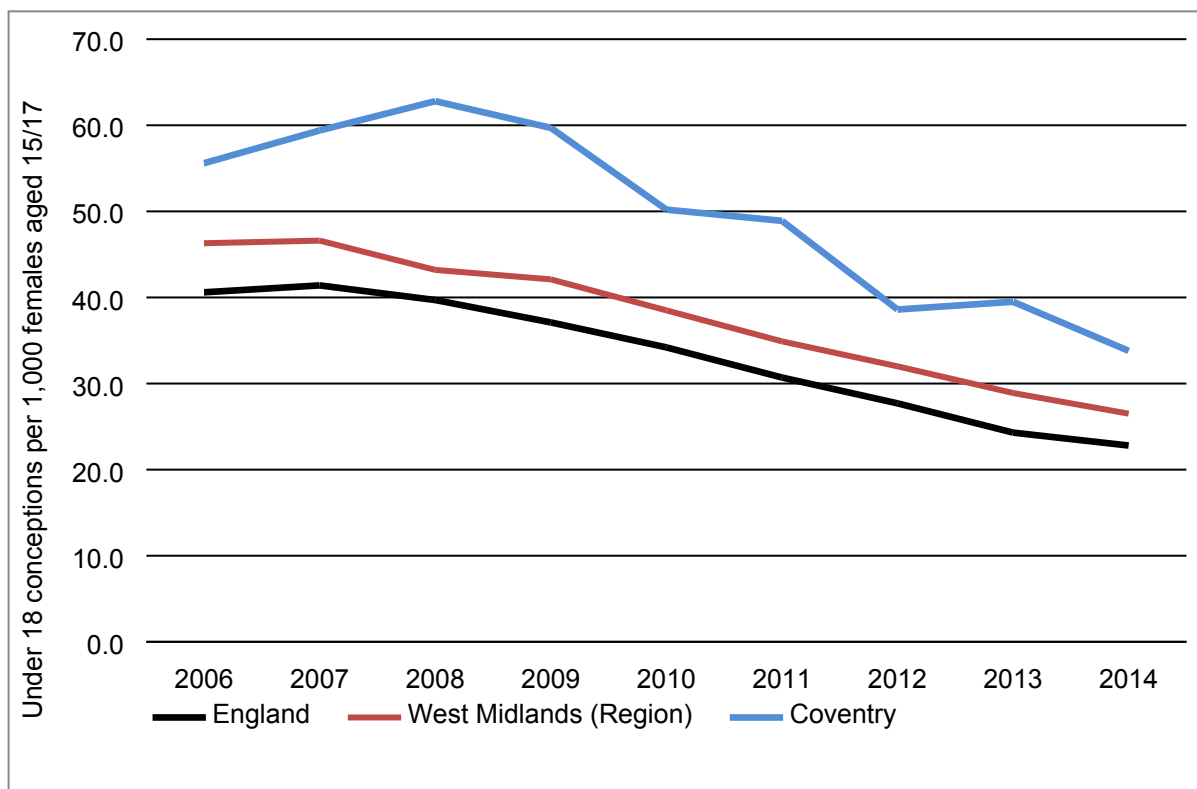
*statutory guidance on: drug education, financial education, sex and relationship education (SRE) and the importance of physical activity and diet for a healthy lifestyle.'*

- 3.3 From September 2015 OFSTED's key judgement Behaviour and Safety has been replaced by the key judgement Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare. 'Inspectors will evaluate the extent to which the school successfully promotes and supports pupils': including "***understanding of how to keep themselves safe from relevant risks such as abuse, sexual exploitation and extremism, including when using the internet and social media***"
- 3.4 The Education Select Committee established to consider the need for statutory provision in November 2014 published its report 'Life Lessons' in February 2015. The report recommends that PSHE including RSE becomes a statutory requirement within school's curriculum: "Governing bodies and proprietors should consider how children may be taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum." Keeping children safe in education (2015) – statutory guidance.
- 3.5 In January 2016, the voices of 2000+ young people were represented in the ['Heads or Tails'](#) report published by the Sex Education Forum, which found that 50% of young people did not learn at primary school about how to get help if they were sexually abused. Updated Government safeguarding guidance published in May 2016 falls short of requiring that all schools teach about safeguarding, but strengthens the wording of the guidance in relation to teaching about safeguarding.
- 3.6 There is still a drive from certain MPs, the National PSHE Association, National Children's Bureau and the Sex Education Forum to establish PSHE and SRE as statutory curriculum subjects. Lobbying continues to emphasise the importance of this area as a prevention strategy to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Abuse and Teenage Pregnancy.

#### **4 Local context**

- 4.1 Teenage pregnancy rates are decreasing nationally. In Coventry, the rates have fallen by approximately 45% between 1998 and 2014. Since 2008, the Coventry rates have been falling at a faster rate than nationally. In 2014, the under-16 conception rate in Coventry was similar rather than significantly higher than the national average for the first time. Whilst there are many factors which have influenced this decline, high quality Relationships and Sex Education is one of the key evidence based areas for action in this area.
- 4.2 Please see Figures 1 and 2 and Table 1 overleaf. Longford and Binley and Willenhall wards have the highest rates of teenage conceptions. However, as conception data is a composite of both live births and terminations (for which ward data cannot be supplied), this masks areas where there are high rates of termination in the City.

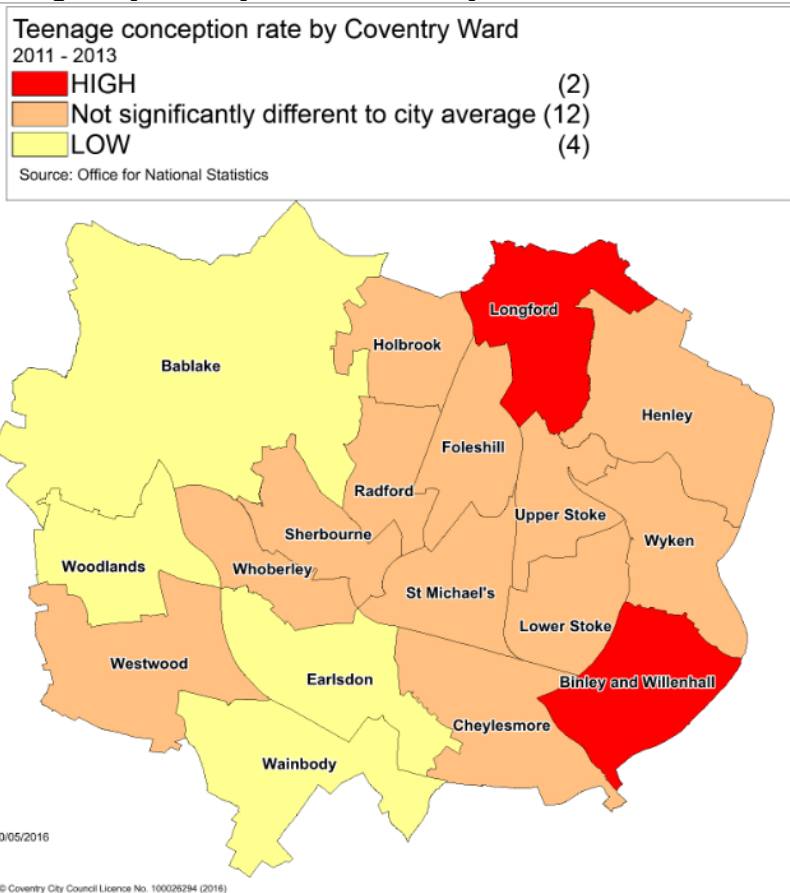
**Figure 1 Under 18 conception rate, per 1,000 females aged 16/17; 2006 -2014**



**Table 1 Under 18 conception rate, per 1,000 females, in the West Midlands, including % change over time**

	2002 Rate Per 1,000 females (15-17 yrs)	2014 Rate Per 1,000 females (15-17 years)	%change 2002- 2014
England	42.8	22.8	47%
West Midlands (Region)	47	26.5	44%
Birmingham	49.6	24.4	51%
<b>Coventry</b>	<b>64.3</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>47%</b>
Dudley	50.1	29.4	41%
Sandwell	62	38.3	38%
Solihull	34.3	16.7	51%
Stoke	62.6	42.4	32%
Walsall	64.1	37.5	41%
Wolverhampton	60.6	29.6	51%

**Figure 2: Teenage Pregnancy rates by Ward in Coventry**



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- 4.1 There are currently 35 academy schools in Coventry, 5 free schools and 81 maintained schools although this is constantly evolving. If all schools become academies none of them will be required to teach basic RSE. However, there are many schools demonstrating good practice with regard to RSE delivery across the City.
- 4.2 In 2010, following recommendations after a week-long visit from the Government's National Support Team for Teenage Pregnancy, the council undertook to provide support to schools on RSE through the Respect Yourself Programme manager and Healthy Schools programme. The Director of Children, Learning and Young People was committed to the delivery of RSE in schools.
- 4.3 The programme involved training school staff, informative and interactive parent's sessions, curriculum planning, school nurse 'drop in' clinics on school sites, templates for policies and parent letters, What Should We Tell the Children programmes to support parents to talk to their young people about relationships and sex. The use of the model lesson plans was audited between 2010 and 2012 and demonstrated a significant increase in the delivery of RSE.
- 4.4 Reductions in the scale and scope of LA advisers as schools now bring in the support they want means that LA direct support for schools is now minimal. Current support available/initiatives being delivered is outlined below, and it is proposed that there are new opportunities to share good practice and highlight RSE as a priority through the newly established Primary and Secondary School partnerships.
- 4.5 Standard lesson plans have been provided to all primary, secondary and special educational needs schools, are updated regularly and are available on [www.besavvy.org.uk](http://www.besavvy.org.uk) (Coventry's public facing information website about relationships and sexual health).

- 4.6 Additionally, the C-card (condom-distribution) scheme continues to be delivered by school nurses and education staff in schools in Coventry. City College and Henley College distributed nearly 1,300 condoms through the scheme during the first quarter of 2016/17
- 4.7 In 2014, all secondary schools were offered the opportunity to engage in three safe sex assemblies/year group sessions and C-card registrations by the 'Respect Yourself' programme. This work has now been integrated into the new Sexual Health contract, and is currently delivered to a small number of schools.
- 4.8 A survey was sent out to all schools in September 2015 regarding RSE delivery. 49 schools responded (mainly primary) with varied levels of RSE being delivered: the focus of RSE delivery was on healthy relationships, puberty, sexuality and child sexual exploitation. Survey results can be found at: <https://www.surveymonkey.net/results/SM-BHDVKQ32/>
- 4.9 The quality and amount of PSHE delivered in schools is highly dependent on senior management commitment, knowledge, skills and enthusiasm of the PSHE lead, therefore may not be consistently delivered. A rapidly changing workforce in schools also poses challenges.
- 4.10 However, schools currently have support with integrating PSHE into their curriculum. Training sessions are provided for staff and parents when requested through a single part time member of staff currently working in the People Directorate. Updates on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) are provided to Designated Safeguarding Leads and school staff and their duty with regard to these issues. Training is also provided on CSE to school governors.

## **5 Other useful background papers:**

- 5.1 Ofsted Nov 2014 Sexual exploitation of Children: It couldn't happen here, could it? A thematic Ofsted inspection to evaluate the effectiveness of local authorities current response to child sexual exploitation. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-exploitation-of-children-ofsted-thematic-report>
- 5.2 Half of 914 people aged 16-24 surveyed by Terrence Higgins Trust rated sex education they received as poor or terrible.

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/jul/12/sex-education-in-schools-unfit-for-smartphone-generation-survey-finds>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-link-between-pupil-health-and-wellbeing-and-attainment>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

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