

RU1: Brook Bitesize: Relationships and Sex Education

Area: Liverpool

Lead: Brook

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Brief Overview: Bitesize sessions around Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) are delivered regularly in Liverpool schools.

Bitesize Brook comprises a one day information giving event with a focus on sexual health and risk taking behaviour. This initiative works with up to 100 young people at a time, making it ideally suited to secondary schools and colleges.

Young people work in smaller teams of 12-15 and rotate around a number of themed learning zones. The focus is on delivering accurate information and expanding knowledge around the key themes such as: sex and the Law, contraception, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), condom use, sexuality, gender and body image. Risk taking behaviour such as alcohol use and sexual bullying are also covered, as these issues can have a direct link to sexual activity and sexual health. Bitesize Brook can also be offered as an event centred on specific issues like World AIDS Day or a programme delivered in a classroom as a Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) programme.

Rated **5/5**
*"good quality
SRE and good
reach into
Liverpool
schools."*
*Dr Penny Cook,
University of Salford*

In recent months, a major new achievement around improving young people's sexual health is that Bitesize has been embraced, very well received and positively evaluated in a number of church controlled faith schools including Catholic Archdiocese controlled schools in the city.

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These sessions included education around contraception, condom negotiation and use, sexuality, gender and stereotyping.

Target Group: Year 9 pupils. It is the belief that after receiving a Bitesize session at this age, it will empower the young person with the knowledge and skills before they may need them. It is also delivered to any year above this age dependent on the school.

Outcomes: A total of 2019 pupils received these sessions between March 2011 and March 2012. 80% had shown a 20% growth in knowledge of Sexual Health and Services and 94% had evaluated the session 7 out of 10.

Sustainability: The Bitesize program at present is funded by Commissioners to deliver twenty five sessions, each one being delivered to one hundred pupils. Schools who have engaged in the service would be happy to pay for it if they had funding within their budget to cover the cost. However, it takes a lot of coordination from the member of staff who takes ownership of the session for them to plan it without it having an impact on any core subjects within the timetable. At present, schools are happy to take responsibility for organising the event as it is a benefit to pupils and staff. Alternative free services available, combined with budget constraints threaten the sustainability of Brooks Bitesize event.

What made it work? The schools knowledge and understanding of Brook and their ethics around informed choices and delaying in sexual activity, their own pro-activity in providing RSE and wanting to work with partner agencies.

What could make it work better? More of a joined up approach throughout schools in the city cascading down from the Local Association of Secondary Heads group and communication between schools promoting services they have engaged in that would benefit each other.

Further information:

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