



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr David McGeorge  
Schools Health Education Unit  
3 Manaton Court  
Exeter  
EX2 8PF

18 June 2013

Dear Mr McGeorge,

Thank you for contacting me regarding sex and relationship education (SRE) in the draft National Curriculum.

I believe that all children should be taught a broad and balanced curriculum that prepares young people for their future and I agree that this should include good quality, age-appropriate sex and relationship education.

The previous Government sought to achieve this by making Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) a compulsory part of the National Curriculum at primary and secondary schools but unfortunately it was not possible to complete this prior to the 2010 General Election.

There was, however, an opportunity to debate this important issue further in the House of Commons during the Children and Families Bill that is currently being considered by Parliament and I supported an amendment on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2013 that would have made PSHE – including sex and relationship education – a statutory part of the National Curriculum at all 4 Key Stages. This Clause would also have ensured that PSHE was accompanied by age-appropriate guidance and parents would have retained the right to withdraw their children from sex and relationship education up to the age of 15.

It is important to ensure that all sex and relationship lessons are age appropriate and that there is an opportunity to consult on the likely content of these lessons but I believe this amendment would have helped to equip young people with the knowledge, skills and resilience they need to keep themselves safe.

I am disappointed therefore that the Government failed to support this and voted against including compulsory sex and relationship education in the National Curriculum at all Key Stages. I know this disappointment will also be shared by the 100 organisations and individuals who signed a letter, published in *The Times*, which criticised the Government for the absence of this approach in their draft National Curriculum.

As I am sure you are aware, in February 2013 the UK Government published their draft proposals for a new National Curriculum and a public consultation closed on 16<sup>th</sup> April



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2013. The Government are yet to respond to this consultation but it is important that they bear these concerns in mind.

I hope there will be a further opportunity to debate this issue in Parliament and to bring about the changes to sex and relationship that are needed to better prepare and protect children for the future.

Thank you once again for writing to me and for sharing your views

With very best wishes,

**Ben Bradshaw MP**



**Ben  
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