Sex Education Guidance

Introduction

This guidance is designed to support educators in delivering sex education sessions that promote the holistic wellbeing of every learner. In line with the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence, the sessions aim to help learners develop a strong sense of self, understand and manage their emotions, build respectful relationships, and critically engage with ideas around gender, sexuality, and health. The content is delivered in small groups—sometimes single-sex and sometimes mixed—to create a safe environment for open discussion and reflection.

1. Understanding Gender and Identity

Topics Covered:

- What is Gender?
- Gender Identity
- Gender Politics
- Gender Equality Movements

Wellbeing Outcomes:

- **Self-Awareness and Respect:** Learners reflect on their own identities and appreciate the diversity of gender identities, developing empathy and respect for others.
- **Critical Engagement:** Learners are encouraged to critically examine societal norms and stereotypes, empowering them to challenge oppressive language or actions.

2. Exploring Sexuality and Consent

Topics Covered:

- Sexuality and Different Orientations
- Consent: Expressing and Managing Feelings

Wellbeing Outcomes:

- **Effective Communication:** Learners develop the language and skills needed to express their feelings clearly and listen actively to others.
- **Informed Decision-Making:** Discussions foster the ability to make responsible choices regarding personal relationships and sexual health.
- **Respect for Diversity:** Emphasis on understanding and celebrating diverse sexual orientations, reinforcing the importance of inclusivity.

3. Building Healthy Relationships

Topics Covered:

- Understanding Healthy Relationships
- Family Structures, Mutual Respect, and Affection

Wellbeing Outcomes:

- Interpersonal Skills: Learners explore the qualities that underpin healthy relationships, such as trust, mutual respect, and effective communication.
- Emotional Resilience: The sessions help build resilience by encouraging learners to seek supportive relationships and manage conflicts constructively.

4. Understanding Human Reproduction and Bodily Changes

Topics Covered:

• Reproduction, Menstruation, Pregnancy, and Childbirth
• Hormonal Changes in Adolescence (physical developments such as voice change, breast growth, etc.)

Wellbeing Outcomes:

- Biological Understanding: Learners gain factual, age-appropriate knowledge about the reproductive system and the natural changes that occur during adolescence.
- Integration of Health and Identity: By linking bodily changes to personal wellbeing, learners are better able to integrate their evolving identities with their physical development.

5. Fostering Positive Body Image and Self-Worth

Topics Covered:

• Body Image and Self-Worth
• Reflection on Media Pressures and Cultural Standards of Beauty
• Discussion of the Variety of Human Bodies and Forms of Beauty

Wellbeing Outcomes:

- Self-Esteem: Sessions focus on nurturing a positive self-image and recognizing that a person's worth is not determined by physical appearance.
- Media Literacy: Learners critically assess how media and cultural narratives influence their ideas about beauty, promoting a healthy and realistic body image.
- Empowerment: Encouraging learners to celebrate diversity and reject narrow paradigms of beauty contributes to a stronger, more inclusive sense of self.

6. Addressing Bullying and Promoting Inclusivity

Topics Covered:

• Understanding Bullying
• Strategies for Responding to and Preventing Bullying
• Supporting Others Who Are Affected by Bullying

Wellbeing Outcomes:

- Conflict Resolution: Learners develop practical strategies for handling bullying, including how to seek help and support peers.
- Community Responsibility: The sessions emphasize the importance of creating a respectful and inclusive community, empowering learners to intervene in harmful situations.
- Emotional Wellbeing: By addressing bullying, learners are encouraged to cultivate a safe learning environment where everyone feels valued and understood.

Delivery and Learning Environment

- Small Group Discussion: Sessions are designed to be interactive and supportive, with a focus on open conversation about personal experiences and feelings.
- Flexible Grouping: Offering both single-sex and mixed group sessions ensures that every learner feels comfortable asking questions and engaging in sensitive topics.
- Parental and Community Involvement: Educators are encouraged to invite feedback from parents and community members to tailor the sessions further to the needs and values of the learners.

Conclusion

This tailored guidance not only provides essential factual content on topics of gender, sexuality, relationships, and bodily changes but also integrates the Wellbeing outcomes central to the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence. By embedding self-awareness, respect, communication, and critical thinking into each session, educators can help learners build the skills and confidence they need to navigate their personal and social lives in a healthy, informed manner.

This revised guidance ensures that the sex education curriculum is not only informative but also deeply connected to the overall wellbeing and personal development objectives of the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence.