

SCHOOLS — SEXUAL EDUCATION

181. Hon Alison Xamon to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to research by the Australian Institute of Family Studies regarding the impacts of early puberty on behaviour and psychosocial development, and I ask:

- (a) is the delivery of sexual education compulsory in Western Australian schools;
- (b) if no to (a), why not;
- (c) if yes to (a), in what school year levels is sexual education required to be delivered;
- (d) are there any government primary schools in Western Australia which do not deliver sexual education (sex-ed) to students; and
- (e) if yes to (d), please provide the names of schools that do not deliver sex-ed to students?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a) All Western Australian Schools are required to teach the content of the Pre-primary to Year 10 Western Australian Curriculum, which includes sexuality education. Schools must use the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline to plan student learning programs, assess student progress and report to parents.

Public school programs recognise that parents are the primary source/providers of sex education to their children. Parents may request an exemption for their child's attendance at classes at which a particular part of a course of study is taught (including sexuality education), on the grounds of conscientious objection (s 72 of the *School Education Act 1999*). The grounds for conscientious objection may include the culture, values and/or beliefs of parents and students. The request is made in writing to the principal. Parents who are concerned about program delivery in their child's school are encouraged to discuss the matter with the principal. School programs should complement both family and community health education programs.

- (b) N/A
- (c) Specific age-appropriate sexuality education content is prescribed within Years 1–10 of the Western Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education syllabus. Sexuality education is also delivered under the broader umbrella of relationships education.

Relationships education supports students to develop knowledge and skills to engage in age-appropriate relationships with others. The concept of body awareness is first introduced in Pre-primary and is further developed throughout the core content of the Western Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education learning area. Skills, knowledge and strategies related to the management of situations that promote respectful relationships are developed from Pre-primary to Year 10.

- (d)–(e) The Department does not collect data on individual school learning programs. All schools are required to deliver the content that is set out in the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline. Schools determine the most effective teaching and learning strategies to deliver the sexual education content, taking into account their local context and the learning needs of students.