



BEXLEY LABOUR GROUP PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LGBTQ+ Relationship and Sex Education in schools

7th May 2024

Press release: Majority of Bexley Cllrs support LGBTQ+ sex education

Bexley Labour Group is pleased that at the full council meeting on the 24th April, a motion in the name Councillor Stefano Borella (Leader of Bexley Labour Group, was discussed to support the compulsory LGBT+ inclusive relationship and sex education in all state funded primary and secondary schools in Bexley and across the country, this was seconded by:

Cllr. Nicola Taylor, Shadow Cabinet Member for Adult Social care, and Health who said:

‘I was very happy to support this motion, as we must never allow the hard-won rights by the LGBTQ+ community to go backwards and we must keep fighting for tolerance, respect, and inclusivity in our society, hate never wins’

Cllr. Stefano Borella, Leader of Bexley Labour Group said:

‘At Wednesday Council meeting, I was delighted to propose a motion that supports compulsory LGBTQ+ inclusive relationship and sex education, as a gay man I remember the 80s growing up in Bexley schools, where none of these issues were discussed in school, all you heard were appalling reactionary headlines from the Daily Mail and the Sun, which did nothing to promote equality and inclusion. Thanks to the last Labour Government this changed, and we saw a more inclusive approach to sex education, and much improved rights for the LGBTQ+ community’

Bexley Labour Group were happy to support the amendment proposed by Cllr. Patrick Adams, Conservative. In the spirit of cooperation, Bexley Labour group voted with the Conservative administration on the amendment that was seconded by Councillor Chris Ball, Labour. Bexley Council must continue to take a strong stand to support the LGBTQ+ community.

Sadly only one Cllr. voted against the amendment, which was the now independent, former Conservative Cllr. For Crayford, Cllr. Felix Di Netimah, who came up with some bizarre comments, condemning identity politics.

Cllr. Chris Ball, Shadow Cabinet Member for Housing, Climate Change, Transport, Environment and Leisure:

‘I was very happy to second the motion, proposed by Cllr. Adams as this would send out a strong message that the council supports tolerance and respect of the LGBT+ community, and we do not tolerate those who wish to divide us, education is a key part of delivering a more tolerant and inclusive society.’

ENDS-

Notes to editors

- For further information, please contact Cllr Stefano Borella.



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From Councillor Stefano Borella:

London Borough of Bexley notes that LGBT+ inclusive relationships and sex education is crucial to the development of young LGBT+ people, and in creating a more tolerant and open society. Council notes that the current climate for LGBT+ people in the UK means that that nearly half - including 64 per cent of trans pupils - are bullied for being LGBT+ in Britain's schools. Council notes that the repeal of Section 28 was a pivotal moment for LGBT+ rights, and that the UK must never move backwards on LGBT+ rights by stopping LGBT+ inclusive education in schools. Council notes it is vital that all children receive comprehensive and inclusion relationships and sex education regardless of their parents' beliefs.

Bexley Council welcomes the introduction of statutory Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), which all primary and secondary schools in England respectively will be required to teach from September 2020. Council affirms unequivocally its support for compulsory LGBT+ inclusive Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education in all state funded primary and secondary schools. Council commits to ensuring that schools are delivering RSE in line with new Government guidance.

Amendment to the original motion that was agreed by the majority of the council

This Council notes that LGBT+ inclusive relationships and sex education is crucial to the development of young LGBT+ people, and in creating a more tolerant and open society. Council notes with concern that there are various reports and surveys highlighting that LGBT+ young people face being bullied in school, that teachers have witnessed homophobic bullying in schools, and that across society LGBT+ people are reported to have lower life satisfaction scores than the UK average.

Council therefore welcomes the Government publishing the 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' statutory guidance in 2019 and the Government's recent consultation on 'Gender questioning children: draft schools and colleges guidance'.

Council agrees that all publicly funded primary and secondary schools in Bexley should provide information to young people about healthy relationships including LGBT+ inclusive Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education, and that they should support pupils in accordance with the guidance and their role safeguard in and promoting the welfare of children for whom they provide education.

Council further agrees it is vital that all children receive comprehensive and inclusive relationships and sex education, and in delivering that schools should work with parents when planning and delivering Relationships Education and RSE so that all of the compulsory subject content is age appropriate, developmentally appropriate and taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need.

And Council also notes and welcomes the actions that have already been taken by the London Borough of Bexley to support and promote equalities, diversity and inclusion, including the 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2022-2026', and the Council's commitment to continue to work with our partners to support all communities in Bexley."