

Knights of Saint Columba

Accrington Council 188

Bulletin No.2- H33

Source Christian Institute

The Department for Education (DfE) has underlined the importance of schools consulting parents over the teaching of Relationships Education.

The statement comes after the Head of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), David Isaac, said parents should not be consulted about teaching LGBT issues in primary schools.

He said the Government's requirement for parents to be consulted encourages them to be "negative or anxious" about the controversial subject.

"Engagement between parents and schools plays a key role in the education of children."

Role of parents

DfE guidance states that "schools must consult parents in developing and reviewing their policy", adding that schools must ensure their policy "meets the needs of pupils and parents and reflects the community they serve".

A DfE spokesperson said: "Engagement between parents and schools plays a key role in the education of children.

"It allows everyone to understand what is being taught and why, and develops a shared set of values. However it does not mean that parents have a veto over curriculum content."

Age-appropriate teaching

The Christian Institute's Education Officer John Denning said it is right that the DfE is insisting on parental consultation, as it is parents, not the state, "who are ultimately responsible for their children's upbringing and education".

He said such consultation "helps schools make sure they are fulfilling their legal duty to provide education which is appropriate to children's religious background".

"The fact is that some schools do abuse their position to push particular viewpoints, which is not appropriate. The consultation process helps guard against this."

He also welcomed the Government's recent clarification that from September 2020, any teaching in other subjects that overlaps with Relationships Education must also be included in consultations with parents.

Bernard Holden MBE JP

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