

Toddlers Shown Cartoon Pics of Adults Watching Porn

Children as young as 4 are being shown cartoon pictures of adults watching pornography during sex education classes, a BBC News feature has revealed.

Sex education consultant Lynnette Smith runs sessions for primary schools, in which children give a thumbs up or down to different cartoon scenarios, such as grabbing a woman's breasts or pulling at a boy's underwear.

The students are also asked when is acceptable to "have a little rummage in your underwear", and the answer given is "somewhere private like the bathroom."

But one teaching union has warned that such sessions may not be suitable for all primary schools because "Innocence is precious."

Smith runs the same presentation for children between the ages of 4 and 11.

A BBC reporter sat in on one of Smith's sessions for 7- to 9-year-olds at a primary school in North Lincolnshire.

Children were heard giving "cries of disgust" and laughing during the half-hour presentation, which also involved the students naming body parts from a picture of a naked girl.

Parents at the school were said to be horrified when first informed that the presentation would take place.

One mother said: "I thought, 'No they're only 7.' "

During the session, other scenarios given the "thumbs down" included looking under toilet doors when someone is inside and showing your bottom to a camera.

Russell Hobby, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers cautioned that: "You don't want to start too young."

He said conversations about online dangers in primary schools should be "general warnings that they may see things they don't like online and advice on what to do about it when they do."

But Lynette Smith has defended her program, saying: "My bottom line is to ask, 'From what age are they vulnerable?' "

Sex and relationships education is not compulsory in primary schools, despite pressure from various campaign groups.

David Cameron said in September this year that children can be warned about the dangers of online pornography without an overhaul of sex education.