# Parents protest after sex education book withdrawn from Little Sutton Primary reading list



Parents at Little Sutton Primary School in Sutton Coldfield were left outraged after a book entitled *Mummy Laid an Egg* by Babette Cole appeared on the reading list for Year 2 pupils, causing considerable controversy and leading to its withdrawal by the headmaster. The book, aimed at explaining reproduction through cartoon-like illustrations, has been described by concerned parents as containing "graphic" images of sexual positions that are unsuitable for six-year-olds. One mother, who brought the issue to light, prompted a domino effect of complaints among other parents upon revealing the book's content.

The illustrations in question, which depict playful yet explicit scenarios involving skateboards and balloons, led to objections that underscored a growing concern regarding the appropriateness of explicit sexual education for young children. Many parents expressed their dismay over not being consulted about the sexualised content included in their children's education. Current guidelines on relationship, sex, and health education allow parents the option to withdraw their children from such lessons, but parents felt this choice was not effectively communicated to them.

The situation resonates with earlier criticisms voiced by advocacy groups, including The Christian Institute, which had previously denounced *Mummy Laid an Egg* and other explicit educational materials as inappropriate for primary school children. Back in 2011, this evangelical group had argued that such content could be damaging and inappropriate for children as young as five. Their concerns echo the sentiments shared by many parents today, who believe that introducing sexual education at such an early age is misguided.

Despite the headmaster's decision to remove the book from the curriculum, the withdrawal came only after a number of parents voiced their protests. One father in particular shared his anger, describing the illustrations as inappropriate, stating, "It's against the law to show these images." He went on to insist that discussions about genitalia and reproduction should not be introduced until at least Year 5, when children are better equipped to understand these concepts.

This incident raises broader questions about how parents and educators navigate the sensitive area of sex education. While many educational professionals argue for the importance of teaching children about bodies and relationships at an early age, the methods and materials used remain deeply contentious. For some, the candid approach of books like *Mummy Laid an Egg* provides an amusing and educational way to discuss reproduction; for others, it appears to violate the boundaries of what is suitable for young learners.

The debate surrounding the book is not novel. Discussions regarding age-appropriate sex education often feature varying opinions on how explicit imagery should be handled in educational contexts. Various experts have advocated for age-appropriate resources tailored to introduce complex subjects in a way that is both informative and sensitive to children's developmental stages. However, parental concerns often call these materials into question, as evidenced by the reactions from the Sutton Coldfield community.

In an age where awareness of children’s emotional and psychological welfare is paramount, it remains to be seen how schools will balance educational needs with parental expectations. Ultimately, the tussle over *Mummy Laid an Egg* illustrates an ongoing societal debate on sexual education's place in primary curricula, highlighting the need for clear communication, enhanced parental involvement, and thoughtful selection of teaching materials.

### Reference Map

1. Parent concerns regarding *Mummy Laid an Egg* and its withdrawal from the curriculum.
2. Description of the book's content from various parental perspectives.
3. Historical context on criticisms of explicit educational materials.
4. Public sentiment and discussions regarding the appropriateness of the book.
5. Overall implications for the future of sex education in primary schools.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2056820/teacher-pulls-graphic-sex-education> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/weird-news/mum-brands-kids-book-explaining-21636027> - A mother discovered the children's book 'Mummy Laid an Egg!' by Babette Cole in a doctor's waiting room. The book, intended to explain reproduction to children, includes illustrations of clowns demonstrating sexual positions, leading the mother to describe it as a 'child-friendly Kama Sutra guide'. Her Facebook post about the book garnered significant attention, with thousands of shares and comments from other parents expressing surprise and amusement at its content. The book's candid approach to explaining reproduction has sparked discussions among parents regarding its appropriateness for young readers.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2011/mar/09/sex-education-criticised-christians?CMP=twt_iph> - In 2011, The Christian Institute, an evangelical Christian group, criticized the use of certain sex education materials in English primary schools. Among the materials was Babette Cole's 'Mummy Laid an Egg', which contains illustrations depicting sexual positions, including a man and woman on a skateboard and wearing red noses. The group argued that such explicit content was unsuitable for children as young as five and encouraged parents to intervene in the teaching of these materials.
4. <https://www.mummypages.co.uk/we-have-officially-found-the-funniest-sex-education-book-ever> - A mother shared her experience with the book 'Mummy Laid an Egg!' by Babette Cole, found in a doctor's waiting room. The book, intended to explain reproduction to children, includes humorous and candid illustrations of sexual positions, leading the mother to describe it as a 'child-friendly Kama Sutra guide'. Her Facebook post about the book went viral, with thousands of shares and comments from other parents expressing surprise and amusement at its content. The book's candid approach to explaining reproduction has sparked discussions among parents regarding its appropriateness for young readers.
5. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/child-friendly-kama-sutra-mum-baffled-over-kids-bizarre-sex-education-book/JDTURUPYHXGSSSBJNB6VQ4FSQI/> - A mother in New Zealand was perplexed by the children's book 'Mummy Laid an Egg!' by Babette Cole, found in a doctor's waiting room. The book, intended to explain reproduction to children, includes illustrations of clowns demonstrating sexual positions, leading the mother to describe it as a 'child-friendly Kama Sutra guide'. Her Facebook post about the book garnered significant attention, with thousands of shares and comments from other parents expressing surprise and amusement at its content. The book's candid approach to explaining reproduction has sparked discussions among parents regarding its appropriateness for young readers.
6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/9319129/Ask-Lorna-sex-education-for-toddlers.html> - In a 2012 column, Lorna Bradbury addressed a reader's question about sex education for a three-year-old. She recommended Babette Cole's 'Mummy Laid an Egg!' as a suitable book for introducing the topic. The book presents the facts of life through a humorous story where children explain reproduction to their parents, using simple sketches and candid illustrations. Bradbury noted that while the book is jolly, its candor may not be suitable for every child or parent, particularly the illustrations depicting sexual positions.
7. <https://www.coramlifeeducation.org.uk/rse-for-Y6-and-P7> - Coram Life Education, an organization focused on relationships and sex education, includes Babette Cole's 'Mummy Laid an Egg' in their suggested reading list for 3-7 year-olds. The book is listed alongside other resources aimed at introducing children to topics of relationships, reproduction, and families. The inclusion of this book indicates its use in educational settings to discuss these subjects with young children, though its candid illustrations have been a point of contention among some parents and educators.