

Sex and Relationship Education Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 Our school's policy on sex and relationship education is based on the DfES document *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance* (DfES 0116/2000). We recognise Sex and Relationship Education as the policy's full title, but for brevity's sake we will refer in the rest of this policy simply to 'sex education'.

1.2 In the DfES document, sex education is defined as 'learning about physical, moral and emotional development'. The guidance states, 'It is about understanding the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health'.

1.3 Sex education is part of the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum in our school. Through sex and relationships education, we inform our pupils about sexual issues. We do this within a framework of Christian values with regard to morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. Sensitivity and respect should be shown to all pupils when teaching about personal relationships and sex education. We do not use sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 We make our children aware of:

- the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults;
- the way humans reproduce;
- respect for their own bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term, and loving relationship;
- the importance of family life;
- moral questions;
- relationship issues;
- respect for the views of other people;
- sex abuse, and how to seek help and support on this or on any other sexual matters.

3 Context

3.1 We teach about sex in the context of the school's aims and values. While sex education in our school means that we give children information about sexual behaviour, we do this with an awareness of the moral code, and of the values which underpin all our work in school. In particular, we teach about sex in the belief that:

- sex education is part of a wider process of social, personal, spiritual and moral education;
- children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies;
- children should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity;
- children will learn how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and other forms of technology;
- it is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect;
- children need to learn the importance of self-control;

- the sanctity of marriage is an important Christian belief;
- pupils should learn the significance of families as key building blocks of community and society;
- children will be made aware of the way in which advertising and the media influences their views.

4 Organisation

4.1 We teach about sex through different aspects of the curriculum. We carry out the main sex education in our personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. We also deliver sex education through other subject areas (for example, Science, PE and RE) which we believe contributes significantly to children's knowledge and understanding of their own bodies, and how they are changing and developing.

4.2 In PSHE we teach children about relationships, and we encourage children to discuss issues. We teach about the parts of the body, and how these work, and we explain to the children what will happen to their bodies during puberty. For example, we teach the children that boys' voices will change during puberty, and we explain menstruation to both boys and girls. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it.

4.3 In Key Stage 1 we teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the fact that people are not all the same, and that we need to respect each other. In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes, and the main stages of the human life cycle, in greater depth.

4.4 In Year 6 we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. We liaise with the Local Health Authority about suitable teaching materials to use with our children in these lessons. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are born, how children's bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children.

4.5 We offer a meeting for all parents and carers of children in Year 6 to discuss this particular programme of lessons, to explain what the issues are, and how they are taught, and to see the materials the school uses in its teaching.

4.6 In Key Stage 2 RE children will learn about the commitment of marriage and how this underpins the nurture and care of children in the family.

5 The role of parents

5.1 The school is well aware that the primary role in children's sex education lies with parents and carers. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. To promote this objective we:

- inform parents about the school's sex education policy and practice;
- answer any questions that parents may have about the sex education of their child;
- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about the arrangements for sex education in the school;

- we believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing bodies and their increasing responsibilities.

5.2 Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education programme that we teach in our school. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from sex education lessons, they should discuss this with the headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard.

6 The role of other members of the community

6.1 We encourage other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support to the children with regard to health education. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the school nurse and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our sex education programme. Other people that we may call on include local clergy, social workers and youth workers.

7 Confidentiality

7.1 Teachers conduct sex education lessons in a sensitive manner, and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the reference seriously, and deal with it as a safeguarding matter. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. They will not investigate, but will immediately inform the named person for child protection issues about their concerns. The headteacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals.

8 The role of the headteacher

8.1 It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our sex education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach about sex effectively, and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

8.2 The headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school sex education programme, and ensures that all adults who work with our children on these issues are aware of the school policy, and work within its framework.

8.3 The headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis, and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

9 Monitoring and review

9.1 The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors the effectiveness of our sex education policy on an annual basis. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification. The Curriculum Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the sex education programme, and makes a record of all such comments.

This policy will be reviewed annually