

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

POLICY

St. Nicholas School believes that learning about sexual development and relationships can greatly contribute to the ability of our pupils to lead fulfilling lives. It develops self-esteem and confidence, personal autonomy and individual responsibility. Our aim is to give our pupils the skills to conduct their relationships with assertiveness and dignity, and to avoid exploitation. We therefore aim to give them the skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to achieve this. This involves imparting a body of agreed knowledge to all students within a given key stage, together with highly individualized programmes to meet the specific needs of individual pupils. We assert the view that people with learning disabilities should not be excluded from forming loving and caring relationships during their lives; we recognize that whilst for some of our students expectations of marriage and parenthood are unrealistic, good sexual health is a possibility for all. Partnership between school, home and outside agencies is crucial in ensuring the success of this programme. The policy has been developed in accordance with the curriculum guidance July 2000.

AIMS

- To provide knowledge and information to which the pupils have an entitlement.
- To build upon the knowledge, skills and understanding the pupil has acquired through the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme.
- To raise pupil's self-esteem and confidence.
- To help pupils to understand their sexual feelings and behaviour so that they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives.
- To develop the skills of decision making, making choices, assertiveness and communication which are necessary in a range of situations.
- To promote acceptable and appropriate behaviour in public and private situations.
- To give practice in strategies which reduce the risk of exploitation, misunderstanding and abuse.
- To provide the confidence to be an active member of society.
- To enable access to information and facilities.

POLICY INTO PRACTICE

THE PROGRAMME

All pupils experience a programme of sex and relationships education (SRE), at a level that takes into account their age, and their physical and cognitive development.

- KS1
- * Who am I?
 - * What do I look like?
 - * Naming main parts of the body.
 - * Life-cycles – human and animal.

- KS2
- * Body parts
 - * Privacy
 - * Body changes at puberty.
 - * People I know / strangers.

- * Appropriate ways to behave with people I know / strangers.

KS3/4 * Menstruation

- * Masturbation
- * Sexual intimacy and relationships.
- * Consent and how to say 'No'.
- * Safer sex
- * Personal hygiene
- * Sexual preference and orientation
- * Pregnancy and birth
- * Contraception

Post 16 * Relationships

- * Personal hygiene
- * Sexual intercourse and conception
- * Contraception
- * 'Choices' clinic
- * Sexually transmitted diseases
- * Abortion
- * Keeping safe from sexual abuse

The biological elements of sex and relationships education, including naming body parts, puberty and human development are part of the science programme, and are therefore compulsory.

TEACHING METHODS

The school is supported by an NHS professional specializing in sexual health with specific expertise in training people with and caring for those with learning disabilities. Joint workshops run by these NHS professionals and school staff are provided for parents, carers, teachers, TAs from this school, as well as in an outreach capacity for other schools. This work supports the programme of work at St. Nicholas, and sessions in the Senior Department are planned and presented by school staff. Sessions take place in familiar locations in which the students feel comfortable. The programme provides for plenty of repetition to assist the students to consolidate their understanding. Material is presented in a lively, practical way, using the correct names for body parts and functions, visual and sensory materials and active methods of learning. Students are grouped in Key Stage ability groups, with flexibility for particular students to access additional areas of the curriculum according to their needs. Anatomically correct models, together with age appropriate magazine and video materials created specifically for students with severe learning difficulties, are integral parts of the programme. Usually sessions begin with the whole group together, and then split into gender groups for further discussion and consolidation. No teacher is expected to undertake sex and relationships education teaching without the support of colleagues in school, the nursing service and specific training.

CONTRACEPTIVE ADVICE

Students are taught that in a context of a committed and loving relationship, using a condom is important when having sexual intercourse. It is taught as an effective contraceptive preventing pregnancy, and as being important in preventing the transmission of STD's. Questions about other forms of contraception, or STDs such as HIV / AIDS, are answered accurately and honestly within the pupil's ability to understand. If a pupil requires further personal advice about contraceptive use, counseling and support will be sought from the appropriate agencies and personnel.

SEXUAL ABUSE

The school takes Safeguarding issues seriously and young people who have been affected by sexual abuse, or who make a disclosure during the teaching of RSE are appropriately supported by trained professionals within the school. The information is shared with the school's Safeguarding lead, usually the Head teacher and ways to proceed are decided.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

The sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (eg: food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of performing and or/ others performing on them, sexual activities. CSE can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition, for example, the persuasion to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones with no immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/ young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and /or economic or other resources.

"Children and young people who are sexually exploited are the victims of child sexual abuse, and their needs require careful assessment. They are likely to be in need of welfare services and- in many cases- protection under the Children Act 1989. This group includes children who have been sexually abused through the misuse of technology, coerced into sexual activity by criminal gangs or are the victims of trafficking" *Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation (2009) DCSF Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Boards*

Fundamental to the teaching of Relationships and Sex within St Nicholas are core themes regarding dignity, consent and choice. We recognize that our young people are vulnerable learners and may need additional support when presented with situations which may compromise their choices. All teachers have had training regarding children at risk from Sexual exploitation, and Safeguarding leads within the school are clear about the risk assessment toolkit, and frameworks for categorising risks our young people may face. In cases where the indicators become apparent, or when a disclosure regarding exploitation and abuse is made, Safeguarding and support processes are immediately put into place. The Safeguarding lead will follow referral processes and the child or young person will access therapy or counselling provided either by the school, or through CAMHS, as agreed through the Creative Therapies team and Multi-agency working following the referral. In most instances, this support is already in place for children and young people who may have been identified as vulnerable or are exhibiting behaviours which cause concern and may allude to Sexual Exploitation and abuse. In some instances where specific concerns lead to specialized therapy, for example young people at the risk of becoming sex offenders themselves, risk assessments within the school are in place and staff working with such students have access to Supervision by a trained Clinical Supervisor, whilst the referral goes through. This is to ensure staff remain safe and able to share their concerns, remain resilient and able to keep the children and young people safe.

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

As of 31st October 2015, Schools have a mandatory duty to report known cases of FGM to the police. FGM is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003. It is a form of child abuse and violence against women. It comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. The duty to report is a personal duty which requires the professional who becomes aware of the case to make a report. Within St Nicholas, the first report will be a Safeguarding incident

form, taken to the Safeguarding lead, who will then act immediately. Teachers have received training about the signs that a girl may be at risk of FGM, or if the procedure has already taken place. Further details regarding types of FGM and words in foreign languages associated with the practice can be obtained online or through the RSE co-ordinator. FGM is not a matter that can be left to be decided by personal preference. It is an extremely harmful practice. Professionals should not let fears of being branded 'racist' or 'discriminatory' weaken the protection and support required by vulnerable girls and women. FGM is a form of child abuse and has severe and significant physical and mental health consequences. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practice FGM. Professionals should also note that the girls and women at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it might be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject.

MASTURBATION

The school respects the privacy of individuals when they use private areas such as the toilets. Pupils who may appear to be sexually aroused within their class and choose to touch themselves are asked to stop. If a pupil struggles to comply with this request, then the student may be asked to leave the classroom discreetly and sensitively. The school can provide social stories for pupils who may need additional support understanding about keeping their bodies private. This would be done with discussions from the parents about ways to proceed in this matter. Of paramount importance is keeping pupils safe and ensuring the safety of those around them. Maintaining dignity and using opportunities to learn about privacy and safety are important.

PARENTS

Working in partnership with parents is crucial in ensuring the effective implementation of the RSE programme. We have developed packs of resources based on the resources used in school which parents are encouraged to request to view at home and discuss with their child. They may also borrow copies of the videos that we use as part of the programme. We hold a meeting for parents each year at which issues relating to the sex and relationships education programme are discussed and parents can view the resource materials. The school nurse always attends these meetings. Any specific concerns that parents may have are communicated at the termly parent / teacher meeting or via the student's home-school book or by letter. Parents may withdraw their child from the sex and relationships education programme, excepting the elements that are contained within the statutory Science curriculum. This is explained to parents before the commencement of a block of work, and parents must contact the PSHE coordinator or the Headteacher if they wish to withdraw their child.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be monitored on a yearly basis by the Curriculum Co-ordinator to keep up to date with any adjustments to statutory legislation or curriculum and any changes will go via the Governing Body when necessary.

The school monitors the effectiveness of the aims, content and methods of this programme, asking for parents views when they borrow the resource packs, and through close links between the PSHE coordinator, class teachers and the school nurse.

EQUALITY, SAFEGUARDING AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

St Nicholas School, in all policies and procedures, will promote equality of opportunity for students and staff from all social, cultural and economic backgrounds and ensure freedom from discrimination on the basis of membership of any group, including gender, sexual orientation, family circumstances, ethnic or national origin, disability (physical or mental), religious or political beliefs.

St Nicholas School aims to:

- Provide equal opportunity for all
- To foster good relations, and create effective partnership with all sections of the community
- To take no action which discriminates unlawfully in service delivery, commissioning and employment
- To provide an environment free from fear and discrimination, where diversity, respect and dignity are valued.

All aspects of Safeguarding will be embedded into the life of the school and be adhered to and be the responsibility of all staff.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

Safeguarding
PSHE
Health and Safety
Creative Therapies policy
Curriculum Policies and Community Cohesion

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WRITTEN NOVEMBER 2015