



Name of Policy:

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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Introduction

We have based our school's sex education & relationships policy on the DfEE guidance document Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (ref DfEE 0116/2000) and the 2014 Supplementary advice to the Sex and Relationship Education Guidance DfEE (0116/2000) 'Teaching SRE in the 21st Century' and the 'Equality Act' of 2000. Guidance has also been sought from the 'NSPCC-keeping children safe' documentation. In this document, sex and relationship education is defined as 'learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. Some aspects are taught in science, and others are taught as part of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE). A comprehensive and outstanding programme of SRE provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline. We strongly believe that SRE is about understanding the importance of equal, respectful and loving relationships. Sex and relationships is part of the personal, social and health education curriculum in our school and is embedded in our SMSC school values. While we use sex education to inform children about sexual issues, we do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions.

Aims and objectives

We teach children about:

- the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults
- the way humans reproduce
- respect for their own and other people's bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a caring, equal, respectful and consensual relationship
- the meaning of family life
- moral questions led by current affairs and the children's own understanding of the world
- how to handle and resolve issues within relationships
- respect for the views of other people
- to treat all people regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation, with respect and understanding
- to understand what areas on the human body are considered private and how this changes from childhood through to consensual relationships in adulthood
- the dangers and heavy presence of sexual material on the internet and children's understanding of what is appropriate or not and what to do if they feel something is not appropriate in line with our Internet safety and Child protection policies
- the understanding that sharing and being involved in the distribution of 'indecent' images of children online as being illegal and a punishable offence, even as a child. This can include 'sexting', although the term is not used in school unless a child brings the word up.

Context

We teach sex education in the context of the school's aims and values framework. 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 values which underpin all our work in school. In particular, we teach sex education in the belief that:

- it is a partnership between home and school
- ensures children and young people's views are actively sought to influence lesson planning and teaching
- starts early and is relevant to pupils at each stage in their development and maturity
- is taught by people who are trained and confident in talking about issues such as healthy and unhealthy relationships, equality, pleasure, respect, abuse, sexuality, gender identity, sex and consent

- includes the acquisition of knowledge, the development of life skills and respectful attitudes and values
- has sufficient time to cover a wide range of topics, with a strong emphasis on relationships, consent, rights, responsibilities to others, negotiation and communication skills, and accessing services
- helps pupils understand on and offline safety, consent, violence and exploitation
- is both medically and factually correct and treats sex as a normal and pleasurable fact of life
- is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief, or other life experience
- uses active learning methods, and is rigorously planned, assessed and evaluated
- helps pupils understand a range of views and beliefs about relationships and sex in society including some of the mixed messages about gender, sex and sexuality from different sources including the media
- teaches pupils about the law and their rights to confidentiality even if they are under 16, and is linked to school-based and community health services and organisations.
- promotes equality in relationships, recognises and challenges gender inequality and reflects girls' and boys' different experiences and needs

We teach sex education through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main sex education teaching in our personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, we also teach some sex education through other subject areas (for example, science), where we feel that they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body, and how it is changing and developing.

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 them what will happen to their bodies during puberty. For example, we tell the boys that their voices will change during puberty and we explain to the girls about menstruation. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it. In Year Six and Year five, children are able to ask anonymous questions, addressing anything they have heard or misconceptions they have regarding their bodies and sexual activity. These are directly addressed by either confident class teachers or a school nurse. This is done with appropriate and scientific language.

In science lessons, teachers inform children about puberty and lifecycles. For this aspect of the school's teaching, we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for science. We teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

In Years 5 & 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 their bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women and men. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children. This may mean that we will separate boys and girls when necessary. In Year 6, both sexes learn about the other sex as we feel this is important.

We invite all parents and carers of children in Years 5 and 6 to discuss this particular programme of lessons, to explain what the issues are and how they are taught, and to see the Year 5 and 6 materials the school uses in its teaching.

The changing context of SRE with the use of the Internet

We recognise the dangers and role the internet has in a child's developing understanding of SRE. With social networking sites now playing instant videos and live streaming, we understand that children may be seeing inappropriate content and not understanding that it is inappropriate for their age. We also understand that although our children are below the age for all social media apps, that they do access these apps and use them regularly. We believe in teaching the children how to stay safe on these apps and how to ensure they are staying within the law. We also encourage the children to report anything they believe to be inappropriate to the adult responsible for their internet use at the time and create a safe and open atmosphere for children to share their worries or concerns with us.

The role of parents

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's sex education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting 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 the arrangements for sex education in the school
- copies of the Year 6 DVD will be made available to parents/carers prior to the lesson
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to sex education, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home. We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing body and their increasing responsibilities

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, Deputy HeadTeacher or Class Teacher 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.

The role of other members of the community

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.

Confidentiality

Teachers conduct sex education lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. In these circumstances the teacher will talk to the child as a matter of urgency. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the Headteacher. The Headteacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with the child Protection Liaison Officer, Deputy Headteacher and SENCO (See also Child Protection Policy.)

Additionally, children have an assembly once a year reminding them of what abuse is and what they should do if they have felt like they have been abused or seen it occur on someone else. This is taken by the NSPCC.

The role of the Headteacher

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 and is available on the school website. It is also the responsibility of the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training if necessary, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity. Teachers are encouraged to speak with other staff to ensure a confident and professional adult can take their place should they feel unable to teach any aspect of SRE in a way that is clear and relevant to the children's needs.

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

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

Monitoring and review

The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors 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. Governors require the Headteacher to keep a written record, giving details of the content and delivery of the sex education programme that we teach in our school.