



# Sex and Relationship Education Policy and Framework

Agreed by Governing Body: 23 March 2017

Review Due: Spring 2020 (or earlier if national policy amendment)

## Sex and Relationship Education – Policy and Framework

All schools are required by law to have a policy on sex and relationship and secondary schools must offer a programme of sex and relationship education for all pupils, which includes HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections. Although there is some SRE in National Curriculum Science, schools are advised to see the PSHE framework as the best context for their planned provision. A DfE (previously known as DfEE) circular, confirms and clarifies these expectations for schools (reference 0116/2000).

### **Rationale**

Appropriate sex and relationships education provides a positive opportunity for the exploration of values and moral issues, consideration of personal relationships and the development of communication and decision making skills. It should foster the development of self-awareness, self-esteem, a sense of responsibility and the skills to avoid and resist undesirable sexual experience. Sex and relationships education should be an integral part of the teaching and learning process. These are the pre-requisites for the promotion of sexual health and the limitation of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDS.

Our approach is to teach sex education and relationships within a framework which models and encourages a respect for self and others; commitment, trust and bonding within sexual relationships; mutuality and non-exploitation in sexual relationships; honesty with self and others. Our approach teaches pupils to develop a critical self-awareness for themselves and for others. It explores the rights, duties and responsibilities involved in sexual relationships. Sex education and relationships encourages compassion, forgiveness, mercy and care when judging others. Sex education and relationships acknowledges and promotes understanding of diversity regarding religion, culture and sexual orientation.

### *Aims and Objectives*

We aim to promote the importance of sexual education and relationships within a committed and loving union, where care and responsibility for one another and the family they create are paramount. Sex education and relationships should allow each student to maximise his/her potential for complete mental, physical and social well-being in order to lead a socially and economically meaningful life. We actively seek to promote health and prevent disease which may result in premature death.

In essence, we promote and develop the skills required for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and off-line.

We aim to provide:-

- **Information:** Age appropriate information about how the body works, sexuality, sexual reproduction, STIs including HIV/AIDS, and all aspects of sexual health.
- **Skills:** Communication and social skills to allow the development and maintenance of relationships, and the ability to make informed choices and decisions about relationships and sexuality.
- **Attitudes, values and beliefs:** The provision of opportunities for pupils to explore their own and others' values and attitudes and to consider how they affect behaviour which will enable them to develop a moral and values framework that is congruent with their gender, culture, race, sexuality, faith and ability.

Although values can be taught, they are also learnt through experience and example. Values cannot be imposed, but pupils can be equipped with the skills needed to allow them to develop their own. We aim to present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within the framework of values and an awareness of the law on sexual behaviour.

We encourage pupils to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications and risks of certain types of behaviour and to accept that both sexes must behave reasonably in sexual matters. We encourage pupils to appreciate the value of family life, and the responsibilities of parenthood as stated in the Learning and Skills Act 2000 (section 148). We acknowledge that some of the pupils may come from backgrounds that do not reflect such values or experiences. Sensitivity is needed to avoid causing hurt and offence, to such pupils and their families, and to allow those pupils to feel a sense of worth.

### **Content:**

Sex and relationships education is delivered by the class mentors and also forms an integral part of our mentor PHSCE framework and is an integral part of some lessons within the Science and PE curriculum. Relationship education is delivered by the Philosophy teacher/s.

We cover:

- Puberty
- Menstruation
- Sexual Development
- Conception
- Human Development from Conception to Birth
- Personal Safety
- Contraception
- STIs including HIV/AIDS
- Relationships
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- FGM
- PREVENT

### **Inclusion**

**Ethnic and Cultural Groups:**

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns.

**Pupils with Special Needs:**

We will ensure that all young people receive sex and relationship education and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our pupils, taking specialist advice where necessary.

**Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation:**

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate question and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them.

### *The Right of Withdrawal*

In Philosophy we discuss Abortion, Marriage and Family Life within the context of World Religion at KS4. In Science we cover adolescence, reproduction and the development of the foetus at KS3. We cover the control and promotion of fertility at KS4. Parents have the right to withdraw their children

from sex and relationships education lessons under section 241 of the Education Act 1993. If parents wish to withdraw their child from sex education and relationships lessons we would ask for their reasons for withdrawal so that any misunderstandings about the nature of sex education can be resolved. This does not include subjects taught within the National Science Curriculum.

### *Sensitive Issues*

The following advice is given by the Sex Education Forum:-

“When dealing with issues of confidentiality and contraception advice it is important to remember what teachers can do:

- they can provide education about types of contraception and where they can be obtained to all young pupils receiving sex education
- they can provide all pupils with information about where and from whom they can receive confidential advice and treatment
- they cannot give explicit individual advice to pupils

A child does not have the right to expect that incidents in the classroom will not be reported to his/her parents, and may not, in the absence of an express promise, assume that information conveyed outside that context is private. No teacher could or should promise confidentiality. However the teacher, in exercising his/her professional judgment, may consider that the child’s best interests are served by not informing the parents.

There is no basis in principle or authority for suggesting that there is any legal duty on a teacher or Head teacher, to inform parents of matters a child has confided to them. However, if the Head teacher instructs staff to inform a student’s parents of evidence or suspicions of unlawful sexual activity, failure to do so might be grounds for disciplinary action.”

Information and advice in relation to contraception forms part of sex education, whether given on a one to one basis or in a group. If a student has been withdrawn from sex education, he/she cannot be given such advice. However, information regarding sources of confidential advice and treatment would not count as sex education and can be made freely available to all pupils. Advice does not require consent, unlike the giving of medical treatment, and the decision as to whether to give such advice to a child, in confidence is a matter of professional judgment for a teacher, having regard to any specific direction by the head. There are no restrictions on giving information concerning sources of confidential advice and treatment.”

Based on the advice in the Sex Education Forum, the school believes that the word ‘advice’ means guidance from the teacher on where to find sources of confidential advice and treatment.

Finally, it is essential that teachers are comfortable and clear with what the school expects them to do.