

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY.

Introduction

A caring and developmental Sex and Relationships Education programme needs to be more than just biology and the fundamentals of reproduction. Young people want reassurance about their body image, behaviour, feelings and relationships. They also need the knowledge and skills appropriate to their level of maturity and developmental needs.

Central to the Sex and Relationships programme is the growth of self-esteem and taking responsibility for oneself and one's actions. The development of pupils' self-esteem is essential to an effective health education programme. If young people feel positive and good about themselves they are more likely to take care of themselves, think positively of other people and therefore, develop non-exploitive, caring relationships. They are also less likely to be exploited themselves.

The Sex and Relationships Education programme has been developed to provide a broad programme as an integral component of both Science and PSHEE. Sex and Relationships will be taught primarily through Curriculum Fridays with each year group covering different aspects showing progression from Year 5 through to Year 8. This programme will also seek to encourage an exploration of personal, social and moral considerations as well as law relating to under age sex. It will cover E.C.M. strands 'healthy lifestyle' and 'staying safe' as well as elements of S.E.A.L.

We believe that the teaching approach and subject matter must be sensitive to the individual pupils' stage of development.

We promote a warm, safe and understanding environment for learning where children can feel comfortable and free to seek advice and talk in confidence. Sex and relationships education will be supported with links through other areas of Science and PSHEE curricular e.g. Human Rights and the Microbes Topic; as well as moral, social and cultural values through citizenship and RE.

This programme will present factors in an objective and balanced manner so that children can:

- Know what is and what is not legal
- Make informed, reasoned and responsible decisions about personal values they will adopt both while they are at school and in adulthood.
- Emphasise the skills, attitudes and insights that young people need in order to form loving and caring relationships

- Foster self-esteem, self-awareness and the skills of assertiveness that will enable them to resist and avoid unwelcome peer or social pressures.

Sex education will include questions of values and beliefs. It is therefore bound to be controversial. Young people will be presented with a balanced range of viewpoints on an issue so that they can assess the evidence and explore ideas without distortion.

Teaching about the physical aspects of sexual behaviour should be set within a clear moral framework in which children are encouraged to consider the importance of self-restraint, dignity and respect for themselves and others, and helped to recognise the physical, emotional and moral risks of casual and promiscuous behaviour. Children should appreciate the benefits of a stable relationship and the responsibilities of parenthood.

Who will teach sex education.

The PSHEE programme of sex education will normally be delivered by permanent members of the teaching staff teaching mixed ability groups, which on occasion, may be re-organised as single sex classes. Student teachers and supply staff will not be involved in delivering the sex education programme unless accompanied by a permanent member of staff. Where outside speakers are used, they will normally be accompanied by the teacher(s) with whole classes they are going to work with. Outside speakers may be Health Professionals or representatives of the Family Planning Association or product advisers from commercial interests. Occasionally, interactive theatre groups may be used. The decision to use such agencies or groups will take into account the children's age and level of maturity. Copies of the Sex and Relationships Education Policy should be made available whenever outside agencies are used.

Assessment

Children are assessed on their understanding, their effort, their level of participation and their ability to express their opinions. Assessment may take the following forms: an optional test which covers the factual biological knowledge; a concept map; posters etc; self assessment concerned with what they knew before, and what they now know; time to comment on their feelings.

Advice and confidentiality.

All sex and relationship lessons are conducted with sensitivity and confidentiality is maintained as far as is reasonable. However, staff may not offer children one to one advice on contraception or sexual behaviour. Neither may staff promise confidentiality to children since there are some

issues e.g. child protection or abuse, which may have to be referred to other people. This needs to be explained to children at the beginning of the unit of work.

Supporting Individual Pupils.

It is recognised that lessons on Sex and Relationships are not always the most appropriate place for children to ask questions or to seek advice about matters of perhaps immediate personal concern. Some children are reticent about speaking in front of their peers about matters which can be personally charged or embarrassing for them.

We recognise this and use a variety of means to provide individual support and advice e.g. question boxes, small peer groups discussions. Pupils are also actively encouraged to speak to family members or trusted adults.

In cases of special needs, children may require alternative and more appropriate provision. In such circumstances help from outside agencies may be sought but always in consultation with parents and the children.

Parental Rights.

Every year, prior to the teaching of sex and relationships, parents are invited in to preview materials, ask questions and express any concerns. It is also at this meeting that they will be able to view the Sex and Relationships Policy and comment on its content.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of any sex and relationships education programme, but not biological aspects of human growth and reproduction that is part of the National Curriculum for Science. Parents who wish to exercise this right should contact the Headteacher.

Children who are withdrawn from the sex education programme shall be provided with alternative work by their PSHEE or Science teachers: such work will be relevant to the programme's overall aims.

The Framework of Sex and Relationships Education.

Attitudes and Values.

- Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour.
- Think about and discuss topical political, moral and social issues.
- Be able to justify their opinions on such issues.
- Behave responsibly within friendships and sexual relationships.
- Look at the nature of relationships within family and friendship groups, including expectations and peer pressure.
- Have respect for individual conscience and opinions. (Including cultural differences and beliefs)
- Be aware of the effects of stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination and stigmatisation.
- Develop critical thinking as part of the decision making process.

Personal and Social Issues.

- Develop self respect and empathy for others.
- Contribute to discussion of topics.
- To develop the skills and understanding to avoid being exploited, or pressured into misbehaviour or into unwanted or unsafe sex.
- Know where to access confidential sexual health advice, support and treatment.
- Manage their emotions in a variety of situations.
- Be able to challenge stereotyping, stigmatisation and prejudice assertively, from an informed point of view.
- Be able to negotiate within a relationship.
- To recognise that personal choices have consequences.
- Learn the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such a delay.
- To be aware of, and to deal sensitively with, sexual orientation. (e.g. heterosexual, lesbian, homosexual, transvestites)

Knowledge and Understanding.

- Fertilisation in humans and the reproductive system (including menstruation)
- Physical and emotional changes in puberty, and how to manage them.
- Have sufficient practical information and personal skills to protect themselves, and their partner, from unwanted pregnancy and STI/STDs.
- Understand the reasons for having protected sex.
- Health effects of unprotected sex.
- How to recognise risk and make the right decisions in personal situations.

Suffolk Safeguarding Children Board Protocol. (extract)
Working with sexually active young people under the age of 18.

Young People Under the Age of 13.

Working together to Safeguard Children 2006 states the following:

- A child under 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sexual activity. Any offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 involving a child under 13 is very serious and should be taken to indicate a risk of significant harm to the child.
- Cases involving under 13s should always be discussed with a nominated safeguarding (child protection) lead in the organisation. Under the Sexual Offences Act, penetrative sex with a child under 13 is classed as rape. Where the allegation concerns penetrative sex, or other intimate sexual activity occurs, there would always be reasonable cause to suspect that the child, whether girl or boy, is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. There should be a presumption that the case will be reported to Children & Young People's Services and that a strategy discussion will be held in accordance with the guidance. This should involve Children & Young People's Services, Police and relevant agencies, to discuss appropriate next steps with the professional. All cases involving under 13s should be fully documented including detailed reasons where a decision is taken not to share the information.

This guidance should be central to professionals' assessment of the situation.

- In all cases where the sexually active young person is under the age of 13, a full assessment must be taken. Each case must be assessed individually and consideration given to making a referral to Customer First. In order for this to be meaningful, the young person will need to be identified, as will their sexual partner if details are known.
- The decision not to refer can only be made following a case discussion with the designated lead for safeguarding (child protection) within the professional's employing authority. When a referral is not made, the professional and agency concerned is fully accountable for the decision and a good standard of record keeping must be made, including the reasons for not making a referral.
- When a girl under 13 is found to be pregnant, a referral to Customer First must be made. A strategy discussion will be held with the Police and/or other agencies. At this stage a multi agency support package should be formulated.

Young People between 13 and 16.

- The sexual Offences Act 2003 reinforces that, whilst mutually agreed, non-exploitive sexual activity between teenagers does take place and that often no harm comes from it, the age of consent should still remain at 16. This acknowledges that this group of young people is still vulnerable, even when they do not view themselves as such.
- Sexually active young people in this age group will still have to have their needs assessed using this protocol. Discussion with Customer First, Children and Young People's Services, will depend on the level of risk/need assessed by those working with the young person.
- **This difference in procedure reflects the position that, whilst sexual activity under 16 remains illegal, young people under the age of 13 are not capable of giving consent to such sexual activity.**

This policy will be reviewed in light of any new legislation or significant change to the school population.

It will be looked at by parents at the yearly evening when Sex and Relationship Education is discussed. Comments will be noted, discussed and acted upon where necessary.

Updated March 2014 as part of the writing of an Academy Trust Sex and Relationships All Through Policy.