

SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION POLICY

Wickersley St Alban C of E (A) Primary School

Policy for Sex and Relationship Education Reviewed Annually in Autumn Term Governors

Introduction

In this document, sex education is defined as 'learning about physical, moral and emotional development. 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 social health. Sex and Relationship Education is part of a planned programme of Personal, Social and Health Education and Science Curriculum in our school. The underlying values which underpin the whole of this work are based on respect for others, the development of positive relationships, and personal choice – these are clearly the focus throughout. The rights of young people have access to balanced factual information and the need to have an opportunity to discuss issues in a safe and supportive environment, which is honest and open, are the key stones to the programme. There is a recognition that within the school there are a variety of different values which arise not only from religion and culture, but also from special educational needs, social circumstances and upbringing.

This policy was drawn up as a result of consultation with teachers, parent representatives and governors.

Aims and Objectives

Education for personal relationships aims to help pupils to develop caring and positive relationships in which the rights of others are acknowledged and respected.

We teach children about;

- 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;
- the acquisition of skills necessary to cope with relationships and related situations;
- respect for the views of other people;
- physical and emotional abuse and what they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters.

Planning and Teaching

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We teach sex and relationship education in the context of the school's aims and values and the responsibility for planning and delivering this area of the curriculum lies firmly with the teaching staff. It will be tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the children.

It is recognised that some staff may find it uncomfortable and may lack confidence – if this is the case, every effort will be made to provide support either with resource materials, training or in the classroom.

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 and PE), 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. At times it is recognised there may be a need to work in single gender groups where some issues may be discussed more openly.

In Year 5 and Year 6 we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. We liaise with the school nurse, who is able to add an extra dimension to this area, providing her professional expertise and additional resources in these lessons. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. The issue of sexual orientation is one which may feature in discussions about sexuality. If this does arise, teachers will need to give objective information and allow balanced discussion.

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

A wide variety of teaching strategies are employed, including group work, discussion, appropriate videos and role play. At times it is recognised there may be a need to work in single gender groups where some issues may be discussed more openly. The use of a wide variety of learning opportunities is seen as a key to the success of this programme, as is the differentiation of materials used.

All resources used are chosen with the developmental needs of pupils in mind and are evaluated on the grounds of the suitability for particular groups. A list of some of the current resources used is outlined in the appendix.

The education for sex and relationships curriculum is constantly under review and is evaluated as a result of feedback from pupils and staff involved in the teaching. Changes and developments are made in light of this feedback in order to keep up to date and respond to the changing needs of the pupils.

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 cooperation. In promoting this objective we:

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- 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.

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, who 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 health care professionals.

The right to withdraw

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 the parents in this regard.