

# Sex Education Policy

## Introduction

We have based our school's sex education policy on the DFEE guidance document Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (ref DFEE 0116/2000). 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 sexual health'. Sex education is part of the personal, social and health education curriculum in our school. 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. We do not use sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

## 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 bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term and loving relationship.
- The importance of family life.
- Moral questions.
- Relationship issues.
- Respect for the views of other people.
- Sex abuse and what they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters.

## Context

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:

- Sex education should be taught in the context of marriage and family life.
- Sex education is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral educational process.
- Children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies.
- Children should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity.

It is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect. Children need to learn the importance of self-control.

## The National Healthy School Standard

We now participate in the National Healthy School Standard scheme, which promotes health education. As participants in this scheme we:

- Provide recommended resources for teaching sex education.
- Listen to the views of the children in our school regarding sex education.
- Look positively at any local initiatives that support us in providing the best sex education teaching programme that we can devise.

## Organisation

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.

In Science lessons teachers inform children about puberty and how a baby is born. For this aspect of the school's teaching, we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for Science. Children learn to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other. In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

In Year 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. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children (as stated in this policy).

We have an open door policy for all parents and carers of children in Year 6 to discuss this particular programme of lessons, to explain what the issues are and how they are taught, and to see the materials the school uses in its teaching.

## 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 schools 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.
- 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, 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. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the Child Protection Co-ordinator who will consult with the headteacher and take the appropriate action. (See also Child Protection Policy).

## The role of the headteacher

It is the responsibility of the headteacher and PSHCE co-ordinator to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our sex education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is the PSHCE co-ordinator's responsibility to ensure that

members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

The PSHCE co-ordinator and class teacher liaise 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 PSHCE co-ordinator 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.