



POLICY ON SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

Other related policies: PSHE and Citizenship, Child Protection, Equal Opportunities

Introduction:

Health Education is one of the five cross curricular themes in the National Curriculum which pupils have an entitlement to experience throughout their education. Sex education is a major component of the School's comprehensive programme of Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship in year 9.

In all areas of human experience a good base of knowledge and understanding is deemed necessary for informed opinions and decisions to be made - human sexuality is no exception. It is vital that pupils receive effective sex education before they become sexually active or put themselves at risk in other ways. It is also vital to correct prejudice and misinformation which may affect relationships with others both now and in the future.

The importance of sexual relationships in all our lives is such that sex education has a crucial role to play in preparing children for their lives now and in the future as adults and parents. In sex education, learning information about the physical aspects of sex, must be complemented by learning about family life and the exercise of personal responsibility towards other individuals and the broader community.

In drawing up the School's policy due regard has been given to:

- the issues of content, organisation, methodology, resources, outside speakers, the explicitness and presentation of their material (including the presence or intervention of teachers as appropriate);
- encouraging pupils to have regard to moral considerations and to appreciate the value of a stable family life, self-restraint, dignity, respect and to behave responsibly in sexual matters.

Specific Aims:

The following aims reflect those of the School and the general aims of the cross-curricular themes, and show how Sex Education is delivered within the context of a moral framework.

1. To provide a broad and balanced Sex Education Programme which:
 - offers full entitlement and access for all pupils;
 - operates in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect so as to encourage pupils to put forward and explore their ideas.
2. By exploring moral and sexual issues and values to:
 - understand that both sexes have responsibilities in sexual matters.
 - foster self-esteem, self-awareness and a sense of moral responsibility
 - develop the skills to identify, avoid, resist and report unwanted sexual experience.
3. To give pupils knowledge and understanding of the following in order for them to make informed choices:
 - i. the physical, emotional and social aspects of an individual's development as a male or female, personal relationships; responsible attitudes and appropriate behaviour.
 - ii. family life - the value and importance of the family as a social institution; its contribution to the development of attachment, love and concern in caring for others.
4. To show that World Health has a global dimension and to understand the responsibility of groups, organisations and society for the health of the individual and the community.
5. To approach Sex Education by an active and creative process of enquiry.
6. To clarify the link between sexual practices and the transmission of HIV and STI's

Informing and Involving Parents:

The views and participation of parents is vital for the most effective sex education. A letter explaining the content and nature of sex education lessons at Upton is given to parents via parent mail. With the development of the schools website it will be increasingly possible to fully inform parents of the detailed lessons which their children encounter at Upton, and encourage them to enhance that part of the Sex Education Programme provided by the School by having discussions at home.

Offering Advice:

The School's function is to provide a general education about sexual matters and issues and not to offer individual advice, information or counselling on aspects of sexual behaviour and contraception. However, professional advice can be made available.

Teachers cannot:

- give personal advice or counselling on sexual matters (including contraception) to a pupil (either individually or within a group)
- give personal contraceptive advice to pupils under 16 for whom sexual intercourse is illegal without parental consent.

Teachers can:

- provide pupils with education and information about where and from whom they can receive confidential sexual advice and treatment, e.g. school nurse, their GP or Brook Advisory Centre. This is not the provision of sex education, but merely the imparting of factual information as to where advice, counselling (and treatment) can lawfully be obtained. Appointments to see the nurse can be arranged by the pupil through the form tutor or Learning Leader or PSHE teacher

Explicit Questions:

Explicit questions are asked because precise knowledge/understanding is required by the pupil. Such questions are not to be discouraged. It is the teacher's responsibility to create a respectful, open and supportive atmosphere within the class so that students do not feel constrained yet understand and respect the boundaries required for a meaningful discussion (see CPD below). There may be occasions when it may be inappropriate to deal with a pupil's explicit question(s) by dealing with it in front of the whole class (see Confidentiality below). Questions from pupils may be framed within a wider context involving other issues. The teacher may deem it appropriate to discuss the child's concerns out of the classroom and with the knowledge of the Learning Leader or senior colleague - a decision may then be taken on how best to deal with it. Answers to the 'questions in a box' approach must only be given after very careful screening of the questions.

Confidentiality:

The context of sex education lessons is not the forum to divulge sensitive personal information; therefore the ground rules set down at the beginning of the lessons will include a clause which states that personal information is not to be shared by students or staff.

The division between biological and non biological aspects of sex education:

The division between biological and non biological aspects of sexual behaviour is indicated by the contribution to the Sex Education Programme made by the Science Department. The themes of parenting, relationships and the ethical and moral considerations of sex education are firmly restricted to the timetabled PSHE lessons.

The Science Department deals only with the biological aspects of human sexual behaviour in its timetabled lessons in Year 8. The separate but strategically co-ordinated PSHE course (currently in Year 9) deals with:

- a) Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and Human Immuno-deficiency Virus (HIV);
- b) Any other sexually transmitted diseases (STD's);
- c) Aspects of human sexual behaviour, other than biological aspects.

Withdrawing pupils from the Sex Education Programme:

Shortly after enrolling at the School, a pupil's parents are sent a letter detailing the content of the sex education course and identifying those parts from which the parents can exercise their right to withdraw their child, although for health reasons this is not encouraged. Issues such as over-population, birth control and other sexual matters are met in a minor way in subjects such as Geography and RE. However, as any discussion is limited and set within the context of the other subject concerned, it does not constitute part of the Sex Education Programme. Any parent wishing to withdraw their child has the right to do so and must contact Mr Arnul directly. However, we do encourage all parents to consider the potential implications of this decision.

What we do if a request for withdrawal is made by a parent?

- we discuss the nature of the concerns with the child's parent and if appropriate attempt to reassure them;
- we consider whether the programme can be amended or improved in a way that will reassure parents - care is taken not to undermine the integrity of the Sex Education Programme and the entitlement of the other pupils, e.g. it may be appropriate and desirable to have single sex classes for some sections of the Sex Education Programme;
- we attempt to ensure that where a pupil is withdrawn there is no disruption to other parts of their education.
- we point out that pupils who have been withdrawn are vulnerable to teasing - we therefore attempt to causing minimal embarrassment to the pupil and minimal disruption to the programme;
- we also point out that pupils may receive inaccurate information from their peers;
- we offer the parents access to appropriate information and resources.

Using Visiting Speakers and others:

We believe that most of the Sex Education Programme is best discussed openly with teachers who are known and trusted by the pupils. However visitors such as sexual health workers, can greatly enhance the quality of the provision as long as they are used in addition to, not instead of a planned programme of sex education. At present, we use speakers from Chester Schools Christian work who provide the same service across many schools in Chester. We feel this provides a specialism in provision and allows the staff to support the students as they investigate this area. It also allows the students to have a non-school related person to ask personal questions and clear up any misunderstandings or misinformation.

Care is taken to provide the visitor, well in advance of the visit, with a copy of the Sex Education Policy.

After gaining approval from the Head teacher for the visit the organiser makes the visitor aware of the ethos of the School and the manner of delivery of the Sex Education Programme. Issues we consider are:

- the degree of explicitness of the content and presentation;
- will the visitor be accompanied by teaching staff?
- will the staff take an active role in the visitor's activities?
- how will the visitor be prepared for the visit?
- how will the visit be built upon and followed up?

The health professionals are able to offer young people confidentiality and can provide a link between the School and support services.

Homosexuality (Lesbian and Gay issues):

Teachers or any other providers do not promote any one life-style as the only acceptable one for society and therefore it is inevitable and natural that homosexuality will be discussed during a programme of sex education. Teaching about homosexuality is not avoided although teachers take care not to advocate homosexual behaviour, present it as the norm, or encourage homosexual experimentation by pupils. One of the many advantages of exploring gay and lesbian issues is the opportunity to correct false ideas, assumptions and address prejudice. The issue of homophobia is explored in depth using the 'FIT' resources in year 10 in order to discourage prejudice and discrimination. We are also working closely with the Proud Trust.

Equal Opportunities Issues and Special Needs:

The nature of work undertaken must be appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. As pupils mature and develop at different rates, the Sex Education Programme is a 'spiral system' in as much as key

concepts are revisited several times throughout the programme. This allows for reinforcement as well as the differentiated stages of pupil maturity.

Children with learning difficulties may need more help than others in coping with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up; they may also need more help in learning what sorts of behaviour are and are not acceptable, and in being warned and prepared against abuse by others. Some parents find it difficult to come to terms with the idea that their child (special needs or not) will some day become sexually active.

CPD:

All teachers involved in this work do not necessarily have to be 'experts' on the issues concerned. However, they do require sensitivity to the needs of the group, an ability to deal with questions openly/honestly and preparedness to refer to more expert advice if necessary. Areas that have been specifically addressed by *In Service Training* are:

- an examination of the school's Sex and Relationships Policy;
- an examination of the timing of the different elements of the sex education programme;
- an examination of who should teach the programme;
- developing skills related to managing group work and discussion.

Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing the Sex Education Programme:

The policy will be reviewed annually. We are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this programme. This will be achieved by the methods outlined in the separate policy 'Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing the PSHE course'. Specifically important to the Sex Education Programme are:

- 1) Pupil feedback;
- 2) Staff review and feedback, particularly at pastoral meetings;
- 3) Parental feedback.

Reviewed November 2017