



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Our school's policy on relationships and sex education is based on the *Diocesan Policy for Education in Human Love (2007)* and the DfE document *Relationships and Sex Education Guidance*. We recognise Policy for Education in Human Life and Love (Relationships and Sex Education) as the policy's full title, but for brevity's sake we will refer in the rest of this policy simply to "RSE"
- 1.2 In the DfE document RSE is defined as "learning about physical, moral and emotional development". The guidance states, "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".
- 1.3. Sex education is part of the Science curriculum and Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) curriculum in our school.
 - 1.3.2 'Education in personal relationships is statutory in the EYFS, where the first of seven areas of learning is Personal, Social and Emotional Development. The national curriculum guidance for SEAL is aimed at ensuring continuity and progression through the primary years. The requirements of the Science Curriculum by the end of KS1 are that children should understand that human beings move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce. They are expected to recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of human beings, to know that human beings can have children which grow into adults; they are taught about the similarities and differences between themselves and others and to treat others with sensitivity. By the end of KS2 children are expected to know that the life processes common to human and other animals include nutrition, growth and reproduction, and to understand the main stages of the human life cycle.' (*Diocesan Policy for Education in Human Love*.)
 - 1.3.3 All of the above should be linked with the teaching of the Church on the sanctity of human life, in which children are encouraged to develop healthy attitudes and an understanding of the essential goodness and holiness of God's creation.
- 1.4 The Governing Body recognises the legal right of parents to withdraw their children from all or any part of sex education provided, except the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction required under the Science national curriculum.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 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 marriage and family life;
 - moral questions;
 - relationship issues;
 - respect for the views of other people;

3 Context

3.1 We teach about relationships and sex in the context of the school's aims and values framework (see the values statement in the Curriculum Policy). While RSE in our school means that we give children information about sexual behaviour, we do this with an awareness of the moral code, and of the Catholic values which underpin all our work in school. In particular, we teach about sex in the belief that:

- sex should be taught about in the context of marriage and family life;
- sex education is part of a wider process of social, personal, spiritual and moral education;
- 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.

4 The National Healthy School Standard

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

- consult with parents on all matters of health education policy;
- equip all our teachers to teach RSE;
- 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 and relationship education programme that we can devise, always being mindful of the *Guidance on SRE in Catholic Schools* provided by the Archdiocese of Southwark.

5 Organisation

5.1 We teach about relationships and sex through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main relationships and sex education in our PSHCE curriculum, we also do some sex education through other subject areas (e.g. science and PE) which we believe contribute significantly to children's knowledge and understanding of their own bodies, and how they are changing and developing.

5.2 In PSHCE, we teach children about relationships, and we encourage them to discuss issues. We teach pupils about the parts of the body, and how these work, and we explain to the children what will happen to their bodies during puberty. For example, we teach the children that boys' voices will change during puberty, and we explain menstruation to both boys and girls. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it.

5.3 In science lessons, in both key stages, teachers inform children about puberty and how a baby is born. For this aspect of our teaching we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for science. In Key Stage 1 we teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the fact that people are not all the same, and that we need to respect each other. In Key Stage 2, we teach about life processes, and the main stages of the human life cycle, in greater depth.

- 5.4 In Years 5 and 6, we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty in these years. We liaise with the local Health Authority about suitable teaching materials to use with our children, in addition to those recommended by the Southwark Archdiocese and other dioceses, 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 children's 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 and their developmental age.

6 Parental rights and responsibilities

- 6.1 We recognise the primary role of parents and carers in children's sex education. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. To promote this objective, we:

- inform parents and carers about the school's sex and relationship education policy and practice;
- answer any questions that parents or carers may have about the sex education of their child;
- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about the arrangements for sex education in the school;
- encourage parents and carers to be involved in reviewing the school policy, and making modifications to it as necessary;
- inform parents and carers 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 bodies and their increasing responsibilities.

- 6.2.1 The Governing Body recognises the legal right of parents to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education programme that we teach in our school, except the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction required under the Science national curriculum. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from sex and relationship 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.

7 The role of other members of the community

- 7.1 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. Other people that we may call on include our clergy.

8 Confidentiality

- 8.1 Teachers conduct sex and relationship education lessons in a sensitive manner. If a child makes a reference to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the reference seriously, and deal with it as a matter of safeguarding (child protection). Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may
- 8.2 have been a victim of abuse. They will not try to investigate, but will immediately inform the designated person for safeguarding issues about their concerns. The headteacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with social service professionals (- See also our policy on Safeguarding).

9 The role of the headteacher

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents or carers are informed about our RSE Policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are equipped to teach about sex effectively, and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.
- 9.2 The headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school sex education programme and ensures that all adults who work with our children on these issues are aware of the school policy and work within its framework.
- 9.3 The headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis, and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

10 Monitoring and review

- 10.1 The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors the impact of our sex education policy on an annual basis. This committee reports its findings to the full governing body and makes recommendations if it considers that 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 our RSE programme.
- 10.2 This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if necessary.