



St John's
School Billericay

Sex & Relationships Policy

Date: July 2019
Those Responsible: Mrs F S Armour - Headteacher
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To be reviewed: Regularly

Sex and Relationships Education Policy

Introduction

St John's School promotes health in its widest sense, attending to the physical, social and psychological development of its pupils and the maintenance of good health for all pupils and staff. The development of emotional well-being and self-esteem is central to these aims and a key element of this is a carefully considered and constructed Sex and Relationships Education Policy for all children in the school's care. This policy forms a part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHEE) Policy.

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 and relationships education (SRE) is part of the PSHEE curriculum in this school. Insofar as SRE is used as a vehicle for informing children about sexual issues, teaching is delivered with due regard for issues of morality and individual responsibility and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. SRE is not used as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

Rationale

We recognise that:

SRE should be gradually developed as an integral part of the curriculum in a way that is appropriate to the age of the child;

SRE is not just about reproduction and sexual health. Teachers will strive to empower pupils to act responsibly in making and maintaining relationships with others, to feel good about themselves and the choices they make, to develop assertiveness skills and the ability to respect themselves and others;

The potentially sensitive nature of these lessons demands that moral and ethical issues will be discussed as an integral part of the subject.

Aims and objectives

SRE is an integral part of PSHEE. It promotes children's self-esteem and emotional well-being and aims to help them to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, based on respect for themselves and for others, at home, school and in the community. Our programme aims to:

- complement and support the work of parents;
- prepare pupils to cope with the physical and emotional challenges of growing up;
- support the personal and social development of all pupils;
- offer balanced and factual information appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils acknowledging the moral and ethical issues involved;
- develop confidence in listening to discussion, thinking and talking about feelings and relationships;
- provide information which is easy to understand and relevant and appropriate to the age and maturity of the children;
- encourage the exploration and clarification of values and the development of positive values;
- educate for life and living, preparing individuals to take be responsible citizens.

Objectives:

- To create a programme for progressive and differentiated learning which caters to pupils' needs and is sensitive to individuals and groups;
- To develop communication and social skills, including being able to ask for help and support;
- To respect the family as the context for procreation, growth and maturing;
- To encourage unembarrassed acceptance of sexuality by providing appropriate vocabulary for parts of the body and encourage positive attitudes towards all bodily functions;
- To generate an atmosphere where questions and discussions on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment;
- To counteract misunderstandings of how the body functions;
- To enable pupils to accept variation in rates of growth and development (physical, emotional, social) and in ages when puberty or sexual activities commence;
- To provide constant reassurance that change is part of the life cycle and to give help in adjusting to these changes;
- To recognise the value of loving and caring relationships.

Children will be taught:

- about the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults;
- respect for their own bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term, and loving relationship;
- to name the parts of their body and to describe how their bodies work;
- to protect themselves and ask for help and support
- to be prepared for puberty
- about the importance of family life;
- about moral questions;
- about relationship issues;
- respect for the views of other people.

Context

We teach SRE in the context of the school's aims and values framework

While SRE 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 SRE in the belief that:

- SRE should be taught in the context of a stable, loving, family environment;
- SRE is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education 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.

Parents and pupils may need to be reassured that the personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers at St John's School will not influence the teaching of SRE within the PSHEE curriculum. All staff are required to work within the agreed values framework in this policy. It is acknowledged that there are a wide variety of home experiences and situations. All children and their families have a right to privacy, respect and acceptance and the approach of the school is non-judgemental and respectful.

Organisation

The teaching of all SRE is set within a clear, balanced, sensitive and moral framework in which pupils are encouraged to consider the importance of respect, acceptance of responsibility, sensitivity, self-esteem, dignity, self-restraint, loyalty and fidelity.

SRE is taught in the context of relationships. Topics and themes are repeated from year to year in greater depth, taking account of pupil development.

The delivery of the SRE programme is by the school staff. Health professionals are also used to support parts of the SRE programme. They are made aware of the school's SRE policy and programme and are expected to abide by it.

SRE is taught through different aspects of the curriculum. SRE teaching is mainly delivered through the PSHEE curriculum, but some SRE is taught through other subject areas (for example, science and PE), where it is felt 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 PSHEE children are taught about relationships, and encouraged to discuss issues. Children are taught about what will happen to their bodies during puberty. For example, boys are told that their voices will change during puberty and menstruation

is explained to the girls. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it. Outside agencies will be brought in if this is deemed necessary.

Sexuality

SRE should include discussion of sexuality in a sensitive manner and should include positive representations of heterosexual and homosexual people. Discussion of relationships should not be solely about heterosexual relationships and the word partner can be used rather than assuming all girls have or want boyfriends and all boys have and want girlfriends. It is important to encourage tolerance and understanding and not demean or encourage prejudice against people whose sexuality is not shared by the majority. Challenging sexism and homophobia should form part of the school's approach to equal opportunities.

Inclusion

This policy is written with the inclusion of all children in mind. Its content will be differentiated to accommodate all levels of ability.

All lessons will be taught in mixed classes where appropriate. Single gender groups will be used where appropriate and relevant.

Extra care needs to be taken to ensure sensitivity is shown towards children whose maturity, experience of family life, sexual knowledge and moral framework is a cause for concern.

The role of parents and carers

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's sex education lies with parents and carers. In particular, parents and carers are the key people in:

Teaching their children about sex and relationships;

Maintaining the culture and ethos of the family;

Helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up;

Preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings.

Withdrawal from Sex Education

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from part, or all of the Sex and Relationship Education programme, they should write to the P.S.H.E. co-coordinator and should be prepared to give a reason for their decision.