



St. Mary's CE (VC) J & I School
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St. Mary's SRE Policy, November 2015

Introduction

We have based our school's sex education policy on the DFCS guidance document Sex and Relationships Education Guidance (ref DfE 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.

Aim 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

We teach sex education in the context of the school's aims and values framework. 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 loving relationship and family life
 - sex education 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



Organisation

We teach about sex through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main sex education in our personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, we also do some sex education through other subject areas (for example, 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.

In PSHE we teach children about self-esteem, feelings and encourage children to discuss issues. We teach 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.

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.

In Year 6 we place a particular emphasis on health education. We liaise with the Local 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 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.

We arrange a meeting 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 feel that it necessary to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents and carers of children at our school, through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. To promote this objective we:

- 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 issues that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about the arrangements for sex education in the school
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy, and making modifications to it as necessary
- 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 bodies 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, except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum for science. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from sex education sessions, they should discuss this with the head teacher, 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 member 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. This should compliment not replace the work being done by teachers.

Confidentiality

A set of ground rules is agreed between pupils and teacher in order to create a safe, supportive climate for discussion. Teachers conduct sex education sessions in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, 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 child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. They will not try to investigate, but will immediately inform the named person for child protection issues about their concerns. The head teacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals.

The role of the head teacher

It is the responsibility of the head teacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our sex education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the head teacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach about sex effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

The head teacher 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.

The head teacher monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

Evaluation and assessment



Evaluation and assessment of pupils' knowledge and skills will take place through their own evaluation, questions and answers during discussions, marking of work and observations.

Monitoring and review

The Standards and Effectiveness Committee of the Governing Body monitors the impact of our sex education policy every 3 years. This committee reports its finding and recommendations to the full Governing Body, as necessary, if the policy need modification. The Standards and Effectiveness Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the sex education programme and makes a record of all such comments.

