



St Mary's R.C. Primary School

Sex and Relationships Education

Policy

Vision:

We believe that every child is a gift from God, therefore, we aim to provide an outstanding and happy Catholic education which develops the 'whole child' whilst enabling them to reach their full potential.

Mission statement:

We love God ... so we follow the examples of Jesus

We love learning ... so we always do our very best in everything

We love each other ... so we treat each other as we want to be treated

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Overview

We have based our school's 'Sex and Relationships Education Policy' in line with advice from Salford Diocese, the Church's teaching in all such matters and 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 and relationships 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. We always teach sex education within a context of relationships.

'Education in sexuality' is but part of education in relationships. Consequently, each young person is entitled to experience a school climate in which the quality of relationships between staff and pupils, between the pupils themselves, is marked by honesty, personal identification, warmth, trust and security'.

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 in marriage as the ideal
- the importance of family life
- moral questions
- relationship issues
- respect for the views of other people
- sexual abuse and what they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters

Context

We teach sex and relationships education in the context of the school's aims and values framework (See Curriculum Policy values statement.) 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 permeate the Roman Catholic faith and 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 education process
- children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies and be aware of how to look after themselves
- 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:

- consult with parents on all matters of health education policy
- train all our teachers to teach sex education
- listen to the views of the children in our school regarding sex and relationships education

- look positively at any local initiatives that support us in providing the best sex education teaching programme that we can devise

Strategies

We teach sex education through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main sex and relationships 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 in both key stages, 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 curriculum 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 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.

These opportunities for learning, which will occur in all areas of the curriculum, will be brought together in a specific 'Sex and Relationship Education programme' adapted to the age and development of pupils, following the 'In the beginning' programme. This programme which is approved by Salford Diocese, teaches a carefully balanced progressive programme throughout the school on sex and relationships rooted within the Catholic faith.

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 Organisations 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 earlier in this policy).

We have also introduced 'Real Love Rocks' with Year 6 this year. This is a programme designed by Barnado's to enhance the relationships aspect of SRE for children of this age.

We offer meetings 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. We follow the 'In the beginning' scheme as approved by Salford Diocese.

We have also started using 'A Journey in Love' to enhance the 'In the Beginning' scheme - a programme recommended by Salford Diocese.

Year 5 and 6 children also receive workshops from Childline about healthy relationships and recognising and reporting 'unhealthy' relationships.

Year 6 also do Crucial Crew which covers how they can take an active role in looking after themselves.

The Role of Parents

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's sex and relationship 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 school's 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 Local Health Organisations, 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 local clergy, social workers and youth workers.

Confidentiality

The school has a number of policies which are published internally for all staff to see, which are relevant to this policy. This policy draws attention to the school policy for confidentiality. In addition, the school Single Equality Policy which ensures that Race Equality, Gender Equality and Equal Opportunity are all interlinked and in delivering the curriculum. It is expected that staff refer to and adhere to such policies to ensure that a fair and justifiable approach is taken towards the delivery of a sex and relationships programme.

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. In these circumstances the teacher will talk to the child as a matter of urgency. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the Headteacher or person responsible for child protection in the school. The Headteacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals. (See also Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.)

Staff Continuous Professional Development

Teachers are regularly trained/updated in Safeguarding of all children and how to approach such sensitive issues with children. Local and National issues are regularly fed back to teachers so they can be vigilant in SRE sessions eg different forms of abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, FGM etc.

The Role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our sex and relationships education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Headteacher'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 Headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school sex and relationships 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 Headteacher 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 and relationships education policy. 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 monitor teachers' planning as a written record, giving details of the content and delivery of the sex education programme that we teach in our school.

Date: June 2015

Signed: Chair of Governors

Reviewed: June 2016