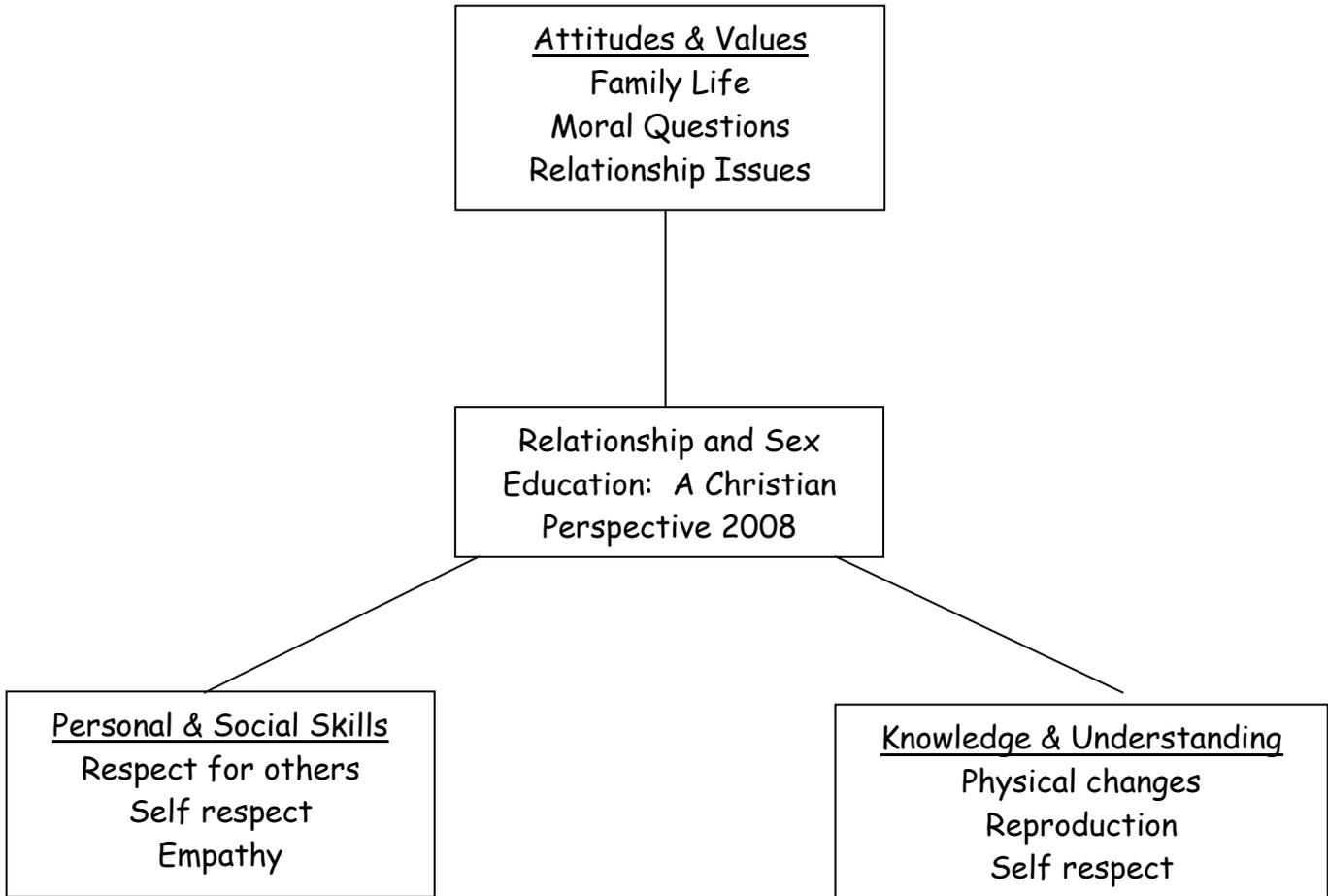


Birchills Church of England
Community Academy

Relationships Policy
(incorporating Sex Education)

Adopted by the Governing Body on 28th September 2016

Review Date: September 2018



Policy on Relationship Education (incorporating Sex Education)

Introduction

Our Academy's policy on sex and relationship education is based on the DfES document 'Sex and Relationship education Guidance' (DfES 0116/2000) and the Diocesan Guidance for Sex and Relationships: A Christian Perspective (2008). We recognise 'Sex and Relationship Education' as the policy's full title, but, for brevity's sake, we will refer in the rest of this policy simply to SRE.

In the DfES document, SRE 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. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity - this would be inappropriate teaching.'

SRE is part of the personal, social and health education (PHSE) curriculum in our school. When we inform our pupils through SRE about sexual issues, we do this with regard to morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions.

Aims and Objectives

We teach children about the three main elements of SRE:

Attitudes and Values

- The importance of family life.
- Moral questions.
- Relationship issues.

Personal and Social Skills

- Respect for the views of other people.
- Developing self respect and empathy for others.

Knowledge and Understanding

- The physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults.
- The way humans reproduce.
- Respect for their own bodies.

Context

Within the Academy the distinctive Christian characteristic of the school provides the context within which all personal development takes place. This means that Christian values and attitudes - with the emphasis on the importance of marriage, the family and stable relationships to build a child's self esteem, self awareness and a sense of moral responsibility - will permeate all the curriculum - both explicit and hidden. It is taught in the context of marriage and family life. SRE is part of a child's broad, balanced

curriculum, integral to the basic curriculum of the school and part of the child's all round development.

Accountability for the implementation of the SRE Policy lies within the governing body of the school.

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:

- Listen to the views of the children in our school regarding SRE.
- Look positively at any local initiatives that support us in providing the best SRE programme that we can devise.

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 (eg, 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 relationships, and we 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, as many children experience puberty at this age. We liaise with the Local Health 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.

The role of parents

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's SRE lies with parents and carers. 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 about the school's SRE policy and practice.
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the SRE of their child.
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about the arrangements for SRE 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 SRE programme that we teach in our school. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from SRE 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 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 call on include local clergy, social workers and youth workers.

Confidentiality

Teachers conduct SRE lessons 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 Principal will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals (see also our policy on Child Protection).

The role of the Principal

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our SRE policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Principal'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 Principal liaises with external agencies regarding the school SRE 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 Principal monitors this policy on a regular basis, and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if necessary.