

RYECROFT C. E. (C) MIDDLE SCHOOL

POLICY STATEMENT

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

1. RATIONALE:

Sexuality is an integral part of who and what we are. As we grow and develop, we have come to terms with our own sexual growth and development, as well as the sexual nature of others.

To make sense of the changes that take place in our bodies during puberty, and the strong emotions that accompany them, we need to develop knowledge and understanding of our own sexuality and the sexuality of others, explore what we think, feel and believe about the issues surrounding sexuality, and acquire the skills to look after ourselves and promote our own sexual health.

Regulations require that its purpose should be:

- The provision of knowledge about loving relationships, the nature of sexuality and the processes of human reproduction (presented in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner).
- The acquisition of understanding and attitudes which prepare pupils to view their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner (set within a framework of values and an awareness of the law).

In all schools, consideration should be given to any relevant religious or cultural factors, and to parents' wishes regarding the degree of explicitness of the concepts and methods of presentation.

As a Church school SRE will be placed within a Christian context of love, faithfulness and forgiveness.

2. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS:

The 1996 Education Act consolidates all relevant previous legislation and states that all secondary schools are required to provide an SRE programme that includes (as a minimum) information about sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS. The sex education elements contained in the National Curriculum Science Orders are also mandatory – these are:

At Key Stage 2 - about the main stages of the human life cycle

At Key Stage 3 - the human reproductive cycle includes adolescence, fertilisation and foetal development; conception, growth, development, behaviour and health can be affected by diet, drugs and disease; to consider how knowledge and understanding of science informs personal and collective decisions, including those on substance abuse and sexual health.

All schools must provide an up to date policy that describes the content and organisation of SRE provided outside the National Curriculum Science Order. The DCSF Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (2000) supports this legislation and suggests that schools should set sex

education within a broader base of self-esteem and responsibility for the consequences of one's actions.

3. THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHOOL'S SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY:

Aims

- a. To provide all young people with access to clear information about sexual health and to facilitate their awareness and understanding of issues relevant to their own lives whereby they can make informed choices with regard to their own sexual health.
- b. To support the personal and social development of all pupils so that they can enjoy relationships based on respect and responsibility.

Objectives

- a. To establish what pupils know, understand, think and feel and to identify their needs.
- b. To provide information about the emotional, moral, intellectual, physical and social aspects of human and sexual development.
- c. To encourage a sense of respect for one's own and others' feelings, decisions, rights and bodies.
- d. To develop skills to resist unwanted sexual advances.
- e. To educate against ignorance, sexism and prejudice and to promote equal opportunities.
- f. To understand and respect the various cultural and religious influences on sexuality.
- g. To find a common language which can promote the acceptance of sexuality.
- h. To develop awareness of and acceptance of sexual identity.
- i. To develop young peoples' understanding of and pride in their own bodies, accepting variation in rates of growth, assisting adjustment to these changes and giving a reassurance that change is part of the life cycle.
- j. To reduce any feelings of guilt and/or anxiety about themselves.
- k. To explore family life, acknowledging the variety of family structures, the implications of parenthood and the needs of the young.

4. THE MORALS AND VALUES FRAMEWORK:

The sex and relationships education programme will reflect the school ethos and demonstrate and encourage the following values:

- a. Respect and valuing of themselves and others.

- b. Understanding and sensitivity towards the needs and views of others.
- c. Responsibility for their own actions.
- d. Responsibility to the school, their family and wider community.

5. CONTENT OF SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION PROGRAMME:

At the start of Year 7, pupils will investigate relationships within the family and what makes good friends. They will also examine how to deal with conflict in these areas. Pupils will work on developing a positive self-image. Pupils will study the lifecycles of plants and animals and as part of this, the school nurse will visit the school and speak to students about changes to their body that occur as they grow up.

In Key Stage 3, pupils learn the importance of communication in relationships, including girlfriend / boyfriend relationships. They explore how to manage their feelings positively and how to manage changing relationships. They learn the law relating to sexual behaviour, how to develop skills of assertiveness in order to resist peer pressure and stereotyping. They will study the Science of reproduction, the range and limitations of contraception and the impact of sexually acquired infections on people. They will explore the benefits of delaying first sexual activity.

Sexual Abuse

Developing self-esteem, assertiveness and the removal of guilt and/or embarrassment over sexual matters will help to prevent this problem.

HIV/AIDS

The history of HIV epidemic has led to the marginalisation of certain groups. This has led to apathy, amongst other groups, about safer practice to reduce numbers of HIV infections. Empowerment is a key feature of sexual health enabling young people to set their boundaries about personal sexual behaviour. Healthy relationships provide a natural framework for HIV education and cultural, social and moral implications of sexual behaviour can be addressed. HIV is everyone's responsibility.

Nobody is invulnerable. Indeed, the most current findings have disclosed that the highest recent incidences of HIV have been amongst the heterosexual community.

Homosexuality and trans-sexuality

As with all aspects of health education, understanding and tolerance of others is a key issue. Discussion about gender identity, homosexuality, trans-sexuality, transphobia and homophobia is an issue that needs handling sensitively. Teaching **about** homosexuality, which will be our approach, is clearly not the same as teaching people to **be** homosexual. Discussing homosexuality with pupils in a secure climate can help to dispel myths, clarify attitudes and values and support young people. All homophobic or transphobic language will be challenged. Mutual respect is the key phrase to be adopted.

Advice to individual pupils

A teacher's pastoral concerns should never trespass on parental rights and responsibilities. As a general rule, teachers should not give contraceptive advice to an individual pupil under the

age of 16. A pupil requesting advice on any aspect of sexual behaviour should be encouraged to discuss the matter with his/her parents and (if appropriate) a relevant health professional. **A teacher, who believes that a pupil's conduct might entail moral or physical risk, or be in breach of the law, must ensure that he/she is aware of the implications. The Designated Lead for Safeguarding and the Principal should be informed, who will counsel the pupil and arrange for the parents to be informed (preferably by the pupil).**

6. CONFIDENTIALITY AND ADVICE:

Pupils will be made aware that some information cannot be held confidential, and made to understand that if certain disclosures are made certain action will ensue. At the same time pupils will be offered sensitive and appropriate support.

The following procedures will be adhered to by all adults:

- Disclosure or suspicion of possible abuse - the school's child protection procedures will be invoked.
- Disclosure of pregnancy or advice on contraception - it is hoped that the following procedure will ensure that pupils who are in difficulty know that they can talk to an adult in the school and that they will be supported.

Professional information and guidance will always be sought from a health professional.

The school will always encourage pupils to talk with their parents first:

- a. Pupils should be asked whether they can tell their parent(s) and whether they want help in doing so. If this takes place, subsequent responsibility then lies with the parent(s).
- b. If pupils refuse to tell their parent(s), the adult should refer them to a health professional.
- c. The adult should report the incident to the Headteacher who will consult with the health professional about informing the parent.

7. FAMILY LIFE:

The value of family life is an important aspect, which will be approached largely through a consideration of the qualities and relationships between the group of people, with an emphasis on love, stability, respect, caring and support.

As part of the sex and relationships education programme, issues of contraception, HIV/AIDS, sexuality and abortion are addressed. Facts are presented in an objective and balanced way, with pupils being encouraged to consider their attitudes and values within those already stated. They will be made aware of the difference between fact, opinion and religious belief.

8. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE:

Any complaints about the sex and relationships education curriculum should be made to the Headteacher who will report to the school's Governing Body.

9. PARENTAL PARTNERSHIP:

Under the Education Act 1993, parents have the right to withdraw their children from the part of the sex and relationships education programme, which do not form part of the National Curriculum. (Please see section heading "Content of the School Sex and Relationships Education Programme).

Before starting their work in Science, parents are written to informing them about the content of the unit of work. (see Appendix 1)

Parents wishing to exercise that right are asked to inform the Headteacher of their decision in writing, prior to the start of the programme.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY AND CHILD PROTECTION:

The school has a separate Child Protection Policy. Effective SRE may bring about disclosures of child protection issues and staff should be aware of the procedures for reporting their concerns. As a general rule, confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. If this person believes that the child is at risk or in danger, she/he talks to the school's child protection coordinator.

The child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and the reasons why. The child will be supported throughout the process.

11. DISCLOSURES:

If a member of staff learns that an under 16 year old is sexually active or contemplating sexual activity the school will ensure that:

- The young person is advised to talk to their parent/carer;
- Child Protection issues are addressed;
- The young person is referred to the school nurse for appropriate information.

12. CONTROVERSIAL AND SENSITIVE ISSUES:

Staff are aware that views around SRE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all SRE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that students are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have a different opinion.

13. DEALING WITH QUESTIONS:

Both formal and informal SRE arising from students' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the student concerned. All students are made aware of their position regarding disclosures and are instructed not to discuss specific personal issues. Questions generated directly from students either verbally or through anonymous written questions should be addressed appropriately by staff but they can do this in a variety of ways including referral to the school nurse, responding to the individual student or to a small group of students. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the Child Protection Coordinator, Head of Science or PSHE co-ordinator as appropriate if they are concerned.

14. SEXUAL IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION:

Ryecroft Middle School believes that SRE should meet the needs of all students regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Homophobic bullying is dealt with in line with the school bullying policy.

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body:

Chair	Date	Chair	Date
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APPENDIX 1

As part our Key Stage 3 Science we will shortly be starting a unit of work on reproduction and growth.

Our studies follow the National Curriculum and cover the human reproductive cycle including conception; fertilisation and foetal development; growth, development; adolescence; behaviour and how health can be affected by diet, drugs and disease. We will be considering how knowledge and understanding of science informs personal and collective decisions, including those on substance abuse and sexual health.

The School Nurse will be meeting with the girls and separately with the boys to discuss the physical and emotional changes that are associated with adolescence. We will also we viewing and discussing a number of programmes on these issues produced by the BBC that are aimed at your child's age group.

If you have any questions relating to your child's learning in this area please do not hesitate in contacting me.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Hall
Assistant Headteacher/ Head of Science