



Meole Brace
C of E Primary School and Nursery

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 We have based our school's Relationship and Sex Education Policy 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.

1.2 It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. Relationships and Sex Education is part of the personal, social and health education curriculum in our school. While we use Relationships and 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.

1.3 The Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education (Sex and Relationship Guidance: A Christian Perspective 2007) states that 'Sex and Relationship Education 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'. Our policy for Relationship and Sex Education is written in accordance with this philosophy.

1.4 In Meole Brace we refer to RSE (Relationship and Sex Education). We place the emphasis upon relationships, supporting pupils understanding and skill in developing positive and healthy relationships.

2. Aims and objectives

2.1 RSE in our school is part of the personal, social and health education curriculum. This is integrated within the wider school curriculum and complements and overlaps with the general ethos and life of the school.

In planning and presenting our RSE programme we provide the opportunity for pupils to express themselves within a trusted and safe environment, following agreed ground rules. We want to reassure children of their value and self-worth including aspects of dignity, self-respect and self-restraint, help them to have a responsible attitude towards personal relationships including mutual respect and care and to develop sensitivity towards the needs of others, provide knowledge of loving relationships and human reproductive process.

We aim to inform children on matters of personal hygiene and related health issues, encourage exploration of values and moral issues taking into account physical and moral risks associated with certain behavior, educate against discrimination and prejudice and help prepare children to make informed choices about relationships.

We offer a planned and appropriate scheme of work, devised to meet the following aims and objectives:

- To give accurate and objective information and dispel some of the hotchpotch of mixed messages which children may have received from a variety of sources from pre-school onwards. This information will be presented in the context of family life, of loving relationships and respect for others as well as their own bodies.
- To capitalise on the fascination that primary school children have for wanting to study themselves, their own pattern of growth and development and reassure them that such changes are normal.

- To work with parents to provide a well balanced viewpoint on all aspects of RSE for children so that their social, emotional and physical health is safeguarded, and thus benefit each family and every member in it.
- Foster a culture of acceptance and openness where questions and discussion can take place without embarrassment. It is expected that within each classroom with the class teacher such a supportive environment will already exist.
- Establish what the children already know and understand, identify what their needs are and then follow a curriculum plan that is progressive, differentiated and sensitive to individual and group needs.
- Create opportunities for children to study themselves and their pattern of growth and development and provide reassurance that change is part of life's cycle.
- Give children support in adjusting to changes and help them to accept the variation in rates of growth and development.
- Develop skills in personal relationships e.g. communication, assertiveness, decision-making, and build and develop self-esteem by helping children to understand their responsibilities, rights, opportunities and choices.
- Help children to understand the value of family life, develop an appreciation of how much parents contribute to their lives and understand the need for the proper care of all young things.
- All disclosure is confidential unless it is felt that it would be detrimental to the welfare of the child. See links with Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Ensure children are able to understand the information that they acquire and provided them with contexts where they are able to consider and evaluate the information they receive. They are often exposed to information and messages from television, the internet, film, music videos, books and magazines which is easily misinterpreted. They are also influenced by family, friends and other significant adults.
- Help children gain the knowledge, confidence and language to discuss and form positive relationships which can be assessed using baseline questionnaires and end of unit assessments.

2.2 We teach children about:

- the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults, reassuring them that such changes are normal and using the correct terminology for body parts;
- the need to discuss sex education issues, at home or school, without embarrassment;
- counteracting misleading or false information and challenging sexism or prejudice;
- 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 and proper care of all young creatures;
- moral questions;
- relationship issues, including issues of self-esteem and assertiveness;
- equal opportunity issues;
- exploring attitudes and emotions;
- respect for the views of other people;
- sex abuse and what they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters.

3. Context

3.1 Ofsted 2002 recommendations have informed our policy and practice, in particular 'A caring and developmental SRE programme needs to be more than just biology and the fundamentals of reproduction.' Young people want reassurance about their body image,

behaviour, feelings and relationships. They also need knowledge and skills appropriate to their level of maturity and developmental needs.

3.2 Our policy and practice is based upon national guidance and is consistent with Shropshire Council recommendations. It is cross referenced and consistent with the following school policies:

- PSHE and Citizenship policy
- Equal Opportunities policy
- Behavior policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Child Protection policy
- Working with Visitors policy
- Confidentiality policy
- Ethnic Diversity Policy
- School Discipline Policy
- Statement of School Philosophy, Aims and Objectives
- The Health and Safety Policy

3.3 We teach Relationships and Sex Education in the context of the school's aims and values. 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 Relationships and 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;
- children should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity;
- it is important to build positive relationships based upon trust and respect;
- children need to learn the importance of self-control.

4. Equal Opportunities

At Meole Brace C of E Primary School and Nursery the notion of equality opportunity is highly valued. The Relationships and Sex Education curriculum should offer children the opportunity to clarify and develop their attitudes and values relating to:

- gender roles
- stereotyping

Taking into account the following equality issues:

- sex;
- Race and culture;
- Disability;
- Ability;
- Religion
- Sexual orientation.

Relationship and Sex education may help to counteract certain assumptions and influences in society such as:

- females being more passive than males;
- women always being the homemaker;
- men always working as the "breadwinner";
- males being aggressive and dominant.

5. Child Sex Abuse Procedure

5.1 The Child Protection Procedures as laid down by Shropshire County Council will be followed. All referrals, whatever their origin must be taken seriously and must be considered with an open mind, which does not pre-judge the situation. The procedures adopted for handling cases of neglect, physical, emotional, sexual abuse and failure to thrive involving children and young persons, are based on the principle that the interests and welfare of the child or young person are of paramount importance.

5.2 Confidentiality must not prevent action if the child is 'at risk'. Teachers will listen sympathetically to anything a child tells them in confidence. However, if a teacher feels that a child is at risk then the appropriate people will be contacted in accordance with the above Child Protection Procedures, a copy of which is available for parents in school.

5.3 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 refer the matter to the head teacher as designated child protection officer. (See also Child Protection Policy).

6. Morals and Values Framework

6.1 The Relationship and Sex Education Policy will be sensitive towards the established morals and values framework of all the major world religions and philosophies.

6.2 The RSE Policy will be complimentary with the Religious Education Policy and the Personal, Social and Health Education Policy.

7. The Social, Ethnic and Religious Mix of the School

7.1 We aim to fulfill the educational needs of the children who are represented in the local community. The children come from a varied cross section of the local community and represent different social, ethnic and religious values, beliefs and customs.

7.2 The Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education recommends 'an exploration of relationships, values, morals and Christian and other belief in the multi-faith context.

8. Disability

8.1 If the school has any children with special needs who require special assistance their needs will be fully considered. Their parents will be consulted.

9. Whole School approach

9.1 It is our belief that RSE is the responsibility of all staff and should be an integral part of the teaching and learning process in order to prepare children to cope with the physical and emotional challenges of growing up and give them an elementary understanding of human reproduction. It should be provided for all children including those with physical, emotional or learning difficulties. We believe it should encourage the exploration of values and moral issues, along with considerations of sexuality, sexual health and relationships. It should

develop decision-making and communication skills, foster self-esteem, self-awareness and respect for oneself and others.

9.2 Questions will be responded to as they arise in a straightforward way, giving simple and correct information, using correct terminology for body part and functions appropriate to the age of the child. This includes questions in sensitive areas, such as HIV, AIDS and abortion which may arise during the work undertaken through the scheme of work. School staff have the right not to feel under pressure to answer difficult questions on the spot and will use distancing techniques and a question box, allowing time for discussion about the most appropriate way to answer.

9.3 Any concerns arising concerning a child or any indications that a child or children are at risk of harm or in danger will be discussed with the head teacher or child protection lead in accordance with the Child Protection policy.

10. Organisation

10.1 The main delivery of RSE is through PSHE, but some aspects are also taught through other subject areas such as science and PE. It is taught by the class teacher, and where possible a Teaching Assistant or other member of staff to provide a gender balance, whenever possible. Some elements may be taught to small groups which may be single gender. The Transition Programme will be taught to year 6 separately. The school nurse will be asked to support by offering question and answer sessions where possible.

10.2 We teach Relationships and Sex Education through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main teaching in our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum, we also teach some Relationships and 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.

10.3 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, providing reassurance that changes are part of life's cycle. We teach pupils about relationships and encourage children to discuss issues. We teach the parts of the body, how these work and how we change as we grow. We encourage children to ask for help if they require it, providing reassurance that change is part of life's cycle.

10.4 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 scheme of work for science... In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

10.5 In Year 5 and 6 we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. There is a greater emphasis on the changes that occur due to puberty, the naming of body parts and understanding their function. 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.

10.6 We use the SENSE DVD Growing up and Keeping Safe and Living and Growing. In addition for Year 6 we use the Shropshire Relationship and Sex Education Respect Yourself Transition Programme. We give all parents and carers the opportunity to view the resources used, to explain what the issues are and how they are taught.

11. Home/School Partnership

11.1 Children are exposed to information and messages from TV, internet, film, music videos, books and magazines. They are influenced by family and friends and significant adults. Part of our role is to ensure that children are able to understand and not misinterpret the information they acquire and to provide contexts where they are able to consider and evaluate the information they receive.

11.2 We believe that parents have the primary role in delivering relationship and sex education. We aim to provide a programme in partnership, ensuring all pupils receive high quality provision in line with national good practice recommendations. It is hoped that the school curriculum and the ethos of the school complements and enhances home teaching and values, giving due regard to the value of family life and loving and stable relationships.

11.3 We provide parents with opportunities to discuss the school's policy and practice. Parents will be informed about the timing of the delivery and offered an opportunity to look at resources. Parents are encouraged to discuss and ask questions. We:

- inform parents about the school's Relationships and Sex Education policy and practice;
- answer any questions that parents may have about the Relationships and Sex Education of their child;
- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for Relationships and 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 Relationships and 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.

11.4 Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the Relationship and Sex Education programme that we teach in our school. The school always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard.

11.5 Under the terms of the 1993 Education Act, parents have the right to withdraw their child from part, or whole of the RSE programme that does not form part of the national curriculum. If a parent wishes to do this they should discuss this with the head teacher. We would encourage parents to discuss any concerns at the earliest opportunity with class teacher and head. The Head will discuss the implications of withdrawal from the non-statutory part of the curriculum. The school always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard.

11.6 Parents should make it clear which aspect of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in and put this in writing. Parents will be encouraged and resources made

available to provide RSE at home and to say follow up discussion. In the event of a child being withdrawn from a lesson the child must stay in school.

11.7 Resources and information regarding further support and help will be made available to support discussion at home. Any parents with concerns about this policy should discuss this directly with the head teacher.

12. The role of other members of the community

12.1 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 Authority, school nurse and other health professionals. Other people that we may call on include local clergy, social workers and youth workers.

13. Role of the Headteacher

13.1 It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that:

- Policy and practice is developed in accordance with good practice guidelines and recommendations.
- The policy is reviewed, monitored and approved by governors.
- Staff and parents are informed about the policy.
- Staff receives appropriate training and support.
- External visitors and agencies adhere to the Visitors policy.
- Staff and governors will review the RSE Policy every two years.

14. Complaints Procedure

14.1 If parents have any cause for concern about the RSE Policy they will be asked to come into school to resolve the problem. In the unlikely event that the concern cannot be dealt with, the Governors can be contacted via the Complaints Policy and Procedure.

15. Monitoring and review

15.1 The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors our relationship and sex education policy on a regular basis. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification.

15.2 The Curriculum Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the relationship and sex education programme, and makes a record of all such comments.

15.3 Governors require the Headteacher to keep a written record, giving details of the content and delivery of the sex education programme that we teach in our school.

15.4 This policy has been reviewed and updated with teaching and support staff, and approved by the school governors. It will be reviewed every two years.

16. Key websites

- www.teachernet.gov.uk/pshe
- www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk
- Sex Education Forum (www.ncb.org.uk/sef).