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Review: when national guidance updated in 2019

St Andrew's CE Primary School Much Hadham

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Introduction

A key aim of the school is that each pupil will develop the skills and knowledge to make decisions. Decisions about how they relate to others can only be made if they have adequate knowledge and understanding of their own physical and emotional development. This is not a task for the school in isolation, and we seek to work with parents to ensure that the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education reflects their expectations and complements teaching at home. Parents will be informed about the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education so that they can decide whether or not to withdraw their child.

Relationships and Sex Education is defined as “learning about physical, moral and emotional development”. It is about understanding the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. 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 Relationships and Sex Education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

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;
- 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 Relationships and 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 Relationships and Sex Education in the belief that:

- it should be taught in the context of marriage, committed relationships and family life;
- it 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.

Curriculum Organisation

Our programme of study for Relationships and Sex Education demonstrates progression that will extend language, concepts and content increasing in depth and complexity as the pupils mature physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Key aspects may be revisited on an annual basis. Relevance and differentiation are key aspects here at St Andrew's. Our skilled teachers know the level of maturation of their pupils and are able to draw out existing knowledge and needs and build on them. Relationships and Sex Education is built into an integrated programme of personal, social and health education. Our PSHE and PE co-ordinator Mrs Small is actively involved in the delivery of this programme.

We teach Relationships and Sex Education through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main Sex Education teaching in our personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, we also teach some aspects of 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. The programme takes significant guidance from the PHSE Association and recommendations from Herts for Learning.

In PSHE we teach children about relationships, and we encourage children to discuss issues through our Protective Behaviours programme. We teach about the parts of the body and how these work.

In Key Stage 1 we teach children that animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body.

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

In Year 5 we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. We liaise with HCC advisors 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.

We arrange a meeting for all parents and carers of children in Year 5 and 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 Relationships and Sex 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 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;
- 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.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the Relationships and Sex Education programme that we teach in our school. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from Relationships and 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 the Local Health Authority, such as the school nurse and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our Relationships and Sex Education programme. Other people that we call on include local clergy, social workers and youth workers.

Confidentiality

Teachers conduct Relationships and 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 listen to the child as a matter of urgency.

If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the Headteacher. The Headteacher will then deal with the matter. (See also Child Protection Policy.)

The role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our Relationships and Sex 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 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 Relationships and Sex Education. This Committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body for approval.