

# **SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION POLICY**

**MAY 2012**

## **What is Sex and Relationship Education?**

DfE guidance states that:

*'The objective of sex and relationship education is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. A successful programme, firmly embedded in PSHE, will help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.'*

These objectives are very relevant to our pupils, albeit they will need more specialist help and more intensive support than their mainstream peers. Our pupils are likely to be more vulnerable than mainstream pupils of the same age and to have issues with maintaining positive relationships which arise from their difficulty in understanding the rules of the social world. A number of pupils will be coming to terms with their disability and its potential impact on the quality of their relationships. Others will grow into adulthood but remain highly dependent on others, needing physical care and constant support to enjoy interaction and make their needs known. With appropriate experiences and skilled teaching we believe that we can reduce the risks of exploitation and improve all our pupils' chances of establishing positive relationships now and in their adult lives.

Within this policy we consider 'relationships' with the range of people who are, or will be, significant in our pupils' lives; family, friends, neighbours, carers, teachers, boy and girl friends and partners.

## **Sex and Relationship Education at Trinity**

All pupils have access to Relationship Education. We place a high priority on the development of positive relationships between all members of the school community; all members of staff work to establish a climate within all lessons and activities where people communicate effectively, respect one another and enjoy learning together.

From year 7 all pupils have access to sex education. We recognise that sex education is equally important for boys and girls. We also recognise the potential impact of disability on body image, self esteem and the opportunity to establish positive relationships now and in adult life. Some of these issues will need to be dealt with sensitively on an individual basis.

Sex and Relationship Education is taught as part of a broad curriculum and it operates on three levels:

Level 1, pupils at early developmental stages are supported to make positive relationships, to communicate effectively and to experience healthy choices within the programmes of study for Communication, Language and Literacy, Social and Emotional Development and Physical Development.

Level 2, pupils are supported to express themselves, to treat other people appropriately, to understand healthy lifestyles and to make a contribution to their community within the programmes of study for Communication, Language and Literacy and PSHE. The programme of study for PSHE includes a discrete section on sex and relationship education.

Level 3, pupils are supported to access the National Curriculum programmes of study at levels appropriate to their knowledge and understanding. Sex and Relationship Education is accessed within science and PSHE.

## **Aims**

In Sex and Relationship Education we aim to support our pupils through their physical, emotional and moral development by providing them with accessible information and opportunities for appropriate interaction with other people. We seek to help those pupils who are able to understand the concepts involved to develop their own values and think through the impact that values have on behaviour. We aim to balance this principle with the need to provide clear information and simple rules for pupils with severe learning difficulties, delayed language or autism.

As appropriate for each pupil, we aim to develop attitudes and values through:

- providing opportunities to experience and reflect on positive relationships and learn the importance of love, respect and care;
- providing physical care (including intimate care where necessary) and physical guidance within the context of supportive relationships;
- enabling pupils to experience being part of a community within the class, the school or the wider world;
- promoting a positive self image;
- promoting the confidence to make and express choices;
- ensuring that there is always at least one member of staff whom a pupil could approach for support;
- expecting pupils to treat other people with respect;
- dealing appropriately with incidents of aggression, bullying, discrimination or injustice.

We aim to develop personal and social skills through:

- providing opportunities to interact with a range of people within and beyond the school community;

- teaching pupils to share and co-operate with others;
- helping pupils to accept healthy choices in for example diet, exercise and health care;
- teaching the difference between ‘private’ and ‘public’ behaviour;
- equipping pupils to express preferences, communicate needs and make decisions;
- supporting pupils to understand, talk about and manage their emotions;
- supporting pupils to manage their behaviour and to understand the consequences of their actions;
- teaching an acceptable vocabulary to express likes and dislikes in relation to experiences and people;
- developing pupils’ understanding of other people’s preferences and points of view;
- teaching pupils how to assert themselves appropriately;
- discussing the impact of peer pressure and suggesting ways to deal with it;
- teaching pupils how to use technology responsibly – i.e. to manage the use of email, text and social networks;
- teaching pupils to manage the practicalities of self care including menstruation;
- discussing ways of making decisions about relationships and lifestyles now and in their adult lives.

We aim to develop knowledge and understanding through:

- developing pupils’ body awareness and physical control;
- providing opportunities to develop awareness of other people; teaching appropriate language to refer to body parts and bodily functions;
- teaching about gender, growth and development;
- teaching about healthy lifestyles including sexual health and emotional well being;
- teaching about when privacy is appropriate and how to maintain it; teaching about the changes which occur at puberty and the skills needed to cope with them;
- exploring and developing the concept of family and family life, taking account of the different family structures of which pupils are a part;
- exploring and developing the concept of community.

### **Planning and individualised learning**

The content of our curriculum is set out within our medium term planning. Teachers identify relevant learning objectives and activities for their pupils, taking account of the pupils’ age and level of understanding.

Teachers ensure that their objectives and resources reflect the range of cultures represented in the school and the range of families in which pupils live.

## **Child protection**

Children and young people with special educational needs may be vulnerable to child abuse and exploitation and may be less clear about what is acceptable public behaviour. We provide explicit teaching in these areas and provide guidance for staff on ways to protect themselves and their pupils.

## **Working with parents**

We recognise that parents are usually the key people in teaching their children about sex and relationships. We also recognise that some parents find it difficult to discuss sensitive matters with their children and that these difficulties may be exacerbated where the child has special educational needs. Parents may face particular issues where their children behave inappropriately within the wider community.

Class teachers are the first point of contact in keeping parents informed of individual programmes and discussing parents' preferences and concerns.

Pupils who are able to do so learn about the significance of marriage and stable relationships. Work on topics linked to family life will also recognise that our pupils come from a variety of backgrounds and reflect family patterns in what is taught and recorded (for example, a display about 'our families' will be inclusive in nature). Staff are respectful of different faith and cultural perspectives and expect pupils to show the same respect to one another's views.

Parents have a right to withdraw children from all or part of the discrete sex and relationship education provided at school except for those parts set out within the National Curriculum. If a parent is considering withdrawing their child they should contact the Headteacher in writing who may agree to alternative arrangements.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

The policy is regularly monitored by the Senior Leadership Team as part of the school SIP cycle. It is the responsibility of the PSHE Co-ordinator of each phase to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of the Sex and Relationship Education policy, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers evaluate lessons and series of lessons and the curriculum in all three phases is monitored and evaluated by the Assistant Headteacher. Sex and Relationship Education is reviewed as part of the school's subject audit cycle.

The Governors Curriculum Teaching and Learning Committee is responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the Sex and Relationship Education Policy.