

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL

SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION POLICY

Approved by Learning and Achievement Committee, Summer 2007

Approved by the Full Governing Body, Summer 2007

To be reviewed Summer 2010

Policy Development and Consultation

- The policy will be formulated by the Tutorial Team Leaders in consultation with all staff through the relevant staff consultation meetings, with students through Year Councils and with the Governors' Learning and Achievement committee.
- The final draft will then be submitted to the full Governing Body for approval.

Principles

- That young people are entitled to responsible and relevant sex & relationship education as a key element of personal and social education.
- That successful adulthood includes understanding and constructive use of relationships and sexuality

Aims - (reflecting the School Aims)

- To help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development.
- To develop self-esteem and self-confidence in young people as the foundation for responsible and caring relationships based on respect for themselves and others.
- To assist the development of skills and understanding in order to live confident, healthy and independent lives.
- To promote understanding of sexual attitudes and behaviour.
- To ensure knowledge of the relevant law

A Moral Framework

- The school recognises the moral framework outlined in the Department for Education Document; 'Sex and Relationships Guidance' Reference DFEE 0116, Published July 2000; which was written to take account of the revised National Curriculum published in September 1999, the need for guidance arising out of the new personal, Social and Health Education (PSCHE) framework and the Social Exclusion Unit report on teenage pregnancy.
- The school believes that sex and relationship education should not be delivered in isolation, but that it is firmly rooted in the framework for PSCHE.
- Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives.

Content

- Knowledge and understanding about male and female puberty, menstruation, the physiology of sex, contraception, pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Exploration of understanding of a variety of personal relationships from friendship to intimacy
- The nature and importance of marriage for family life and bringing up children. This includes the recognition that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage. Students should learn the significance of marriage and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society. There should be no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.
- Exploration of issues around bullying, including homophobic bullying.
- Exploration of moral values, family values, religious values, gender roles and stereotyping

- To understand difference whilst respecting themselves and others in preventing and removing prejudice.
- To provide an opportunity for students to examine their own and others' attitudes to sexual activity and related issues
- To learn to understand human sexuality, the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the resultant benefits, and learn about obtaining appropriate advice on sexual health.
- To promote an awareness of the pressure on young people to behave in certain ways and to help improve assertiveness and the confidence to cope with many different and conflicting pressures.
- To further develop personal skills and qualities; - i.e. listening, questioning, communicating, standpoint-taking, valuing the opinions of others, empathy, etc.
- To contribute to the promotion of spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at school and in preparation for the opportunities, experiences and responsibilities of adult life.

Organisation

- Knowledge and understanding of some topics (e.g. the biological aspects of human sexual behaviour) will be covered as part of the National Curriculum in Science (see Appendix B).
- Some of the moral aspects will be discussed as part of the Religious Education syllabus (See Appendix C)
- Examination of attitudes and behaviour will be part of the tutorial programme
- In curriculum areas and tutorial programme, content and methods are designed to be appropriate to the age and general development of pupils in the group and to be sensitive to religious belief and cultural practices
- Outside agencies (e.g. Theatre in Education, A.C.E.T.) may be engaged when the quality of learning outcome and resources allow
- Personal, confidential advice is available from medical practitioners and organisations offering the support of qualified counsellors.

Responsibilities

- The Tutorial Key Stage leaders, with the guidance of the Deputy Headteacher Learning and Achievement, is responsible for the overall planning and delivery of Sex & Relationship Education through the PSCHE programme
- Year Team Leaders will be responsible for the planning of the programme for a specific year group which will, in the main, be delivered by tutors to tutor groups. Where appropriate, support may be given by a team of senior staff
- There will be ongoing training provision for staff
- Teaching resources for the Tutorial programme will be based on approved materials. There will be regard to the age and cultural background of pupils. It is recognised that Department of Health materials are developed with reference to DfEE guidance.
- Safeguards will make access to the internet safe and prevent access to unsuitable material.
- The appropriate Heads of Department are responsible for the elements of sex education contained in the syllabuses in National Curriculum - Science and Religious Education

Guidance to Staff on Sensitive Issues

- Teachers and pupils should negotiate and agree ground rules, e.g. about acceptable behaviour and appropriate language to be used in lessons.
- It must be made clear to pupils from the outset that there may be limitations on confidentiality in certain sensitive areas, e.g. child abuse.
- Statements by teachers on sensitive issues such as abortion, contraception, drugs, same sex relationships, etc. must be purely factual and objective. Subjective, personal comments such

as - "In my opinion...", "I think.....", "If I were you....." are inappropriate for teachers to use when dealing with sensitive issues.

- Teachers dealing with sensitive issues should only use materials approved by tutorial or departmental teams.

Dealing with Students who ask for Individual Advice

(N.B. These guidelines apply to pupils asking for individual advice about all sensitive issues e.g. not just about sexual or relationship matters, but also substance abuse, bereavement, illness, etc..)

- Teachers should encourage students to discuss their concerns with parents.
- House Heads, the School Community Nurse and Counsellors from 14-21 have considerable experience, and it may be appropriate for students to refer to them.
- Confidentiality should not be promised, but if a teacher feels concerned about the raising of a sensitive issue, (s)he should seek the advice of a senior colleague or the headteacher
- Teachers can inform students where to seek confidential advice and treatment - e.g. from a G.P., family planning or young peoples' advisory clinic. The school library and the Connexions room at Wormestall contain displays detailing such information.
- It is important to distinguish between, on the one hand, the school's function of providing education generally about sex and relationships education, and, on the other, counselling and advice to individual students on these issues, particularly if this relates to their own sexual and relationships behaviour. Good teachers have always taken a pastoral interest in the welfare and well-being of students. But this function should never trespass on the proper exercise of parental rights and responsibilities.
- Particular care must be exercised in relation to contraception advice to students under 16 years, for whom sexual intercourse is unlawful. The general rule must be that giving an individual student advice on such matters without parental knowledge or consent would be an inappropriate exercise of a teacher's professional responsibilities. Teachers are not health professionals.
- A teacher approached by an individual student for specific advice on aspects of sexual behaviour should, wherever possible, encourage the pupil to seek advice from his or her parents, and, if appropriate, from the relevant health service professional (eg. The student's GP or the school nurse)
- There will be occasions when teachers and other professionals giving sex and relationships education have to exercise their discretion and judgement about how to deal with particularly explicit issues raised by an individual student. It is unlikely to be appropriate to deal with such issues with the whole class. Teachers should normally discuss the child's concerns first with the parents, to see how they would like the matter to be handled. Where the parents wish them to do so, it may be appropriate to respond individually to the child's question outside the class. In exceptional circumstances, where the teacher has reason to believe that the child may be distressed or in danger, it may be appropriate for the teacher to speak individually to the child before consulting the parents, to clarify the basis for the concerns. Where there is a risk that a teacher may be compromised in these circumstances, it would be wiser for them to be accompanied by another member of staff.

Child Protection Procedures

- Any suspicions or disclosure about Child Abuse (sexual, emotional or physical) must, without exception, be referred immediately to the Deputy Headteacher Learning & Achievement, who is the designated person responsible for dealing with such matters, and who will set in train the formal procedures. In his/her absence, refer to the Headteacher or most senior member of staff.

- The Governing Body has adopted the West Berkshire Teenage Pregnancy Protocol. (Appendix A)

The Role of Parents

- The prime responsibility for bringing up children rests with parents. Parents are key figures in helping their children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities which sexual maturity brings.
- The Sex & Relationship Education offered by the school will support the role of parents, and take into account parental views about its content and presentation.
- Information evenings for parents will be held as and when appropriate to ensure that parents are fully informed of the content of the programmes
- Copies of this Sex & Relationship Education Policy will be freely available to parents
- Information about Sex & Relationship Education will be included in the school prospectus
- Parents have the right to ask for their children not to attend any or all parts of the school's programme of Sex & Relationship Education, except those parts which are required by the National Curriculum Science Order, and the Religious Education syllabus. Pupils who do not attend these lessons will be supervised.
- Parents who wish to do this should write to the Headteacher.

Dissemination of the Policy

- All members of staff, parents, students and members of the governing body will be directed to a copy of this policy on the school website.

Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- The effectiveness of the programme will be reviewed on an annual basis as part of the annual review of the PSICHE programme (see Tutorial Programme Policy)
- Questions or complaints about the policy should, in the first instance, be addressed to the Chair of the Governing Body
- In working towards the National Healthy School Standard (Section 1) it is recognised that this supports and complements the PSICHE framework,

Additional Information

Appendix A Teenage Pregnancy Protocol

Appendix B National Curriculum Science - Key Stages 1 - 4

Appendix C Religious Education - Key Stages 1 - 4

Appendix D DfEE Circular 0116/2000 (Sex and Relationship Guidance) Summer 2000

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Signed by Chairman

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Date