

**ST BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL**  
**RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY**

**Reviewed by the Governors' Education Committee, Summer 2019**

**Approved by the Full Governing Body, Summer 2019**

**To be reviewed Autumn 2019**

**Introduction & Principles**

All schools must provide a curriculum that is broadly based, balanced and meets the needs of all pupils. Under section 78 of the Education Act 2002 and the Academies Act 2010, a PSHE curriculum:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- Prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

The Government's PSHE education review of PSHE Education (March 2013) stated that the subject would remain non-statutory and that no new programmes of study would be published. The DfE specified as part of its National Curriculum guidance that 'All schools should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), drawing on good practice'. The review also detailed:

"PSHE remains an important and necessary part of all pupils' education. We believe that all schools should teach PSHE, drawing on good practice, and have outlined this expectation in the introduction to the new National Curriculum" (Written Ministerial Statement: Review of Personal, Social, Health and Economic education, March 2013).

This SRE policy is informed by existing DfE guidance on **Sex and Relationships Education** (Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, July 2000), **preventing and tackling bullying** (Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies, July 2013), **Drug and Alcohol Education** (DfE and ACPO drug advice for schools: Advice for local authorities, headteachers, school staff and governing bodies, September 2012), **safeguarding** (Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, March 2013) and **equality** (Equality Act 2010: Advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities, revised February 2013).

**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 'Children, Schools and Families Act 2010, provides the current guidance on this area of the curriculum. Guidance in this area also arises from the OFSTED report on Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) published in May 2013, entitled 'Not yet good enough'.
- 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.

## **Definition of Relationships and Sex Education**

- 'RSE is lifelong learning process of acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex, sexuality, relationships and feelings' (Sex Education Forum, 1999).
- Effective RSE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain relationships. It also enables children and young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being.

## **Content**

The sex education contained in National Curriculum science (Key Stages 1–4) is compulsory in academy schools. In academy secondary schools it is also compulsory for pupils to have sex education that includes HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections.

- 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 stigmatism of students 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.

- Being alert to signs that young girls may be at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM). School summer holiday especially during the transition from primary to secondary schools is thought to be a key risk time for FGM.

### **Organisation**

- Knowledge and understanding of some topics (e.g. the biological aspects of human sexual behaviour) will be covered as part of the Curriculum in Science
- Some of the moral aspects will be discussed as part of the Religious Education syllabus.
- Examination of attitudes and behaviour will be part of the Personal Development Programme (PDP).
- In curriculum areas and the PDP, content and methods are designed to be appropriate to the age and general development of students in the group and to be sensitive to religious belief and cultural practices.
- Outside agencies (e.g. Theatre in Education, A.C.E.T. and other representative bodies and speakers in education) 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 Key Stage leaders, with the guidance of the Deputy Headteacher: Curriculum & Achievement are responsible for the overall planning and delivery of Sex & Relationship Education through the PSCHE programme.
- Key Stage 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/visiting professionals, lesson observations and student feedback.
- There will be ongoing training provision for staff.
- Teaching resources for PDP will be based on approved materials. There will be regard to the age and cultural background of students. It is recognised that Department of Health materials are developed with reference to DfE 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 Curriculum - Science and Religious Education

### **Guidance to Staff on Sensitive Issues**

- Teachers and students 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 students 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 students 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, the Designated Safeguarding Officer 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. 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 student 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Assistant Headteacher: Learning & Achievement at KS3, 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 Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Assistant Headteacher: Learning & Achievement at KS4 or most senior member of staff in school.
- The Governing Body will support the work of the school and specialist agencies in the event of a teenage pregnancy.

### **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 Relationship & Sex 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 Relationship & Sex 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 Relationship & Sex Education, except those parts which are required by the Curriculum in Science, and in Religious Education. Students 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 Personal Development Programme.
- Questions about the policy should, in the first instance, be addressed to the Headteacher.

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Signed by Chair of Governors

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Date