ST BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL
RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Reviewed by the Education Committee, Autumn 2019

Introduction & Principles
This policy covers our school's approach to the aims, content, delivery and organisation of relationships and sex education (RSE).

Relationships and Sex Education is part of a lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. At St Bart's, RSE is centred on personal safety, caring for others and building strong family relationships. This is coupled with teaching students about sexual health (including safe sex), and sexuality. Effective relationships and sex education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. RSE at St Bart's is intended to help students learn about relationships, emotions, sexuality and sexual health. We aim to present relevant facts in an objective and balanced manner. Lessons are set in the context of the family, friends and wider societal issues and address responsibilities that arise from within these relationships. RSE at St Bart's will help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Under the Academies Act 2010 all schools must provide a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school and of society, and
- prepares students at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

All maintained secondary schools must provide relationships and sex education (including education about sexually transmitted disease such as HIV and AIDS and child protection issues such as FGM and child sexual exploitation) and must teach human growth and reproduction as set out in the national curriculum. This is a statutory requirement.

Documents that inform the school's RSE policy include:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning & Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2019)

Aims - (reflecting the School Aims)
St Bart's values every individual equally and our overarching aims for our students are for them to:

- fulfil potential now and in later life.

- develop confidence, self-esteem and decision-making skills.
- enjoy and value learning.
- develop personal responsibility and respect.

Underscoring these aims, our approach to RSE seeks to:

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

Content

The sex education contained in the National Curriculum science curriculum is compulsory in academy schools.

- Knowledge and understanding about male and female puberty, menstruation, the physiology of sex, contraception, miscarriage, pregnancy, sexual health, 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, the roles and responsibilities of parents and the characteristics of successful parenting. 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 promote increased awareness of the challenges which the online world and social media place on young people and to promote safe behaviour online.
- To promote awareness of how to obtain further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.
- 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

- Our RSE programme is an integral part of our whole school PSHE provision and is largely delivered through the Personal Development Programme (PDP).
- 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 curriculum.
- Examination of attitudes and behaviour will be part of the Personal Development Programme (PDP).
- Learning about relationships and sex education within the PDP programme will link to and complement the learning in other curriculum areas such as Science and RE and these links will be signposted in curriculum maps.
- In all delivery areas, 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 beliefs and cultural practices.
- Outside agencies (e.g. Theatre in Education, and other representative bodies and speakers in education) may be engaged when the quality of learning outcome and resources allow.
- Selected resources, such as books and film clips, will be used which support and promote understanding within a moral/ values context.
- Personal, confidential advice is available from medical practitioners and organisations offering the support of qualified counsellors.

Responsibilities

- The Key Stage leaders, under the leadership of the Head of Faculty, Food and PDP, with the guidance of the Deputy Headteacher: Curriculum & Achievement are responsible for the overall planning and delivery of Relationships and Sex 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 or visiting professionals.
- 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.
- The appropriate Heads of Department are responsible for the elements of relationships and sex education contained in other curriculum areas - Science and Religious Education

Safe and Effective Practice

- In line with our schools aims, all teachers responsible for delivering aspects of the RSE curriculum will foster learning by creating a healthy, safe and secure environment in which students feel comfortable.

- Teachers and students should negotiate and agree ground rules, e.g. about acceptable behaviour and appropriate language to be used in lessons.
- It will 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. will 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 will 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 <u>all</u> 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 and /or seek advice from their parents and, if appropriate, relevant medical professionals such as a GP or the School Nurse.
- Teachers may refer students to their House Heads, the School Community Nurse and Counsellors for further support.
- Confidentiality should not be promised; if a teacher feels concerned about the raising of a sensitive issue, they should seek the advice of a senior colleague or the DSL, Rachel Mairs.
- 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 students' own sexual and relationships behaviour.
- 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 would be an inappropriate exercise of a teacher's professional responsibilities. Teachers are not health professionals.

- There will be occasions when teachers and other professionals giving relationships and sex 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. 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.

Safeguarding Procedures

- Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, has the potential to lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue.

- Any suspicions or disclosure about child abuse (sexual, emotional or physical) must, without exception, be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Rachel Mairs or the Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Jon Lawes.
- Any disclosures made about students' involvement in risky or illegal behaviour must also be shared. This includes, but is not limited to, disclosures about involvement in sexual activity for those under the age of 16, or disclosure of alcohol or drug use.
- Visitors/external agencies which support the delivery of RSE will be made aware of our safeguarding procedures.

The Role of Parents & Carers

- The prime responsibility for bringing up children rests with parents and carers. Parents and carers 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 Relationships & Sex Education offered by the school will support the role of parents and carers, and take into account parental views about its content and presentation.
- Information evenings for parents and carers will be held as and when appropriate to ensure that they are fully informed of the content of the programmes.
- Copies of this Relationships & Sex Education Policy will be shared with parents via the Bartholonews newsletter and will be freely available to parents, carers and other stakeholders via the school website.
- Parents and carers have the right to ask for their children not to attend any or all parts of the school's programme of 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. Once a student reaches the third term before their 16th birthday they have the right to choose for themselves and the school will arrange for the student to receive this teaching.
- Parents or carers who wish to withdraw their child from the Sex Education elements of the PDP curriculum 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 and reported to the Governors' Education Committee.
- Questions about the policy should, in the first instance, be addressed to the Headteacher.

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Signed by Chair of Governors Date