

Relationships & Sex Education Policy

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Park Community School

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Contents

1	Background and Context.....	3
2	Aims	3
3	Content	3
4	External Speakers.....	4
5	Parents	4
6	Equal Opportunities	4
7	Training.....	5
8	Assessment.....	5
9	Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability.....	5
	Appendix I - Teaching Strategies for Relationship and Sex Education.....	6

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

1 Background and Context

Relationship and Sex education is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development and includes the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect (both mutual and self) and the love and care for family life. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes so that pupils leave able to make informed decisions in all their relationships they form. See section 34 of the Children & Social Work Act 2017.

Furthermore, in accordance with DfEE Sex and Relationship Education Guidance 116/2000 the school will present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within the framework of values identified in this paragraph and promoting an awareness of the law on sexual behaviour. They will also be encouraged to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications, and risks of certain types of behaviour, and to accept that both sexes must behave responsibly in sexual matters. We, the school, firmly believe that the key to this is the development of the students' self-esteem and a positive feeling of self-worth.

We also recognise that the children come from a variety of religious and cultural backgrounds which will enrich the understanding of all students, but that sensitivity will be needed to avoid causing hurt and offence to them and their families. The teaching of sex education is seen as a partnership between home and family and parents have an important role in this aspect of their child's development.

The Government currently plans to have new statutory guidance in place for September 2020.

2 Aims

At Park Community School the aims of the RSE programme will be delivered within and by promoting the moral framework as follows:

- **different types of relationships**, including friendships, family relationships, dealing with strangers and, at secondary school, intimate relationships;
- how to recognise, understand and build **healthy relationships**, including self-respect and respect for others, commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent, and how to manage conflict, and also how to recognise unhealthy relationships;
- how relationships may **affect health and wellbeing, including mental health**;
- healthy relationships and **safety online**;
- factual knowledge, at secondary school, around **sex, sexual health and sexuality**, set firmly within the context of relationships.

While also recognising that all pupils have an entitlement to:

- Age and circumstance appropriate RSE
- Access to help from trusted adults and signposting to relevant and appropriate services.

3 Content

Formal Entitlement

Throughout Key Stage 3 and 4 relationship and sex education is mainly taught through Challenge Days (part of the SMSC programme) and the Science curriculum. Other subjects make important contributions as appropriate. It will be the responsibility of the SMSC lead

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

and SRE coordinator to ensure this coverage is kept up to date and new developments included.

Informal Entitlement: Whole Class Issues

It is recognised that many issues relating to relationship and sex education will evolve informally through class discussions and through teaching materials used by teachers. Such issues will be sensitively dealt with in accordance with Section 4 of Guidance 116/2000. This will involve clear ground rules and techniques for depersonalising discussion. If a teacher deems a question to be inappropriate for class discussion, he/she will address the issue later the same day with the pupil concerned.

Informal Entitlement: Individual Issues

It is possible that individuals will occasionally seek advice from individual teacher. Where this involves advice on contraception to pupils under 16 or other matters which raise legal issues teachers will follow the guidance of the Confidentiality Policy which is a separate document, under this guise is also the Child Protection Policy, both of which are available on request. Generally, the normal process for a teacher to follow will be to advise the student to talk to their parents, if not to seek help from a medical professional, or signpost appropriate external agencies.

4 External Speakers

Where appropriate teachers will, with the approval of the Head teacher, invite external specialist to present parts of the relationship and sex education programme. The teacher who invites the speaker will ensure they know and understand the school policy for sex education and understand how their contribution fits into the sex education programme. The teacher will also discuss their input with the speaker and be present at the presentation. A service level agreement should be signed.

5 Parents

Relationship and Sex education is seen as a joint responsibility of both parents and school. Staff at Park Community School will support the work of parents in this area and wherever possible will provide appropriate supportive material for them to study and use. Parents may also have access to classroom materials and appropriate syllabuses for sex education, should they so wish.

Parents will have access to the school policy either at the school, or, on request, by copy forwarded for their own use. Through these documents parents will also be made aware of their rights to withdraw their child from any or all aspects of relationship and sex education, other than that covered by the Science national curriculum. Such requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher who will make alternative arrangements for such students. Parents will be informed in writing of specific SRE sessions taught outside of science for instance contraception to allow them to withdraw their child if they feel it necessary.

6 Equal Opportunities

Relationship and Sex Education is an entitlement for all students and this policy has been drawn up in accordance with the School Equal Opportunities Policy.

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

7 Training

Training and support will be made available for all staff involved with the sex education programme as appropriate and as resources allow. It will be the responsibility of the Head of Department to liaise with the senior member of staff with responsibility for professional development to identify and meet training needs.

8 Assessment

Assessment of student learning is being developed in accordance with the School Assessment Policy. The aspects of relationship and sex education contained within the National Curriculum will be subject to the appropriate statutory assessment requirements. Other aspects of the sex education programme will be assessed by pupil self assessment and feedback from visiting speakers and staff delivering the programme.

9 Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability

The RSE lead will monitor and evaluate the development of the relationship and sex education policy and will report to the Deputy Headteacher, who, in turn will report to the Senior Leadership Team.

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Appendix I - Teaching Strategies for Relationship and Sex Education

Extract from DfEE Sex and Relationship Guidance 116/2000 Section 4 and Paragraphs 7.11, 7.12

This section looks at some practical strategies for teaching sex and relationship education. Schools may already be making use of these in their programmes.

- 4.1 It is essential that schools can help children and young people develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about sex and relationships. Teachers and other staff may need to overcome their own anxieties and embarrassment to do this effectively. Partnership between school and parents is the key to success. There are a number of teaching strategies that can help this, including:
- establishing ground rules with their pupils; _ using `distancing' techniques;
 - knowing how to deal with unexpected questions or comments from pupils;
 - using discussion and project learning methods and appropriate materials; and
 - encouraging reflection.
- 4.2 Some teachers will need training and support, perhaps by team teaching or by inviting visitors from outside services or agencies.

Ground rules

- 4.3 A set of ground rules will help teachers create a safe environment in which they do not feel embarrassed or anxious about unintended or unexpected questions or comments from pupils. Ground rules might be developed as part of the school's sex and relationship education policy or individually with each class or year group. For example, one class worked out this set of ground rules together:
- no one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question;
 - no one will be forced to take part in a discussion;
 - only the correct names for body parts will be used; and
 - meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

Distancing techniques

- 4.4 Teachers can avoid embarrassment and protect pupils' privacy by always depersonalising discussions. For example, role play can be used to help pupils `act out' situations. Case studies with invented characters, appropriate videos, and visits to theatre in education groups can all help pupils discuss sensitive issues and develop their decision-making skills in a safe environment. Some of these methods are listed below under discussion and project learning.

Dealing with questions

- 4.5 Teachers should establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. Many teachers are concerned about responding to unexpected questions or comments from pupils in a whole-class situation. Having a set of ground rules should reduce the chances of this happening but teachers will need support and training so that they are prepared for the unexpected. For example:
- If a question is too personal, the teacher should remind the pupil of the ground rules. If the pupil needs further support, the teacher can refer her or him to the appropriate person, such as a school counsellor, school nurse, helpline, or an outside agency or service;

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

- If a teacher doesn't know the answer to a question, it is important to acknowledge this, and to suggest that the pupil or teacher or both together research the question later;
- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis. In this way, the pupil will feel they have been treated with respect, but the rest of the class will not have to listen to personal experience or inappropriate information. To maintain trust and respect the teacher must remember to talk with the pupil later; and
- If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse, they should follow the school's child protection procedures.

Discussion and project learning

4.6 Research into what makes relationship and sex education effective shows that discussion and project learning encourages learning and is enjoyed by pupils. Pupils take part in a structured activity in which they can:

- draw on previous knowledge to develop more understanding;
- practise their social and personal skills;
- consider their beliefs and attitudes about different topics;
- reflect on their new learning; and
- plan and shape future action.

4.7 Active learning is most effective when pupils are working in groups. Methods include discussion techniques such as the use of circle time in primary schools, case studies and project work.

4.8 Teachers should also assess the usefulness of providing factual information in written form for young people to keep for future reference.

Reflection

4.9 Reflecting is crucial for learning as it encourages pupils to consolidate what they have learned and to form new understanding, skills and attitudes. Teachers can help pupils reflect on their learning by asking questions like these:

- What was it like doing this discussion today?
- What did you learn from the others, especially those who had a different experience or belief from your own?
- What do you think you will be able to do as a result of this discussion?
- What else do you think you need to think or learn about?

Key points

Schools need to help children and young people develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about relationships and sex.

Teachers and other staff can use a range of strategies to help them do this, including establishing ground rules, introducing 'distancing' techniques, making use of discussion and project learning, and encouraging reflection.