



SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

Introduction

This policy takes full account of the school's legal obligations and the latest DCSF guidance 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' (DFES 116/2000). The school aims to ensure that its approach goes beyond provision of biological information to focus on clarifying attitudes and values, and developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships.

According to the latest DFES guidance Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is:

'...lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health' (DFES 'Sex and Relationship Guidance', 2000).

Aims

1. To fulfill the legal obligations of the college for SRE.

2. To help students understand facts and issues related to:

- a. physical development at appropriate stages;
- b. human sexuality, sexual health, **gender identity**, emotions and relationships.

3. To develop students' understanding of :

- a. the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations;
- b. the value of family life, marriage and stable & loving relationships for the nurture of children;
- c. the value of respect, love and care;
- d. the nature and issues surrounding moral dilemmas;
- e. the need to developing critical thinking as part of decision making.

4. To develop the personal and social skills that help students to:

- a. manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- b. have self-respect and empathy for others;
- c. make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice;
- d. appreciate of the consequences of choices made;
- e. manage conflict;
- f. recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

5. To help all students to feel secure and confident to discuss sex, **identity and relationships issues, willing to express their own beliefs and concerns and listen with respect to those of others.**

6. To equip teaching and non-teaching staff with the necessary skills and confidence to deliver SRE to students and use recognised health professionals where appropriate through:

- a. the taught SRE content within the PSHE and tutorial programme;
- b. the pastoral care system.

Guidelines

1. An up-to-date SRE policy will be available to all parents on demand in the School Office. Parents will be informed annually in the School Prospectus and Annual Report to Parents of this situation. All Year 7 parents will be told of their rights at the start of the year (as well subsequent arrivals in college).

2. The school recognises parents' right to withdraw their children from 'sex education' lessons which fall outside those aspects covered in the National Curriculum Science. This wish should be communicated to the Head teacher in writing so that discussions can be held to see what alternatives there are, or what compromises can be reached.

3. The Governing Body will review annually this Sex and Relationships Education Policy and receive any representations from parents/carers.

4. There will be a taught SRE programme; pastoral support for students who experience difficulties. (This may include accessing appropriate agencies such as school nurse); and the provision of appropriate information through leaflets and books in the library and displays of posters.

5. This programme will seek to help young people feel good about themselves, and become knowledgeable and confident about sex and relationships, are, therefore, more likely to be more discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and to have fulfilling relationships in later life.

6. The SRE programme will be delivered within the moral framework as follows:

- a. the value of stable and loving relationships;
- b. respect, understanding and empathy towards others who may have different backgrounds, religious beliefs, cultures, sexuality, feelings and views;
- c. the development of relationships, including sexual relationships, should be based on mutual consent, rather than coercion;
- d. the right not to be abused by other people or be taken advantage of;
- e. the right of people to follow their own sexuality, within legal parameters.

7. The programme will recognise that all students have an entitlement to:

- a. age and circumstance appropriate SRE;
- b. access to help from trusted adults and helping services.

8. The main SRE programme will be delivered through PSHE and **tutorial** lessons. In addition, certain biological aspects are delivered through science lessons and other aspects of SRE are considered in RE as part of the study of different religions.

9. The SRE programme is delivered in a developmental manner so that issues are explored in greater depth as students mature. Active learning methods, which involve children's full participation, will be used. This includes use of quizzes, case studies, research, role-play, video, small group discussion and use of appropriate guest speakers. Sex and relationship education takes place with the students' usual PSHE teacher. Should a teacher be absent, a short-term supply teacher would not undertake it. Teaching is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that students are not put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. Teaching resources are selected on the basis of their appropriateness to students.

10. The school nurse plays a role in SRE, both in terms of input into lessons and provision of pastoral support for students. The school will work in ongoing consultation and partnership with the college nurse. Outside agencies and speakers are also involved in inputting to SRE lessons. The college will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to student needs. We shall work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within the school.

11. Teachers are careful to ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not influence the teaching of sex and relationships. To this end, the ground rules above are agreed to provide a common values framework within which to teach. There are clear parameters as to what will be taught in whole class setting and what will be dealt with on an individual basis:

- a. Students will be given preparation so that they will know how to minimise any embarrassment they feel;
- b. No-one (teacher or student) should be expected to answer a personal question;
- c. No-one will be forced to take part in a discussion;
- d. Only the correct names for body parts will be used;
- e. Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

12. Sometimes an individual child will ask an explicit or difficult question in the classroom. Questions do not have to be answered and can be addressed later. This school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in these situations and refer to the PSHE **subject leader** concerned.

13. Teachers should establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting. Teachers should set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that students discuss issues in a way which does not encourage giggling and silliness. If a verbal question is too personal, the teacher should remind the students of the ground rules. If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a student, 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. Teachers should not be drawn into providing more information than is appropriate to the age of the child.

14. Students must not be given the impression that teenagers inevitably have sex, the view that sex should be between two people who are mature enough to make informed decisions should be emphasised. If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of sexual abuse, the DSL or deputy DSL should be informed and the usual child protection procedures followed.

15. SRE involves consideration of a number of sensitive issues about which different people may hold strong and varying views. The college's approach to SRE will be balanced and take account of, and be sensitive to, different viewpoints but will not be based on personal bias. The approach will be educational, rather than one based on any single dogmatic view.

16. Young people may have varying needs regarding SRE depending on their circumstances and background. The college strongly believes that all students should have access to SRE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this, the college's approach to SRE will take account of needs arising from issues of:

a. Gender. Girls tend to have greater access to SRE than boys, both through the media (particularly magazines) and the home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them, this may require single sex grouping on certain occasions. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.

b. Ethnic, religious and cultural diversity. Different ethnic, religious and cultural groups may have different attitudes to SRE. The school will consult students and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups.

c. Varying home backgrounds. We recognise that our students may come from different family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

d. Sexuality. On average, about 5% of students will go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual (GLB). Students may also have GLB parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our students, almost certainly, will meet and work with GLB people. Our approach to SRE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. Homophobic bullying is recognised within the colleges bullying policy.

e. Gender identity. Our approach to SRE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of gender identity. Transphobic bullying is recognised within the colleges bullying policy.

f. Special educational needs. We shall take account of the fact that some students may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical disabilities that result in particular SRE needs.

17. A whole school approach will be adopted to SRE that actively involves the whole school community.

18. The school takes its role in the promotion of student well-being seriously. Staff will endeavour to make themselves approachable and to provide caring and sensitive support for students in a number of ways. Staff may be approached for help on an individual basis. They offer a listening ear

and, where appropriate, information and advice. The college nurse offers a health and support

service to students. Students can be referred to the college nurse and/or outside helping agencies. Professional counselling is available if appropriate. The college will keep up to date about the development of local services and national help-lines for young people, and form working relationships with local agencies that are relevant to student needs.

19. College staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a student for help. Staff must make this clear to students. **Safeguarding** procedures must be followed when any disclosures about abuse are made.

20. Support and guidance to develop SRE in the college includes: SRE training for teachers funded through the LEA and local Primary Care Trusts; advice and support for colleges from expert LEA and Health Authority personnel; and support from Lancashire Healthy Schools Programme.

21. The policy will be disseminated to all teaching staff, governors and outside agencies.

Conclusion

This policy is like so many a matter of common sense on the part of the responsible adults. It must be read in conjunction with other school policies related to **Safeguarding**, Bullying, **Equalities**, Race Equality and the Curriculum.