

Sex and Relationships Education Policy at St. Edmund's Catholic Primary School, Skelmersdale.

1 Introduction

1.1 We have based our school's sex education policy on the DfEE guidance document Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (ref DfEE 0116/2000). In this document, sex education is defined as 'learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding 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'. Sex education is part of the personal, social and health education curriculum in our school. While we use sex education to inform children about sexual issues, we do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. We do not use sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation. We use the resources of ***In the Beginning*** to guide and support our work

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 Throughout their time with us, we teach children about:

- the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults;
- the way humans reproduce;
- respect for their own bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term, and loving relationship;
- the importance of family life;
- moral questions;
- relationship issues;
- respect for the views of other people;
- sex abuse and what they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters.

3 Context

3.1 We teach sex education in the context of the school's aims and values framework (See Curriculum Policy values statement.) While sex education in our school means that we give children information about sexual behaviour, we do this with an awareness of the moral code and values which underpin all our work in school. In particular, we teach sex education in the belief that:

- sex education should be taught in the context of marriage and family life;
- sex education is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process;
- children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies;
- children should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity;
- it is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect;
- children need to learn the importance of self-control.

4 The National Healthy School Standard

4.1 We hope shortly to participate in the National Healthy School Standard scheme, which promotes health education. As participants in this scheme we will:

- consult with parents/carers on all matters of health education policy;
- train all our teachers to teach relevant aspects of sex education;
- listen to the views of the children in our school regarding sex education;
- look positively at any local initiatives that support us in providing the best sex education teaching programme that we can devise.

5 Organisation

5.1 We teach various aspects of sex education through different areas of the curriculum. Some sex education teaching takes place in our personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, we also teach some sex education through other subject areas (for example, science and PE), where we feel that they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body, and how it is changing and developing. The Here I Am syllabus too offers opportunities for children to gain understanding and information in sexual matters. For the most part though we believe that sex education is best taught by parents/carers who can work with their own children in the intimacy and security of their own home. To assist parents/carers in fulfilling this responsibility, the school provides, on request, a very useful pack of multi-media information and resources. Additionally, the Headteacher and other staff are always available and willing to offer advice.

5.2 At appropriate stages in R.E. and PSHE, we teach children about relationships, and encourage them to discuss issues raised. We teach about the parts of the body and how these work, and we explain to them what will happen to their bodies during puberty. For example, we tell the boys that their voices will change during puberty and we explain to the girls about menstruation. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it.

5.3 In science lessons in both key stages, teachers inform children about physical development and change and how a baby is born. For this aspect of the school's teaching, we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for science. In Key Stage 1 we teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other. In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

5.4 In Year 6, many children begin to experience the changes to their bodies brought on by puberty. We liaise with the Local Health Authority about suitable teaching materials to use with our children. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are born, how their bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children (as stated earlier in this policy). The School Nurse is frequently involved at this stage and speaks usually to Mums and Daughters at a mutually convenient time after school.

6 The role of parents and carers

6.1 The school is well aware that the primary role in children's sex education lies with parents/carers. We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with the parents/carers of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we:

- inform parents/carers about the school's sex education policy and practice;
- answer any questions that parents/carers may have about the sex education of their child;
- take seriously any issue that parents/carers raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for sex education in the school;
- encourage parents/carers to be involved in reviewing the school policy and making modifications to it as necessary;
- inform parents/carers about the best practice known with regard to sex education, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home. We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing body and their increasing responsibilities.

6.2 Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of any sex education programme that we teach in our school. If a parent/carer wishes their child to be withdrawn from any lessons dealing with sexual matters, they should discuss this with the headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of parents/carers in this regard.

7 The role of other members of the community

7.1 We encourage other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support to the children with regard to health education. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the school nurse and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our sex education programme. Other people that we may call on include local clergy, social workers and youth workers.

8 Confidentiality

8.1 Teachers conduct all lessons involving sexual matters in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. (See the school's policy regarding the investigation of suspected child abuse). In these circumstances the teacher will talk to the child as a matter of urgency. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the headteacher who is the Designated Person for Child Protection. The headteacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals.(See also Child Protection Policy.)

9 The role of the headteacher

- 9.1** It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents/carers are informed about our sex education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.
- 9.2** The headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school sex education programme, and ensures that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy, and that they work within this framework.
- 9.3** The headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors, on the effectiveness of the policy.

10 Monitoring and review

- 10.1** The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors our sex education policy on an annual basis. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, if the policy needs modification. The Curriculum Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents/carers about the sex education programme, and makes a record of all such comments.

The Use of *In the Beginning* to Guide and Support The Sex and Relationships Education of our children

The school's policy aims to develop in children the knowledge, values and attitudes necessary to enable them to make informed, responsible decisions about sexuality and sexual behaviour and to develop respectful relationships with others.

We believe that the school policy is:

1. In keeping with the ethos of their home and school;
2. Supported by their family experience;
3. Suitable to their age and stage of development;
4. Guided by respect for themselves and others;
5. Founded on the recognition of the importance of relationships, family and marriage;
6. In keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church.



Parents retain primary responsibility for the social and moral development of their children. However, they can reasonably expect the school to support and instruct children in these important areas. Therefore, using the resources and materials identified in the scheme "*In the Beginning*" the children will be encouraged to:

- Celebrate Creation as a God-given gift;
- Appreciate that God intended new life to be the result of a union between (mature) male and female;
- Associate love as a feature of this union;
- Recognise the value of partnership (sharing the role of bringing up a family);
- Recognise the importance of the family unit (regardless of individual structures);
- Appreciate the tremendous responsibilities of parenthood and the sacrifices which parents have to make for the sake of the child;
- Value every form of life;
- Develop an appreciation of what it means to belong to a community;
- Develop a desire to help communities as part of God's global family;
- Understand and value themselves.

Signed:

Date: