

# Richmond School Sex and Relationship Education Policy

## 1. Preamble

- 1.2 Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. It should be firmly rooted within relevant subjects of the National Curriculum and the framework for PSHE Education, and should not be taught in isolation.
- 1.3 The aim of sex and relationship education is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. A successful programme, integrated within a range of appropriate subjects, will help young people to respect themselves and others, and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence to adulthood.
- 1.4 Within and alongside PSHCE, a carefully presented sex and relationship education programme will help students develop the skills and understanding they need to live confident, healthy and independent lives. It will play an important part, alongside other aspects of the curriculum and school life, in helping students deal with difficult moral and social questions.
- 1.5 Following guidance from the DSCF, sex and relationship education should introduce students to the significance of marriage and stable relationships as the key building blocks of community and society. Care should be taken that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.
- 1.6 Students need to be given accurate information and helped to develop skills that will enable them to understand and respect themselves and others for the purpose of preventing and removing prejudice. Students should learn the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and learn where and how to obtain appropriate advice on sexual health.
- 1.7 Sex and relationship education should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students, preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It should help young people steer a course through the many and conflicting pressures they will face in modern life, so that they are able to reach well informed balanced decisions appropriate to their needs, interests and circumstances.

## 2. The Policy: Responsibility and Management

- 2.1 Sex and relationship education is the responsibility of all who contribute to the school. The head teacher and Governing Body should determine the main outlines of the school's policy, which in detail should be formulated by teachers who have the relevant expertise and training, in consultation with students, parents, staff, and appropriate outside agencies. The development, leadership and resourcing of Sex and Relationship Education is the responsibility of the Co-ordinator for Health Education in liaison with the co-ordinator for PSHCE in key stages 3 and 4/5 and the heads of department whose subjects include reference to sexual development, sexuality and relationships. The Co-ordinator for Health Education is accountable to the Deputy Head and the Headteacher.

2.2 All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, should be aware of the aims of the sex and relationship education programme. The policy should be set alongside the school's policies on:

- ü Child Protection
- ü Health Education
- ü Drugs Education
- ü Equal Opportunities
- ü Behaviour and Discipline

all of which have connections and relevance.

### **3.0 Principles of this Policy**

3.1 It is the policy of Richmond School that Sex and Relationship Education should:

- § provide young people with factual information about the human reproductive system
- § provide young people with balanced information on which to base decisions about sexuality and sexual relationships
- § be complementary and supportive to the guidance provided by parents and guardians
- § introduce information about sex within the context of relationship education, which emphasises self-esteem, moral responsibility, and respect for the needs and interests of others
- § develop decision making skills essential to successful mature independence

### **4. Definition**

4.1 Sex and relationship education is a programme of learning providing students with information, context, and perspectives that are a necessary foundation for making choices not only about sex and sexual relationships, but also non-sexual relationships.

### **5. Three main elements**

5.1 Knowledge and understanding

- § learning about and understanding physical development at different stages;

- § understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships;
- § learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice and support services;
- § learning about sexually transmitted diseases and their effects;
- § learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the repercussions of unwanted pregnancies.

## 5.2 Personal and Social Skills

- § learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- § developing self respect and empathy for others;
- § learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice;
- § developing an appreciation of the consequences of the choice made;
- § managing conflict;
- § learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

## 5.3 Attitudes and Values

- § learning the importance of moral values and individual conscience;
- § learning the value of family life, marriage, and stable loving relationships for the nurture of children;
- § learning the value of respect, love and care;
- § exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas;
- § developing critical thinking as a part of decision making.

# 6. Teaching Sex and Relationship Education at Richmond School

## 6.1 Sex Education is presented:

- § through carefully graded sections of the PSHCE programme at Key Stages 3, 4 and 5;
- § through assemblies and extra-curricular activities designed to raise awareness about sexual health and relationship issues;
- § through subjects such as science, religious education, food and textile technology and physical education; topics introduce factual information, and encourage students to think carefully about the moral and social decisions relevant to sexual relationships;

## 6.2 Key Stage 3

(\* denotes covered by the Science curriculum)

By the end of Key Stage 3

### **Students will be able to:**

- § manage changing relationships
- § recognise risk of personal safety in sexual behaviour and be able to make safe decisions
- § ask for help and support
- § explain the relationship between their self-esteem and how they see themselves
- § develop skills of assertiveness in order to resist peer pressure and stereotyping
- § see the complexity of moral, social and cultural issues and be able to form a view of their own
- § develop good interpersonal skills to sustain existing relationships as they grow and change and to help them make new relationships
- § be tolerant of the diversity of personal, social and sexual preference in relationships
- § develop empathy with the core values of family life in all its variety of forms
- § recognise the need for commitment, trust and love in meaningful relationships which may manifest themselves in a variety of forms, including marriage
- § recognise the stages of emotions in relation to loss and change caused by divorce, separation and new family members and how to manage their feelings positively.

### **Students will know and understand**

- § that fertilisation in humans is the fusion of a male and a female cell\*
- § the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence\*
- § about the human reproductive system, including the menstrual cycle and fertilisation\*
- § how the foetus develops in the uterus\*
- § how the growth and reproduction of bacteria and the replication of viruses can affect health\*
- § how the media influence understanding and attitudes towards sexual health
- § how good relationships can promote mental well-being
- § the law relating to sexual behaviour of young people
- § the sources of advice and support
- § about when and where to get help, such as at a genito-urinary medicine clinic.

### **Students will have considered**

- § the benefits of sexual behaviour within a committed relationship

- § how they see themselves affects their self-confidence and behaviour
- § the importance of respecting difference in relation to gender and sexuality
- § how it feels to be different and be discriminated against
- § issues such as the costs of early sexual activity
- § the unacceptability of prejudice and homophobic bullying
- § what rights and responsibility mean in relationships.

### 6.3 Key Stage 4 (by the end of Key Stage 4)

#### **Students will be able to:**

- § recognise the influences and pressures around sexual behaviour and respond appropriately and confidently seek professional health advice
- § manage emotions associated with changing relationships with parents and friends
- § see both sides of an argument and express and justify a personal opinion
- § have the determination to stand up for their beliefs and values
- § make informed choices about the pattern of their lifestyle which promote well-being
- § have the confidence to assert themselves and challenge offending behaviour
- § develop qualities of empathy and sympathy and the ability to respond emotionally to the range and depth of feelings within close relationships
- § work co-operatively with a range of people who are different from themselves.

#### **Students will know and understand:**

- § the way in which hormonal control occurs, including the effects of the sex hormones\* some medical uses of hormones including the control and promotion of fertility\*
- § the defence mechanisms of the body\*
- § how sex is determined in humans\*
- § how HIV and other sexually transmitted infections affect the body
- § the link between eating disorders and self-image and sexual identity
- § the risks of early sexual activity and the link with the use of alcohol
- § how the different forms of contraception work and where to get advice
- § the role of statutory and voluntary organisations
- § the law in relation to sexual activity for young people and adults
- § how their own identity is influenced by both their personal values and those of their family and society
- § how to respond appropriately within a range of social relationships

- § how to access the statutory and voluntary agencies which support relationships in crisis
- § the qualities of good parenting and its value to family life
- § the benefits of marriage or a stable partnership in bringing up children
- § the way different forms of relationship including marriage depend for their success on maturity and commitment.

**Students will have considered:**

- § their developing sense of sexual identity and feel confident and comfortable with it
- § how personal, family and social values influence behaviour
- § the arguments around moral issues such as abortion; contraception and the age of consent
- § the individual contributions made by partners in a sustained relationship and how these can be of joy or benefit to both
- § the consequences of close relationships including having children and how this will create family ties which impact on their lives and those of others.

6.4 The detailed schemes of work for the science and PSHE curricula in key stages 3 and 4 give the specific content of sex and relationship education. The main topics covered are

In the science curriculum:

- § fertilisation in human beings (KS3)
- § physical and emotional changes taking place in adolescence (KS3)
- § the menstrual cycle (KS3)
- § the development of the foetus (KS3)
- § bacterial and viral effects on health (KS3)
- § sex hormones and hormonal control (KS4)
- § medical uses of hormones (KS4)
- § the body's defence mechanisms (KS4)
- § the genetic determination of sex in humans (KS4)

In the PSHE curriculum:

- § growing up, bullying (Year 7)
- § images and idols (Year 8)
- § sexual development (Year 9)
- § pressures and choices (Year 10)
- § teenage health issues; HIV and AIDS (Year 11)
- § general health issues (Year 12)
- § well woman/well man talks by the school nurse (Year 13)

- 6.5 Throughout these programmes of study there is a consistent concern to:
- § emphasise the qualities of love and care in relationships;
  - § give prominence to the responsibilities of parenthood;
  - § focus on boys as much as girls;
  - § build up self-esteem in students;
  - § teach the need for responsibility in all sexual activity;
  - § ensure that young people understand the importance of safe sex;
  - § know the whereabouts of local advice and treatment related to sex;
  - § help students develop assertiveness and the strength to resist pressure;
  - § give young people a clear understanding of the reasons for delaying sexual activity;
  - § ensure that young people understand the law on sexual relationships.
- 6.6 It is the policy of the school that children with **special educational needs** should have access to the full sex and relationship programme of study. It is recognised that modifications to the programme may be required for some students, depending on their abilities to understand, communicate, and record information. This is differentiation which is typically applied to content in any subject when the needs of these students are taken into account and prepared for.

## 7. **Guidance on dealing with sensitive issues when teaching sex and relationship education**

- 7.1 Issues should be presented in a broad and balanced manner, free from sensationalism and personal bias, and pitched at the appropriate level. Consideration must be shown towards all religious beliefs. The law on sexual behaviour must be regarded as a fundamental starting point for dealing with all matters which come within its remit.
- 7.2 Staff dealing with sensitive issues need to exercise care in the way they are introduced to, and discussed with, students. Staff should be aware that they must never offer total confidentiality to any student who discloses information suggesting possible abuse towards a young person.

## 8. **Sexual orientation**

- 8.1 Whatever their developing sexuality, young people need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs. Teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. There should be no direct promotion of a specific orientation in any of the teaching.
- 8.2 Sessions on bullying should include the issue of homophobic bullying, and affirm the unacceptability of the emotional distress and harm caused by bullying in whatever form.

## **9. Puberty**

- 9.1 Teaching needs to emphasise the variety of ages when the onset of puberty can take place, and ensure that there is understanding and acceptance of the range of 'symptoms' that are manifest in different young people's puberty phase.
- 9.2 Teaching should prepare girls for the onset of menstruation, and the school should recognise that nationally about 10% of girls receive no preparation from their parents before their first period. It is important that boys too learn and understand about the changes taking place within the female body when the menstruation cycle begins.

## **10. Contraception**

- 10.1 Information about contraception will mostly be the remit of the school nurse's contribution to the sex and relationship education programme. Parents, teachers and governors should be aware that as well as giving information about all forms of contraception, including emergency contraception, the school nurse will be following government guidelines in giving students, individually or as a class, additional information and guidance on where they can obtain confidential advice, counselling, and, where necessary, treatment.
- 10.2 It is recognised that young people need to assimilate knowledge and understanding of contraception, and talk easily about its methods and issues related to it, some time before they may use it.
- 10.3 Teachers should not offer advice to individual students about contraception or health matters related to sexual activity. Students should be referred to the relevant health care facilities and staff. Suspicion of sexual abuse, however, should be dealt with following the School's Child Protection Procedures.

## **11. Abortion**

- 11.1 The issue of abortion, when raised through the sex and relationship programme, must be addressed with due sensitivity to the religious convictions of students and their parents. Young people should be offered the opportunity to explore the dilemmas on the basis of clear factual information about abortion, and awareness of the religious and moral positions, which are held by different groups within modern society.

## **12. Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV/AIDS**

- 12.1 Information and knowledge about HIV/AIDS is vital. Young people need to understand what is risky behaviour and what is not. The sex and relationship programme should inform young people about condom use and safer sex in general, and the school nurse will be the one to present this information to tutor groups through the PSHE programme.
- 12.2 Supplementary to this factual information, students are introduced to techniques of avoiding pressure to engage in unwanted or unprotected sex; this is a part of a strand within the programme which emphasises assertiveness and independent decision making.

12.3 Students also need to know about the diagnosis and treatment of STIs.

12.4 The main aims of this aspect of sex and relationship education are to:

- ensure that all students have an accurate understanding of HIV transmission and the health problems that such an infection may cause;
- enable students to explore attitudes towards HIV/AIDS and clarify the moral issues raised by this condition;
- help students to realise that anyone using unprotected sex could be infected with HIV;
- to encourage students to translate their knowledge of the HIV infection into responsible and safe behaviour with respect to both sexual activity and the use of drugs.

### **13. Genetic Engineering, Genetic Counselling, Embryo Research and IVF**

13.1 Discussion of these and related issues are likely to arise in the key stage 4 science programme of study. It is important that students have the opportunity to consider the impact of reproductive technology and the complex nature of the related ethical issues. Clear factual information must be provided as the starting point for such discussion.

### **14. Approaches to teaching Sex and Relationship Education**

14.1 It is essential that schools 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.

14.2 There is a number of teaching strategies that can help with this, including:

- establishing ground rules for discussion;
- using 'distancing' techniques;
- knowing how to deal with unexpected questions or comments from students;
- using appropriate materials;
- encouraging reflection;

### **15. Ground Rules**

15.1 A set of ground rules helps teachers to create a safe environment in which they do not feel embarrassed or anxious about unintended or unexpected questions or comments from students. Teachers should establish their own preferred set, but should bear in mind these suggestions:

- respect for privacy;
- the right to 'pass' on a question;

- respectful listening to the opinions of others;
- only the correct names of body parts should be used;
- meanings of words will be explained in a sensible factual way;

## **16. Distancing techniques**

16.1 Embarrassment can be avoided and privacy protected by depersonalising discussions. Role play, case studies, videos and theatre in education can all help students discuss sensitive issues without the fear that their own circumstances may be revealed. They can help develop decision making skills in a safe environment.

## **17. Dealing with questions**

17.1 Teachers should establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. Teachers may never-the-less be faced with questions which they deem to be unsuitable, offensive, or too difficult in the context of the lesson. Ground rules will help avoid this kind of thing, but teachers need to be prepared for the inappropriate question. For example:

- If a question is too personal, the teacher should remind the student of the ground rules. If the student needs further support, the teacher can refer her or him to the appropriate person or agency.
- If a teacher does not know the answer to a question, it is important to acknowledge this, and to suggest that the student and/or the teacher research the question later.
- 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. In this way the student will feel that s/he has 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 student later.
- If a teacher is concerned that a student is a risk of sexual abuse, s/he should follow the school's child protection procedures. Teachers must not offer guarantee of confidentiality to students if they disclose information which suggests there has been, or may be, abuse towards a young person.

## **18. Teaching materials and methods**

18.1 Co-ordinators and course leaders of programmes of learning which cover sex and relationship issues and topics should be mindful of providing a variety of approaches and materials when setting out schemes of work and learning activities. A variety of teaching styles should be incorporated in to the programme so that children of different abilities and aptitudes are able to access the information and issues, which are so important to their development and future decisions.

18.2 Reflection is crucial for learning as it encourages students to consolidate what they have learned and to form new understanding, skills and attitudes. Reflection can be encouraged by asking questions such as:

§ What was it like doing this discussion today?

- § What did you learn from the others, especially those who had a different experience 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 learn or think about?

## **19. Working with Parents**

- 19.1 Parents have been involved in the development of this policy. Parents will be kept up to date with any significant changes to the policy. Opportunities will be made available for parents to get support and guidance concerning sexual and other health related issues.
- 19.2 This policy document is available for any parent/guardian who wishes to see it. (Reference: Education Act paragraphs 35 – 37)
- 19.3 Richmond School will aim to work with parents on all aspects of Sex Education and to support them in their role within the family. Sex and relationship education at Richmond School should be complementary to that given in the home. In order to meet the concerns of parents the school will:
- § communicate with parents as to the aims and content of the sex and relationship education programme, and ensure that parents are aware of their legal rights;
  - § ensure that all staff and other contributors are familiar with the school's policy toward sex and relationship education and any agreed procedures to be followed;
  - § operate an agreed code of practice which guides all staff on how to respond to specific situations such as questions from individual students on sensitive issues;
  - § monitor and review the position of sex and relationship education at Richmond School.

## **20. Guidelines on parental right of withdrawing students from lessons involving Sex Education**

- 20.1 The School will provide opportunities for parents to discuss the content of the programme with appropriate staff on request. We hope that any parents thinking of withdrawing their child(ren) from those parts of the programme, other than those required by the National Curriculum science order, will take the opportunity to discuss their concerns in a confidential way before making any formal request for withdrawal.
- 20.2 Parents wishing to exercise their right of withdrawal should write to the head teacher stating their wishes. In this letter parents are invited to voluntarily indicate the reasons for the request. The purpose of doing this is to allow parents and school to ensure that the request is not a misunderstanding about the nature of the sex and relationship education programme, which might be easily resolved so that full participation can take place. Students withdrawn from sex education will remain so until written instructions from a parent/guardian indicates otherwise.

20.3 Parents withdrawing their child/ren from the sex and relationship programme of study can obtain a standard pack of information published by the DCSF available from the school.

## **21. Guidelines on the involvement of health professionals and visitors**

21.1 Involvement should be planned as part of a structured programme of sex and relationship education.

21.2 All contributors (staff and external contributors) should be made aware of relevant school policy and guidelines on sex and relationship education.

21.3 The LEA's 'Guidelines for the use of Outside Providers' should be followed.

21.4 Issues to be covered and relevant material to be used should be discussed with relevant staff beforehand.

21.5 The appropriate member of staff will be present during any sessions provided by an external contributor.

21.6 These guidelines do not cover the service offered by the school nurse in providing individual and confidential advice and counselling to the students. In these sessions the nurse is covered by relevant legal and professional guidelines, though the school retains overall responsibility for any service offered.

21.7 The contribution of health professionals and other visitors to the sex and relationship education programme should be complementary to the programme and never substitute for it. They should abide by the terms of this policy.

## **22. Confidentiality**

22.1 During the course of teaching about sex and relationships staff may become aware of information that indicates a student may be vulnerable to abuse or has suffered abuse.

22.2 In such circumstances the teacher should follow the procedures stated in the school's Child Protection Policy. Guarantees of confidentiality must not be given to students who reveal or suggest information indicating possible abuse, and a senior member of staff should be consulted.

**Review Date: June 2010**

## **APPENDIX A**

### **A SUMMARY OF THE LAW ON SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR**

The following is a summary of the main sexual offences in England.

#### **Unlawful Sexual Intercourse**

It is an offence for a man to have sexual intercourse with a girl under the age of 16. The consent of the girl is immaterial.

#### **Incest**

It is an offence for a man to have sexual intercourse with a woman whom he knows to be his granddaughter, daughter, sister or mother. It is an offence for a woman over the age of 16 or over to permit a man whom she knows to be her grandfather, father, brother or son to have sexual intercourse with her by consent.

#### **Rape**

It is an offence for a man to rape a woman. A man commits rape if:

- I. He has unlawful sexual intercourse with a woman who at the time of the intercourse does not consent to it and
- II. At the time he knows that she does not consent to the intercourse or he is reckless as to whether she consents.

#### **Indecent Assault**

A child under the age of 16 cannot in law give any consent, which would prevent an act from being an indecent assault. Both boys and girls over 16 can give consent but, in the case of a girl, that consent can be vitiated in certain circumstances (i.e. when there is fraud as to the nature of the act). An assault need not be physical but may consist merely of conduct, which causes the victim to apprehend immediate personal violence. The assault must be capable of being considered by right-minded persons as indecent.

#### **Other Indecent Conduct**

It is an offence if a person commits an act of gross indecency with or towards a child under the age of 14. This encompasses conduct of an indecent nature, which falls short of assault.

It is an offence to commit buggery with a human being or an animal. This does not apply where two men over the age of 18 commit buggery in private by mutual consent.

Gross indecency between men is an offence unless the act is committed in private and both parties consent and have attained the age of 18 years.

#### **Legal Capacity**

Until recently there was an irrefutable presumption in the law that a boy under the age of 14 is incapable of sexual intercourse. This presumption has now been abolished by section 1 of the Sexual Offences Act 1993 and a boy under the age of 14 can therefore be convicted of rape, buggery or any offence involving sexual intercourse. Until recently it was necessary to prove in the case of the child aged between 10 and 14 that he knew what he was doing wrong. The Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) has recently held that this rule is no longer to be applied.

This document is the outcome of a Working Party made up of staff, governors, parents and outside providers. Consultation has taken place with and comments received from the whole staff, Governing Body, NYCC Co-ordinating Tutor for Health Education, and with the Department for Education.

The principle legislation upon which the Policy Document is based is the Education Act 1993, Sex Education in Schools [Circular number 5/94]. Also of particular relevance is the Education Department Notes of Guidance for Schools and the Child Protection Guidelines.

Reference has been made to a range of relevant publications and sources. These include:

- ◆ Guidelines: Sex Education NYCC Education
- ◆ Department Developing and Reviewing a School Sex Education Policy: A Positive Strategy National Children's Bureau 1994.
- ◆ BMA Briefing for School Governors 'Sex Education: Our Children's Entitlement'.
- ◆ 'Sex Education': A Guide for School Governors and Teachers.
- ◆ Health Education Authority: 'Parents, Schools and Sex Education'.
- ◆ Sex Education Matters; Quarterly newsletter of the Sex Education Forum, National Children's Bureau.
- ◆ 'A Framework for School Sex Education': Sex Education Forum.
- ◆ NUT: 'Sex Education'.
- ◆ ATL: Volume 16 No. 6 'Sex Education
- ◆ National Curriculum Council 'Curriculum Guidance 5: Health Education'. NCC 1990.
- ◆ The DCSF guidance document 0116/2000 on Sex and Relationship Education, which outlines good practice in the delivery of this curriculum topic.

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