



Hope Academy

A joint Catholic & Church of England Academy

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

Mission Statement:

“A community of learners of all ages from the local area committed to mutual service where all can flourish, be their best and work for the common good to the glory of God and his creation.”

APPROVED			
REVIEW DATE			
SIGNED PRINCIPAL		PRINT NAME	
SIGNED CHAIR OF GOVERNORS		PRINT NAME	

RATIONALE

The governors intend that its principal achievements will be:

- To state the aims and objectives of the school's sex education programme;
- To set the programme within the context of moral values which are at the heart of Christian Education.
- To enhance co-operation with parents, our associated primary schools and the wider Christian community;
- to provide a summary outline of the context of the sex education programme at each stage and an indication of the method of its delivery;
- To comply with the requirements of the Education Act 1993 and Circular 4/94 having particular regard to parents' rights to withdraw their children from sex education.

AIMS

Sex education at Hope Academy has as its aims:

- To contribute to the personal, moral, emotional, social and spiritual development of all students.
- To ensure that all students have the knowledge and understanding to make confident decisions within a framework of Christian values as held and agreed by the Catholic & Church of England Diocese..
- To prepare all students to be able to accept their own and others' sexuality in positive ways and to enjoy relationships based on mutual respect, dignity and responsibility.

OBJECTIVES

- To have an awareness of the differing levels of knowledge and understanding among the students so that their concerns can be identified.
- To engender growth in self-respect and self worth, recognising that each of us is created in the image of God.
- To explore the sanctity and value of life, and give an appreciation of the values of a family life.
- To enable students to have an understanding that love is central and the basis of meaningful relationships.
- To enable students to have some understanding of themselves, their own bodies and their emotional development as they grow and change.
- To encourage students to be aware of their attitudes and values and have a sense of responsibility for themselves.
- To enable students to reflect on their relationships and recognise the qualities that help relationships to grow and develop positively.
- To have an understanding of and to give sensitive consideration to the beliefs, values and cultures of others.
- To provide a forum where students can share their concerns and offer a climate of support where they will be listened to sensitively.
- To correct mis-information.
- To explain the process of human procreation.
- To enable students to recognise the importance of the choices they make and that they are responsible for the decisions they take.
- To help students resist peer, social and media pressures where necessary.
- To help students develop their critical faculties and be aware of the diverse values conveyed by the media in relation to self-image and sexuality.
- To give students the opportunity to recognise the implications of drug and alcohol abuse.
- To fully emphasise the teaching of the Catholic Church & Church of England on the Sacrament of Marriage.

ORGANISATION

The programme will be delivered mainly through the curriculum areas of RE, Science and Personal Social & Education. For RE and Science this will happen within the normal teaching groups.

RESPONSIBILITY

Ultimate responsibility for the sex education policy lies with the governors. The Heads of RE and Science, together with the PSHE Coordinator, will be responsible for delivery of the programme within the school and the Assistant Principal Curriculum will have overall responsibility.

METHODOLOGY

Methodology and approach will be determined by individual teachers. However, the school will give advice and training wherever there is a perceived need or request.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The successful delivery of the programme will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Sex Education Policy Group. Criteria and methods of review will be decided each year by the group. Part of this process of monitoring and review will include liaison with our partnership primary schools in order to establish continuity within a developmental programme. The group will also consult parents with the frequency and in the manner deemed most appropriate. Each year parents will be given information about that part of the sex education programme that will affect their child.

INTRODUCTION

Learning about sexuality and relationships is a lifelong process and HOPE ACADEMY recognises that parents are the key figures in helping their children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and the challenges and responsibilities which sexual maturity bring. The Academy offers units of Sex & Relationship Education (SRE) as an integral part of a broad and balanced PSHE programme and within the Science National Curriculum. SRE is delivered in a balanced and sensitive manner, within a moral and caring framework. This is intended to complement and support the role of parents.

WHAT IS SEX & RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION?

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships for family life (both within and outside of marriage), respect and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity. This would be considered inappropriate teaching.

It has three main elements:

Attitudes and Values

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

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 choices made;
- managing conflict; and
- learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

Knowledge and Understanding

- learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages;

- understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships;
- learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services;
- learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay; and
- the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

The process of SRE is a combination of the sharing of information and the exploration of ideas and attitudes. Specific objectives of lessons, at appropriate stages, will include the following:

- To respond sensitively to the student's age, maturity and stage of development.
- To discover what students know, understand, think and feel and to identify their needs.
- To provide accurate, factual information that correct false assumptions, myths and folklore.
- To encourage unembarrassed acceptance of sexuality by providing appropriate vocabulary and by encouraging positive attitudes to bodily functions.
- To provide reassurance that change is part of the life cycle and to give help in adjusting to these changes.
- To generate an atmosphere where questions and discussions on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment.
- To help students recognise the role of intimacy and sexual activity in a loving, caring relationship.
- To help students recognise the differences in the nature of male and female sexuality.
- To help students to appreciate the value of family life, the implications of parenthood and the needs of the very young.
- To help students to understand and respect the varied cultural and religious influences on individual sexuality;
- To develop the students' skills in personal relationships, for example, communication, respect, assertiveness.
- To develop the students' skills in decision making.
- To help young people to affirm their right to be able to resist unwanted touch or advances and to communicate about such matters.
- To develop awareness of sexual identity, to challenge sexism and prejudice in society and to promote equal opportunities.
- To be able to discuss issues such as sexual harassment and the effects on individuals.
- To develop students' understanding of the risks and responsibilities of sexual behaviour and to provide them with the information and skills to keep themselves safe.
- To provide awareness of sources of help and encourage students to seek advice on individual issues.

MORALITY AND VALUES

- Morals and values are essential dimensions of sexuality and relationships. Indeed there is a moral dimension to every aspect of human life.
- Caring adults, whether parents, governors or teachers are naturally concerned about the moral values of the young. How, then, do we best influence the morality of the next generation?
 - By example, not by exhortation.
 - By reasoned discussion and values clarification, not by instruction.

- We cannot force or oblige people to 'be good'. People develop their own morality; they test their core values and beliefs against their experience. By this, they develop, own and implement their personal moral code.

ORGANISATION OF SEX & RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

- SRE is an important area of the curriculum at HOPE ACADEMY. It forms a discrete element of the Science and PSHE curriculum.

KS3

- The factual information will be covered predominantly in Science and PSHE. This will be done with regard to the moral and emotional context.

KS4

- The focus of SRE is targeted upon increasing student awareness of attitudes and values, personal and social skills and knowledge and understanding in relation to this part of the curriculum in order to prepare them for making informed decisions about relationships and the place of sexual activity within these. SRE is delivered via the Science, PSHE & RE curriculum, with sessions also delivered by form tutors. Specialist external agencies are also involved in delivering sessions at the Academy, for example: Sexual Health talks, discussions and theatre or drama presentations on related topics and issues.

KS5

- SRE will be covered at KS5 throughout the PSHE programme. Students will be given issues to discuss in relation to their everyday life. They also look to future issues that may arise in the world of Higher Education or work.

CROSS-CURRICULAR IMPLICATIONS

Health Education is a cross-curricular theme and matters relating to sex education may occur in other area of the curriculum. It is inevitable in secondary academies that the teaching of apparently unrelated subjects (e.g. English, Religious Education) will occasionally lead to a discussion of aspects of sexual behaviour, family life, relationships and abortion. Such discussion will not formally constitute part of the Sex & Relationships Education Programme. However, all teachers at HOPE ACADEMY will follow the guidelines provided for staff contained in this Policy for dealing with such issues as and when they arise. The Academy is confident that staff will draw upon their professional judgement and common sense in these circumstances.

PARENTAL RIGHTS TO WITHDRAW THEIR CHILDREN FROM SEX EDUCATION

Although the Academy hopes that all parents will allow their children to participate in sex education, those parents who are unable to give such permission should write to the Principal stating that they wish their children to be withdrawn either from all or part of the sex education which falls outside the statutory requirements of the Science curriculum. Parents may inform the Principal of their reasons. Parents cannot withdraw their children from any part of sex education taught in the National Curriculum. A list of these students will be supplied to all teachers.