

## **Sex Education Policy**

The Government believes that all students should be offered the opportunity of receiving a planned programme of sex education during their school careers. All maintained schools are therefore required under section 2 of the Education Reform Act 1988, amended by section 241(1) of the Education Act 1993, to make provision for sex education for all students. The 1988 Act also requires the curriculum in general to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students, and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Where sex education is concerned, the governing body and the Head teacher must take steps to ensure that it is given in such a manner as to encourage students to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life. By section 241(5) of the 1993 Act, Governing bodies have to make and keep up to date a written statement of the policy with regard to the provision of sex education and make such a document available for inspection and provide a free copy to any parent who asks for one.

Parents must also be aware that they have the right to request that their child be excused from all or some of the sex education lessons, except in so far as such education is part of the National Curriculum.

The Government stresses that the prime responsibility for bringing up children rests with parents. Ruskin recognises that parents are key figures in helping their children cope with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up, and in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities which sexual maturity brings. We hope that we have ensured that the programme offered will support parents and has taken full account of parents' views about content and presentation.

### **Issues considered:**

Legal framework  
Moral and ethical considerations  
Topics other than those required which should be included  
Stages at which various topics should be taught  
Methods of delivery of the programme  
How parental requests for their child to be withdrawn should be handled.

### **What is Sex and Relationship Education?**

It is part of a lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It involves acquiring knowledge and information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care, for family life.

### **Aims and Objectives of the Policy**

To give the most appropriate and balanced programme for the needs of the students, in line with government requirements, providing knowledge and understanding about loving relationships, the nature of sexuality and the processes of human reproduction.

To ensure that students are helped to understand that a sexual relationship should be part of a stable, loving relationship, and to appreciate the importance of self-restraint, dignity, respect for themselves and others and acceptance of responsibility.

To enable students to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications, and risks, of certain types of behaviour, and to accept that both everyone should behave responsibly in sexual relationships.

To help students, whatever their circumstances, to raise their sights and develop confidence and self-esteem so that they appreciate that it is acceptable to say 'no' and recognise the importance of informed personal choice in managing relationships.

To present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within a clear framework of values and an awareness of the law on sexual behaviour.

### **Content Headings**

Relationships

Physical development

Human reproduction

Contraception

Sexually transmitted diseases (STI's), including HIV and AIDS

Topics will be set within a clear framework of moral and ethical values as laid down in the Aims and Objectives

### **Equal Opportunities**

All registered students will be entitled to receive the full programme unless parents have chosen to withdraw them. Due consideration will be paid to religious and cultural points of view.

### **Organisation**

Co-ordinator: Mrs D Sharp – PSHCE Co-ordinator

Teachers / Tutors

Physical development:	P.E. staff
Human reproduction:	Science staff
Contraception	PSHCE staff with RE and inputs from e.g. Family
HIV, AIDS and STI's	Planning Clinics, the Health Authority
Abortion	the School Nurse, RE

Moral and ethical issues of sexual behaviour are also discussed in, for example, R.E. and English lessons, within the context of the subject concerned. The teachers will balance the need to give proper attention to relevant issues with the need to respect students' and parents' views.

Training provision:

as appropriate and affordable after a review of the adequacy of training and experience already undertaken by staff involved in the teaching of sex-education. No member of staff will be required to teach sex education unless trained and willing to do so.

#### Methodology and approach:

It is felt that to teach sex education as a discrete topic gives it too much emphasis, and that the programme is best delivered as part of the PSHCE programme, organised on a modular basis so that it can be taught by experienced staff who are comfortable with the content, and can handle any more difficult and controversial topics that might be raised straightforwardly and firmly. Where sex education and health education overlap, a health professional could be brought in and the outside speaker made aware of the overall policy on sex education, such as Catch 22 have visited Ruskin from September to February half term – they delivered two sessions with Year 11 and two sessions with year 10. This was followed by six sessions with years 9. In addition Year 11 & 10 PSHCE staff also delivered SRE lessons. The use of an external agency allowed trained professionals to answer questions and the students commented on feeling comfortable with the Catch 22 professionals.

Use will be made of visual and other materials which are appropriate to the needs and ages of the students, and conform to the Aims and Objectives of the school programme.

#### Specific Classroom arrangements:

Mixed classes

#### Effectiveness review:

The co-ordinator will receive reports from staff teaching the programme and will liaise with the Governing Body through the Curriculum Committee so that the policy can be reviewed. Parents' views will be sought through the normal channels and, more formally, at the Annual Parents' Meetings. Students will be involved in an assessment of how they have benefited from the course, and how far it has met their needs.

#### Liaison with primary school feeders:

The excellent existing links will be used to inform the programme and ensure some progression and continuity of approach.

### **Specific Issue Statements**

#### Contraceptive information and advice:

Information on contraception will be given as a part of the sex education programme, and the legal consequences of intercourse below the age of 16 will be made clear. It is, however, always a possibility that a student will approach a teacher for individual advice. While the student's confidences should be respected, the pastoral role of the teacher should not trespass on the proper exercise of parental rights and responsibilities, and the student should be encouraged to seek advice from his/her parents or from a health professional. This is particularly important where a teacher is approached by a student under 16, the age of consent, and the general rule should be that giving such an individual advice without parental consent would be inappropriate. If it is felt that the student is at moral or physical risk, then the Co-ordinator and the Head teacher should be informed so that proper counselling can be arranged for the students concerned.

#### Other sensitive issues:

It would not be helpful to avoid all controversial topics, since that would not make them disappear, and could leave confusion in the minds of students. Such questions (on, for example, homosexuality or abortion) will be dealt with in a balanced way, pitched at the level of the students' needs and experience. Particularly explicit issues may be raised by an individual student which it is inappropriate to discuss with the whole class. If possible, the student's parents should be approached to see how they would like the issue to be handled. If the teacher has reason to believe the child could be in distress or danger, then the relevant procedures should be implemented.

Education about HIV and AIDS is a mandatory part of a sex education programme, and is needed to correct some of the misinformation acquired by young people and to make them aware of the risks of certain kinds of behaviour. The school will adapt its scheme of work to ensure it covers current community based issues.

#### Child withdrawal procedures:

Parents wishing their child to be wholly or partly excused from sex education lessons, except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (i.e. the study of human growth and reproduction in Science lessons).

Parents must express their wishes in writing to the Head teacher who will discuss the matter with them. The school will also be prepared to help any parents wishing to provide sex education at home.

Any child withdrawn from such lessons will be suitably provided for, e.g. through a programme of self-supported study.

#### Complaints procedure:

Parents are always welcome to write to or telephone the school to arrange to discuss any matter concerning them. If necessary, the established procedures can be brought into action.

#### **Working with Parents**

It is hoped to secure maximum support from parents for the programme of sex education. The Policy Document, and the scheme of work will be freely available, and provision will be made for parents to be consulted about the suitability of materials that might be used in lessons.

#### **Dissemination of the Policy**

The Policy Document will be available on request, and a summary, together with clear advice on the right of parents to withdraw their child from the programme will be included in the School Prospectus.

#### **Other Relevant School Policies:**

Several other policies adopted by the school could bear some relevance:

Anti-Bullying

Equal Opportunities

Illegal Drugs, Solvent Misuse and Drugs Education

Safeguarding

Behaviour Policy

Sex Education Guidelines for Staff