



THE ACADEMY OF
ST NICHOLAS

Sex & Relationship Education Policy

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Introduction

Learning about sexuality and relationships is a lifelong process and The Academy of St Nicholas 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 PSHEE cross curricula 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.

The PSHEE programme will help students develop the skills and understanding they need to live confident, healthy and independent lives. It will play an important role, alongside other aspects of the curriculum and Academy life in helping students deal with difficult moral and social questions. SRE is designed to enable our students to learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Related Documents

DFE Sex & Relationship (SRE) Guidance 2000

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body and the Principal are obliged to ensure that sex education is given in such a manner that students will be encouraged to be guided by moral principles and recognise the value of family life. The Governing Body has specific responsibility for drawing up a written policy for the provision of sex education and ensuring that it is monitored and reviewed regularly.

The teacher responsible for PSHEE has the overall responsibility for the monitoring, organisation and management of the SRE component in the PSHEE programme for Keys Stages 3 and 4. She has responsibility for PHSEE Schemes of Work, inviting visiting speakers, monitoring materials used for SRE, worksheets, videos and other publications and resources and liaison with the Science Curriculum Director.

Health Professionals who are involved in delivering programmes are expected to work within the Academy's Sex & Relationship Policy and on the instructions of the Principal. However, when they are in their professional role, such as an Academy nurse in a consultation with an individual student, they should follow their own professional codes of conduct (this is the case irrespective of who is paying them). Visiting speakers should complement but never substitute or replace planned provision.

Review and revision of the Policy will take place in consultation with the lead for PSHEE, Curriculum Leaders, the SMT, the Governing Body, all teaching staff, parents, students and relevant outside agencies. The Policy will take account of local and national guidelines.

Policy

Sex and Relationship Education at the Academy is intended to help and support our students through their physical, emotional and moral development. SRE is an important part of children's preparation for adult life. In common with all other aspects of education, SRE will be provided to ensure equality of opportunity in relation to:

- access for all to an appropriate programme; and
- the provision offered in terms of learning, environment, content, methodology, learning support, where relevant, and pastoral/welfare structures and procedures.

SRE offers a valuable vehicle for promoting equality between individuals and groups. It necessarily involves an exploration of human and social diversity, and a fostering of self-esteem and self-worth in a learning environment that can demonstrate recognition, acceptance and respect of difference. It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage and stable and loving relationships for family life, 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.

Parental Rights to Withdraw their Children from Sex Education

As a result of the above, the Academy hopes that all parents will allow their children to participate in sex education, however 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. Parents may request to see materials relating to sex education to inform their decisions to withdraw their child or not. A list of withdrawn students will be supplied to all teachers.

Sex & Relationship Education - SRE 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.

SRE is an important area of the curriculum at THE ACADEMY OF ST NICHOLAS. It forms a discrete element of the Science curriculum and PSHEE topics as outlined below

KS3

The factual information will be covered predominantly in Science and PSHEE themes across the curriculum. 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 & RE curriculum; also PHSEE themes across the curriculum. 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 within Religious Education and enrichment activities. 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.

There are cross curricula implications for SRE as Health Education is a cross-curricular theme and matters relating to sex education may therefore 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 THE ACADEMY OF ST NICHOLAS will follow the guidelines provided for staff contained in this Policy for dealing with such issues as and when they arise.

Morals and values are essential dimensions of sexuality and relationships. People cannot be forced or obliged 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. The moral dimension of SRE will therefore be influenced by reasoned discussion and values clarification as outlined within the following teaching methodologies and approaches for SRE

Teaching of Sex Education – Methodology and Approaches

Staff delivering sex education will present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner. They will provide students with opportunities to explore values, make judgements and be better prepared to make informed and principled choices. All sex and relationship education will be set within a clear framework based upon the PSHEE guidelines. Students must also be made aware of the law on sexual behaviour.

Young people will be encouraged to appreciate the value of a stable family life, marriage/stable long term partnerships and the responsibilities of parenthood. They will be helped to consider the importance of self-restraint, respect for themselves and others, acceptance of responsibility, loyalty and fidelity. They will be able to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications and risks of certain types of behaviour and to accept that both sexes must have responsibility in sexual matters.

Young people need to be warned of the risks of sexual behaviour, but emphasis will not solely be on the negative aspects of sexual activity. This can be counter-productive. SRE will rather promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of students within the Academy and help prepare our students for the responsibilities and experiences of their adult life. Sensitivity to religious beliefs and moral codes is appreciated as an important dimension and will be respected when discussing sexual behaviour.

PSHEE is based on a spiral model in which key aspects, such as SRE, are revisited at different stages. This offers progression, increasing in depth of concept and content as the students mature physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

Lessons covering SRE will provide a supportive climate for discussion. 'Ground Rules' are set for discussion and the groups are encouraged to demonstrate trust, care and compassion. They are required to listen to the opinions of others, respect confidentiality, privacy and the 'right to pass' without embarrassment. Ground Rules will be set at the beginning of each lesson with an SRE element and will help teachers create a safe environment in which they do not feel embarrassed or anxious about unintended or unexpected questions or comments from students. It can be beneficial for a class to work out the set of ground rules together. Possible ground rules might include:

- No one (teacher or student) will have to answer a personal question;
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion;
- Only the correct names for body parts will be used; and
- Meanings of words will be explained in a factual way.

Dealing with Questions

Staff will need to establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. The ground rules will reduce the chances of unexpected questions or comments from students however the following points offer further guidance on how students' questions will be dealt with

- If the 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 (Post 16) to the appropriate person, such as a counsellor, Academy nurse, helpline or an outside agency or service.
- If the teacher doesn't know the answer to a question, it is important to acknowledge this, and to suggest that the student or teacher or both together 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 they have 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 at risk of sexual abuse, they should follow the Academy's Child Protection Procedures.

Students will be encouraged to be involved in their own learning and clear guidelines will operate regarding language usage and gender and sexual stereotyping. A range of teaching and learning strategies will be used when dealing with issues that can be difficult to discuss in a large group or for working with students who find SRE embarrassing.

- Care with group dynamics
- Use of pairs and small groups
- Use of the anonymous 'question box technique'
- Distancing techniques, such as case studies, role plays etc.

Sensitive Issues

It is important to recognise the power and confusion of informal learning from, for example, TV, magazines, newspapers, gossip and jokes in the wider community around sensitive issues such as sexually transmitted diseases. Avoiding sensitive or controversial issues does not make them go away and can leave children and young people confused, often misinformed and at risk.

Official documentation advises the inclusion of such topics as contraception, abortion, homosexuality and HIV/AIDS within the Sex Education syllabus. At THE ACADEMY OF ST NICHOLAS, these issues will therefore be presented in a broad and balanced way, free from sensationalism and personal bias. They will be sensitively pitched to the level of students' needs and maturity. Sensitivity to religious beliefs is appreciated as an important dimension and will be respected.

Advice and Individual Students

It is important to distinguish between, on the one hand, the Academy's function of providing education generally about SRE on the basis described above and, on the other, counselling and advice to individual students on these issues, particularly if this relates to their own sexual behaviour. Teachers delivering sex education will exercise their discretion and professional judgement about how to deal with issues raised by individual students. Teachers will be confident in continuing to take a pastoral interest in the welfare and wellbeing of students but this function will never trespass on the proper exercise of parental rights and responsibilities. Students will always be encouraged to discuss specific situations with their parents.

In relation to contraceptive advice to students under 16, for whom sexual intercourse is unlawful, DFE guidance states that *"The general rule must be that giving an individual student advice on such matters, without parental knowledge or consent, could be an inappropriate exercise of a teacher's professional responsibilities."* Students will therefore be encouraged to seek advice from their parents and their medical practitioner.

If a teacher has reason to believe that a child is distressed or in danger, they should follow the procedures in the Academy's 'Child Protection Policy' and report their concerns to the Assistant Principal (Student Support & Inclusion) who is the designated Child Protection Co-ordinator as soon as is practical. Staff are not in a position to offer students total confidentiality in this respect. Staff should advise students that they may have to pass on information that they are given.

Where the circumstances are such as to lead the member of staff to believe that the student has embarked upon, or is contemplating, a course of conduct which is likely to place him (or her) regardless of age at moral or physical risk or in breach of the law, the member of staff has a general responsibility to ensure that the student is aware of the implications and is urged to seek advice. In such circumstances, the member of staff should inform the Assistant Principal (Student Support & Inclusion), who should arrange for the student to be counselled if appropriate and, where the student is under age, for the parent to be made aware, preferably by the student himself (and in that case, checking that it has been done) or by direct contact by the Assistant Principal (Student Support & Inclusion) or Student Welfare Service.

Pregnant Young Women and Young Mothers in the Academy (Post 16)

In the event of a student becoming pregnant and carrying the baby to full term, (Post 16 only) the Academy will ensure that the young woman is given every opportunity to continue with some form of educational training. As far as possible, the student will be supported so that she can continue her education within the Academy. In the event that this is not possible, the student will be offered alternative educational provision in liaison with the Local Authority.

In addition, the Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinator will work with the Health & Safety Advisor, the student's family and any other appropriate agencies to ensure a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is conducted, control measures are put in place and details communicated as agreed in the risk assessment. NAEM risk assessment form (F35) will be used as the basis for the risk assessment. The Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinator will keep records of all NAEM students and ensure their risk assessments are regularly reviewed. Where other factors impact on the student e.g. child protection, these will be managed in line with the relevant ASN – Sex & Relationship Education

Academy policy and process.

Young Fathers

Where a young father makes himself known to THE ACADEMY OF ST NICHOLAS staff, every effort will be made by the Academy to support him to ensure that he has on-going access to education and, where identified, is signpost to appropriate support agencies. The teenage pregnancy co-ordinator will maintain a list of all young fathers and will work with external agencies, as required, to support them while they remain a student at the Academy. All staff will be sensitive to the needs of young fathers and will refer any queries or concerns to the teenage pregnancy coordinator in the first instance

Definitions

PSHEE	Personal, Social, Health, Emotional & Economic
NAEM	New and Expectant Mothers SRE Sex & Relationship Education SMT Senior Management Team

Appendices

Appendix 1	A Summary of the Law on Sexual Behaviour
Appendix 2	Sex & Relationships Education – The Legal Framework

APPENDIX I – A SUMMARY OF THE LAW ON SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

The Government regulations related to Sex & Relationships Education require teachers to be aware of and have regard to the law on sexual behaviour. The following is a summary of the main sexual offences in England taken from the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

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 of the age of 16 or over to permit a man whom she know to be her grandfather, father, brother or son to have sexual intercourse with her consent.

Rape - It is an offence to commit rape against another person. Rape is committed if sexual intercourse takes place and consent is not given or the person committing the act “*does not reasonably believe that consent has been given.*”

Sexual Activity with a Child - person aged 18 or over (A) commits an offence if:

- a he intentionally touches another person (B)
- b the touching is sexual, and c either:
 - (i) B is under 16 and A does not reasonably believe that B is 16 or over, or
 - (ii) B is under 13

Child Sex Offences committed by children or young persons - A person under 18 commits an offence if he does anything which would be an offence under any of Sections 9-12 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 if he were aged 18:

Sc 9	Sexual activity with a child
Sc 10	Causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity
Sc 11	Engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a child
Sc 12	Causing a child to watch a sexual act

The Age of Consent

The legal age for young people to consent to have sex is still 16, whether they are straight, gay or bisexual. The aim of the law is to protect the rights and interests of young people, and make it easier to prosecute people who pressure or force others into having sex they don't want.

Although the age of consent remains 16, the law is not intended to prosecute mutually agreed teenage sexual activity between two young people of a similar age, unless it involves abuse or exploitation. Young people, including those under 13, will continue to have the right to confidential advice on contraception, condoms, pregnancy and abortion. (*Working within the Sexual Offences Act 2003 – Home Office*)

APPENDIX 2 – SEX & RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION - THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Section 1(2) of the Education Reform Act 1988 requires all maintained academies to offer a curriculum which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the Academy and of society; and
 - prepares such students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The 1986 Education Act (2) invested the responsibility for Sex Education with governing bodies and Section 241(5) of the Education Act 1993 requires them to:

- make and keep up to date a separate written statement of their policy with regard to the provision of sex education; and
- make copies of the statement available for inspection (at all reasonable times) by parents of registered students at the Academy and provide a copy of the statement, free of charge, to any such parent who asks for one.

The Education (Academy Information) Regulations 1993 require all maintained Academies to publish in their prospectus a summary of the content and organisation of any sex education they provide.

Section 46 of the 1986 Act requires that the LEA, Governing Body and the Principal:

“Shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that where sex education is given to any registered students at the Academy, it is given in such a manner as to encourage those students to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life.”

The law does not define the content of Sex Education other than Section 241(2) of the Education Act 1993 which inserts Section 114(1) of the 1944 Act a definition of ‘Sex Education’ which includes education about HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. The Secretary of State has no statutory power to prescribe, by subordinate legislation, the content or organisation of Sex Education.

Section 17A of the Education Reform Act 1988 (inserted by Section 241(2) of the Education Act 1993) provides that:

“If the parent of any student ... requests that he/she may be wholly or partly excused from receiving sex education at the Academy, the student shall, except in so far as such education is comprised in the National Curriculum, be so excused accordingly until the request is withdrawn.”