****Newport CE Junior School

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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1) Introduction

We have based our school’s Sex Education Policy on the DfE guidance document Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (ref DfE 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.

In the production of this policy we have consulted with teachers, governors and parents and followed advice from the Local Authority and the Diocese.

2) Aims and Objectives

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
* sexual abuse and what they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters

3) Context

We teach Relationships and Sex Education in the context of the school’s aims and values framework. While Relationships and 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 Relationships and Sex Education in the belief that:-

* relationships and sex education should be taught in the context of a long-term and loving relationship, marriage, civil partnerships 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) Equal Opportunities**

At Newport Junior School we are committed to the provision of RSE to all of our children, responding to the diversity of children’s cultures, faiths and family background.

RSE must be both specific to the needs of the children and young people and be integrated into the mainstream to improve the sexual health and wellbeing of all children and young people.

We also need to consider the varying home backgrounds that children may have and the different relationships that the children may be aware of.

As stated in the SRE guidance: ‘*As part of sex and relationship education, pupils should be taught about the nature and importance of marriage for family life and bringing up children. But the Government recognises - as in the Home Office, Ministerial Group on the Family consultation document ‘supporting families’ – that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside of marriage. Therefore pupils should learn the significance of marriage and relationships as key building blocks of community and society. Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.’*

Guidance from the DCFS guidance booklet ‘Homophobic Bullying’ states that ‘schools can find ways of discussing different families in age appropriate ways; this teaches pupils about respecting others who are not like themselves, which in turn discourage them from bullying.’

5) Planning for Relationships and Sex Education

Our long term planning for RSE is integrated into our PSHE Scheme of Work. When planning for RSE it will be at the teacher’s discretion as to what teaching strategies and additional resources are used depending on the age and development of the children.

**Units of Study for RSE**

An outline of the RSE scheme of work can be found in the appendices. We use the Channel 4 video programmes entitled ‘Living and Growing’ accompanied by teacher resource books. These contain follow up activities for the children which reflect issues raised in the programmes and help to develop themes for further discussion.

In each year group the children will have an opportunity to recap the unit previously studied so that their knowledge and understanding is built up as they progress through the school. Work to develop and encourage discussion and correct terminology takes place during each session.

In Upper Key Stage Two arrangements are made for boys and girls to meet in single-sex groups to have time with the school nurse. Although the following topics will have been covered with all children, we believe that these sessions will make the children feel more comfortable about asking questions:-

* Girls’ discussion: more details on menstruation, sanitary protection, contraception etc.
* Boys’ discussion: issues such as erections, wet dreams, voice breaking, circumcision, contraception etc.

This is also a time for the children to ask questions in confidence. We use a question box so that those children who feel reticent about asking a question may still do so anonymously and these will be answered generally.

If children are absent during any of the sessions then arrangements are made to enable them to catch up.

Some of our sessions are led by the School Nurse. Advice states that all health professionals involved in delivering our programme for the older children are expected to work within our school RSE policy. However, if during consultation with an individual child they feel it necessary, they may follow their own professional code of conduct.

6) Teaching and Learning

Relationships and Sex Education is divided up into three parts:

**Attitudes and Values**

* learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations
* learning the value of family life, marriage 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
* learning how to recognize 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

We teach Relationships and Sex Education through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main Relationships and Sex Education teaching in our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE & Citizenship) curriculum, we also teach some 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.

In PSHE & Citizenship we teach children about relationships, and we encourage children to discuss issues. 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.

In Science lessons, teachers inform children about puberty 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 One, children will have already learned about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and will also have learnt about the main parts of the body, learning to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other. In Key Stage Two we build upon this work, teaching about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

In Year 6 we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. We liaise with the Local Health Authority and Local Authority about suitable teaching materials to use with our children in these lessons. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. By the end of Key Stage Two, 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.

We arrange meetings for all parents and carers of children in Years 4, 5 and 6 to discuss this particular programme of lessons, to explain what the issues are and how they are taught, and to see the materials the school uses in its teaching.

7) The Role of Parents

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

* inform parents about the school’s sex education policy and practice
* answer any questions that parents may have about the sex education of their child
* take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for sex education in the school
* encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy and making modifications to it as necessary
* inform parents 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.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education programme that we teach in our school. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from sex education lessons, 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 in this regard.

8) The Role of Other Members of the Community

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 Relationships and Sex Education programme. Other people that we call on include local clergy, social workers, youth workers and representatives from the NSPCC etc.

9) Confidentiality

Teachers conduct Relationships and Sex Education lessons 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. 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. The Headteacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals. (See also Child Protection Policy.)

10) The Role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our Relationships and 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.

The Headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school Relationships and 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.

The Headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

11) Monitoring and Review

The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors our Relationships and Sex education policy on an annual basis. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification. The Curriculum Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the Relationships and Sex Education programme, and makes a record of all such comments. Governors require the Headteacher to keep a written record, giving details of the content and delivery of the Relationships and Sex Education programme that we teach in our school.