

DEALING WITH SEXUALITY & PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

At Spring Hill School we value the importance of sex and relationship education to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. This programme is linked closely to the Policy for Personal, Social and Health Education, Sex and Relationship Education Guidance and the National Healthy School Standard Guidance.

We recognise the partnership of home and school, of parent and teacher, in this important area of personal development.

Sex education is a continuing, developmental process, which includes the exploration of attitudes and values and the development of skills, as well as the presentation of factual knowledge. As with all other learning, it should be gradual and matched to the child's maturity and stage of development.

Sex education teaches children to develop an awareness of, and respect for, themselves and others. It aids the development of positive self-esteem, which will help children to cope with the challenges of personal growth. It enables children to be aware of the personal choices they can make and prepares them to make responsible decisions. It is about exploring feelings and emotions and enjoying confidence in one's own ability.

As part of the sex and relationship education framework, pupils are taught about the nature and importance of family life and bringing up children. Pupils will learn about the significance of marriage and stable relationships. Care is taken that no child is stigmatised because of his or her home circumstances.

What is Sex and Relationship Education?

Sex and relationship education is about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health.

Sex and relationship education has three main elements:

1. Attitudes and values:
 - learning the importance of values and moral considerations
 - learning the value of family life, marriage and stable relationships
 - learning the value of love, respect and care.

2. Personal and social skills:
 - learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
 - developing empathy and self-respect
 - learning to make choices without prejudice
 - appreciating the consequences of choices made
 - managing conflict
 - recognising and avoiding exploitation and abuse.

3. Knowledge and understanding:

- learning about and understanding physical development
- understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships.

The Philosophy of the School

It is the philosophy of Spring Hill School that all children experience a planned programme of sex and relationship education that offers them the opportunity to explore attitudes and values, and develop personal and social skills, as well as learning the facts necessary for life.

Aims and Objectives of the Policy

- To reassure children of their value and self-worth, including aspects of dignity, self respect and self-restraint.
- To nurture a responsible attitude towards personal relationships, such as aspects of mutual respect and care, and to develop sensitivity towards the needs of others encompassing fidelity and loyalty.
- To foster the ability to manage relationships in a responsible and healthy manner.
- To promote the value of loving relationships and of family life.
- To recognise that marriage is an important, but not exclusive, context for family life.
- To provide knowledge of human reproductive processes.
- To inform children on matters of personal hygiene and related health issues.
- To encourage exploration of values and moral issues, taking into account the physical and moral risks associated with certain behaviour.
- To educate against discrimination and prejudice.
- To empower children to make informed choices about their developing sexuality.

This policy supports the following School Policies.

- Equal Opportunities
- School Discipline
- Statement of School Purpose, Aims and Objectives
- Health and Safety
- Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship
- Child Protection.

Areas of Responsibility

Governors

- To ensure the legal framework is followed.
- To consult with parents on the determination of the school's sex and relationship education policy.
- To implement the sex and relationship education policy through the Head Teacher.
- To implement the 'annual' reviews.
- To make, and keep up to date, a separate written statement of the school's policy with regard to Sex Education.
- To make copies of this statement available for inspection by parents of pupils registered at the school and provide a copy free of charge to any parent who requests one.
- To include a summary of the content and organisation of sex education in the School Prospectus.

Head Teacher

- To implement the Sex and Relationship Education Policy.
- To ensure the policy is followed.
- To liaise with the Governors on the teaching in school.
- To liaise with parents.
- To ensure the policy is reviewed annually.
- To disseminate information to staff.
- To respond to individual problems experienced by children, enlisting external agency support if appropriate.

Class Teacher / PSHE Co-ordinator

- To prepare long- and short-term plans to include Sex and Relationship Education in the Curriculum.
- To ensure the correct resources are available.
- To respond to the individual needs of children, giving relevant support should a child be experiencing difficulties.

Policy, Formation and Consultation Process

The policy has been written following the DfES guidelines *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance 0166/2000*.

Equal Opportunities

In support of the Equal Opportunities Policy, all Spring Hill School pupils, regardless of age, ability, gender or race, have the same opportunity to benefit from the sex education resources and teaching methods.

Organisation of School Sex and Relationship Education

Who Will Teach It?

The teacher with responsibility for PHSE will teach sex and relationship education as part of the PHSE Curriculum. Opportunities will be provided, where appropriate, for separate lessons on physical changes, conception and birth.

Dealing with Sensitive Issues

All parties at Spring Hill School are in agreement that teachers and residential social work staff should answer all children's questions relating to sex and relationship education in an open and factual way, taking into consideration the family background, culture, religious beliefs, and pupils' differing experiences. The Governors expect staff to use their professional judgement and discretion when faced with, or answering, questions, which they deem to be of a sensitive nature, for example homosexuality, contraception or sexually transmitted diseases.

The following ground rules have been established.

- Staff should not enter into discussions about personal issues and lifestyles.
- No one (child or adult) has to answer a personal question.
- Nobody is forced to take part in discussion.
- In discussion, staff will promote the knowledge and use of 'accepted' names of body parts.
- Meanings of words are explained in a sensible and factual way.

Spring Hill School Sex and Relationship Education Programme

Sex and relationship education is delivered within the Science Curriculum and the four broad themes within PHSE.

1. Increasing confidence and responsibility and making the most of pupils' abilities.
2. Preparing to play an active role as citizens.
3. Embracing a healthier lifestyle.
4. Developing good relationships and respecting differences between people.

Through sex and relationship education, the children should:

- develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships
- be able to name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work
- be able to protect themselves and ask for help and support
- be prepared for puberty.

Within the Science Curriculum, the children should:

- know that all creatures, including humans, move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce
- recognise the main external parts of their bodies
- know that humans and animals can produce offspring, which grow into adults
- recognise the similarities and differences between themselves and others, and treat others with sensitivity
- know that the life processes common to humans and other animals include nutrition, growth and reproduction
- know about the main stages of the human life cycle.

*Parents should be aware that children cannot be withdrawn from these Science lessons.

Specific Issues

Child protection Procedure

The Child Protection Procedures as laid down in the 'Spring Hill School Child Protection Statement' is followed. All referrals, whatever their origin, are taken seriously and considered with an open mind, which does not pre-judge the situation. The procedures adopted within the 'Spring Hill School Child Protection Statement' area for handling cases of neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse, and failure to thrive, involving children and young persons, are based on the principle that the interests and welfare of the child or young person are of paramount importance.

Confidentiality should not prevent action being taken if the child is 'at risk'. Teachers listen sympathetically to anything a child tells them in confidence; however, if a teacher believes that a child is at risk, the appropriate people will be contacted – in accordance with the above Child Protection Procedures. A copy of this is available in school for parents.

Child Withdrawal Procedure

Sex education at Spring Hill School is taught across the Curriculum and it is not possible to separate all the sex education lessons. At the initial placement meeting Parents will be asked to allow their child to participate in the sex education programme of the school.

In the event of a child being withdrawn from a lesson, that child is provided with appropriate, challenging work until the sex education lesson is over.

Complaints Procedure

If a parent or guardian has any cause for concern about the Sex Education Policy, they should approach the Principal and staff. If the concern cannot be resolved, the Governors can be contacted.

Procedures for the Involvement of Health Professionals and Visitors

Visiting Health Professionals are involved in the implementation of the Sex Education Policy only after detailed consultation concerning lesson content and method of teaching. The class teacher remains in the lesson throughout.

Working with Parents

Spring Hill School seeks to work in partnership with parents through consultation and support. Parents are vital in teaching children about sex and relationships, maintaining the culture and ethos of the family, helping children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing, and preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings.

The school provides support to parents in helping children learn the accepted names of the body, talking with the children about their feelings and relationships, and answering questions about growing up, having babies, relationships and sexual health.

Parents are consulted before the formal policy document is submitted to the full Governing Body for approval. Local Health Care Professionals are invited to take part in the presentation of the document to parents to provide any additional information and support.

The policy is presented to all staff and a copy made available to them.

Further Information

Useful Documents and Resources

DfES
0116/2000)

Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (Circular

DfES

National Healthy School Standards Guidance 1999

QCA
Teachers in

The National Curriculum Handbook 2000 for Primary
England: