

WITHINFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sex Education Policy

March 2021 - Reviewed February 2023

1. Introduction

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of Sex Education at Withinfields Primary School.

2. Rationale

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education and Health Education compulsory in all primary schools. Health Education includes Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools.

Withinfields Primary School has decided to teach specific aspects of sex education as it is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The Department for Education recommends that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It states that it should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born. We relate our sex education to the Personal, Relationships, Health and Economics (PRHE) curriculum in that it promotes respectful relationships and being safe. Sex Education is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

3. Objectives and principles

The aims of Sex Education at Withinfields Primary School are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships, including the importance of family for the care and support of children
- Help children to understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships
- To be able to recognise unsafe situations, protect themselves and ask for help and support

Our sex education curriculum is taught to our 9-11 year old children alongside the health education aspects relating to changing adolescent bodies. We have developed the curriculum taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an age-appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online. Some aspects of puberty are taught as part of the statutory PRHE curriculum in Year 4, 5 and 6..

4. Approaches

4.1 Sex Education Content

Withinfields Primary School has designed a programme that is set within a moral framework and matched to the pupils' level of maturity. The teaching of the sex education complements the statutory Science curriculum and PRHE curriculum.

Our Sex Education will focus on:

- how to identify external genitalia and reproductive organs
- the links between love and committed relationships between two people
- what sexual intercourse is, and how it can be one part of an intimate relationship between consenting adults
- how pregnancy occurs i.e. when a sperm meets an egg and the fertilised egg settles into the lining of the womb
- about the responsibilities of being a parent or carer and how having a baby changes someone's life

We will work towards this aim in partnership with parents and carers.

4.2 Links to Science Curriculum

There are clear links between aspects of Sex Education and the Science curriculum.

In Key Stage 2, children learn:

- To describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals
- To describe the changes as humans develop to old age
- To recognise the impact of diet, exercise, drugs and lifestyle on the way their bodies function
- To recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents

4.3 Delivery of the Sex Education curriculum

In Key Stage 2, we teach non-statutory sex education in Year 6. We acknowledge that many children will begin to experience puberty earlier than this so we explain what will happen to their bodies during puberty. Some of this learning takes place as part of the statutory PRHE curriculum as it relates to Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing in terms of changing adolescent bodies. This includes key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes and about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle. This is a compulsory part of Health education.

During all non-statutory sex education sessions, we encourage the children to ask for help if they need it and there are opportunities for single-sex question sessions. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care.

4.4 Roles and responsibilities

4.4.1 The governing body

The governing body will develop and maintain an awareness of Sex Education provision in the school. They ensure that the school meets its legal obligations and maintains a focus on inclusive practice, as well as identifying and seeking to remove any barriers to learning.

4.4.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that Sex Education is taught consistently in the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from Sex Education.

The headteacher also:

- Ensures that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity
- Monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors on the effectiveness of the policy

4.4.3 Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Delivering Sex Education in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to Sex Education
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of Sex Education

Class teachers are responsible for teaching Sex Education at Withinfields Primary School. Teachers will reply to, and answer, children's questions sensitively and openly. They will ensure that balanced information is provided which will take into account the different faiths' views and avoid any negative impressions. Teachers will need to answer questions that may arise through the direct teaching of Sex Education, as well as those that may be asked at other times. All questions will be handled sensitively and set within a general context. Staff who have concerns about teaching Sex Education are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher. Questions which teachers feel uncertain about answering should be discussed with a senior member of staff and answered at a later date. Consideration should be given to religious or cultural factors, and to parents' wishes before questions are answered.

4.4.4 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in Sex Education unless their parents have withdrawn them from the sessions and, when discussing issues related to Sex Education, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

4.4.5 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 cooperation. In promoting this objective we:

- Inform parents about the school's Sex Education policy and practice; this includes informing parents by letter or email before beginning to teach a unit of Sex Education
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the Sex Education sessions; this includes providing opportunities for parents to view the resources that are used in lessons
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for Sex Education in the school
- Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education. However, this rarely happens as, by working in partnership with parents, they recognise the importance of this aspect of their child's education
- A register of any pupils who are removed from lessons will be kept and distributed to all teachers involved

4.5 Parents' right to withdraw

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from Relationships and PSHE education. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education. The science curriculum in all maintained schools also includes content on human development, including reproduction, which there is no right to withdraw from. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education and that child will go to another class for the duration of the lesson.

4.6 Confidentiality

Teachers conduct Sex Education lessons in a sensitive manner. 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 outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse or exploitation or appears to be experiencing inappropriate relationships. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw these to the attention of the DSL as a matter of urgency. Disclosure of female genital mutilation must be reported to the police. Staff should not offer or guarantee confidentiality when a child has disclosed information. The school aims to ensure that pupils' best interests are maintained. The school would communicate with parents, if appropriate to the situation. If information is shared, the child will be supported by the DSL and other relevant staff or agencies.

4.7 Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Our pupils have different needs based on their emotional and physical development, life experiences, and learning differences. We aim to ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to fully participate in Sex Education lessons at their appropriate emotional, cognitive and personal development. A differentiated program will be provided where necessary, to ensure that all pupils gain a full understanding. This may mean the Sex Education being taught in a 1:1 situation, in a small group or delivered by external agencies. We will ensure that there is equality of access for all pupils, regardless of any protected characteristics, so avoiding discrimination.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

The delivery of Sex Education is monitored by SLT through, for example, planning scrutiny, learning walks and lesson observations. Pupils' development in Sex Education is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

6. Review

The policy will be reviewed annually by the PRHE Lead and Deputy Headteacher and changes agreed by the Governing Body and communicated to parents and carers..