

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION

Principles

This policy was developed in response to Sex and Relationship Education Guidance DFES 2000, the National Teenage Pregnancy Strategy and National Healthy Schools Programme.

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

In line with College principles covering participation and partnership, the following have been consulted in drawing up this policy:

Principal
Teaching Staff
Governors
Students
Parents
College Nurse
Healthy Schools Co-ordinator

The College understands that it may be a significant number of students who do not belong to a traditional nuclear family (father, mother and children). The College acknowledges, therefore, that students' experiences and appreciation of family life are varied. The College encourages students to understand the nature of family life in all its forms and to distinguish myths and stereotypes.

Entitlement and Equal Opportunities

We provide a broad and balanced RSE programme for all our students including those with special educational needs, ensuring full entitlement and access to all.

Purposes and Values

A RSE Programme should:

- a) Be an integral part of the learning process for all children.
- b) Encourage exploration of values and moral issues, consideration of sexuality and personal relationships and the development of communication and decision making skills.
- c) Foster self-esteem, self-awareness, a sense of moral responsibility and the skills to avoid and resist unwanted sexual experience.

Provision

RSE is a cross curricular theme which means that it is covered in several curriculum areas. Stereotyping for example is discussed in English lessons as part of the course work, whilst work on moral values of different culture and groups is undertaken in Humanities. Clearly Physical Education has a key part to play in helping students to recognise the importance of valuing and taking care of themselves.

Citizenship lessons which occur once per week provide an ideal opportunity to deal with moral issues. The tutor also has a prominent role to play as someone who, when appropriate, may raise some of these issues informally with small groups or individuals. Some issues are also covered within the tutor PHSE programme.

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A great deal of work is covered during modular curriculum weeks. Such weeks involve the suspension of the normal timetable. Each half-year group spends that time on one particular module of work. There are three modules, one in Year 7, one in Year 9 and another in Year 10, where the focus is primarily aimed at RSE. The advantages for this type of organisation are numerous and include:

- flexibility of changing the structure of groups (e.g. single sex groups)
- enhanced staffing
- discussions not being constrained by lesson changes
- allows a bond to develop between student and the teacher with whom they spend most of that week

Relationship and Sex Educational Programme has Three Main Elements

Attitudes and Values

- learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices
- learning the value of family life, stable and loving relationships, and marriage
- learning about the nature of children
- learning the value of respect, love and care
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- developing critical thinking as part of decision-making
- challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour

Personal and Social Skills

- learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- developing self respect and empathy for others
- learning to make choices with an absence of prejudice
- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made
- managing conflict
- empowering students with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter)

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
- the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy

The RSE programme is taught in a developmental manner so that issues are explored in greater depth as students mature.

Aims

The aim of RSE is to provide balanced factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of sexual health. Our RSE programme aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

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- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour; have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want.
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships
- avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex
- communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues
- develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity
- understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity
- understand the reasons for having protected sex
- have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from uninvited / unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections including HIV
- be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary
- know how the law applies to sexual relationships

Child Protection and Safety

- Be able to analyse and assess situations in terms of safety
- Personal and social skills
- Be able to give and receive praise and encouragement in order to promote self-esteem and confidence
- Discuss moral values and explore those held by different cultures and groups

Practice

Parents are informed about RSE in the College Prospectus and this policy is available at the College.

RSE should help students make informed life choices, establish a healthy lifestyle and build up a system of values. The teaching methods used as are important as the context of the lesson.

'Active learning' is an important element of RSE and a wide range of teaching methods are used including discussions, role-play, looking at case studies and other creative ways of involving students in understanding the issues. We make appropriate use of DVD's and provide students with the opportunity to look at a range of contraceptive methods under the supervision of a trained member of staff.

Ground rules are established for group activities/discussions when dealing with sensitive issues.

These might include:

- Listen to what other people say
- No talking when someone else is talking
- If all you can say is something unpleasant, don't say anything
- If people don't want to say anything they don't have to
- Don't laugh at what other people say
- Respect cultural differences

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Inclusion

Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns.

Students with Special Needs

We will ensure that all young people receive sex and relationship education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate question and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them.

Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Teachers are not legally bound to inform parents of any disclosure.

In a case where a teacher learns from an under 16 year old that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

- the young person will be persuaded, where possible, to talk to parent/carer and if necessary to seek medical advice
- child protection issues will be considered, and referred if necessary to the teacher responsible for Child Protection under the College's procedures
- the young person will be properly counselled by the school nurse about contraception, including precise information about where young people can access contraception and advice services

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first.

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one to one situation with an individual student, but in a classroom situation they must follow the schools confidentiality policy.

Legal Aspects

In accordance with DCSF guidance (0116/2000), teachers at this College do not give students individual advice on contraception and other aspects of sexual behaviour. However, in group sessions it is felt to be good practice to teach about the advantages and disadvantages of different contraceptive methods and safer sex. In addition, information regarding access to contraception and advice services are covered.

In circumstances where a student is considered to be at risk of any type of abuse, the College follows the LA procedures for Child Protection as laid down in the Child Protection Procedures, Protocols and Practice Guidance.

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Following discussions with the College, parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education, other than from those elements contained in the Science National Curriculum. The College makes provision for students where the parents have chosen to exercise this right.

Key Personnel

Mrs. Maxine Young is the Assistant Principal at Thomas Estley Community College responsible for co-ordinating RSE.

The Chair of Governors and Principal have responsibility for RSE.

College Nurse - She provides **drop in** sessions where she is available to give accurate advice on issues which teachers are not permitted to give.

External speakers from the wider community who have specific expertise are incorporated into the planned RSE programme.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The College is committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the RSE Policy. This is achieved by:

- student feedback
- staff review and feedback
- parental feedback
- OFSTED inspection feedback
- Policy review

Visits by governors and parents to classes, lessons and sessions where RSE is being given are welcomed by the College. These may form the basis of a monitoring report to the College Governing Body Teaching and Learning Committee or, indeed, a full meeting of the College Governing Body.

Equality Monitoring

Thomas Estley Community College's commitment to equality and diversity means that this policy, via an Equality Impact Assessment, has been screened in relation to the use of gender-neutral language, recognition of the needs of disabled people, promotion of the positive duty in relation to race, age, disability and avoidance of stereotypes.

Based on the Equality Impact Assessment findings, this policy is judged to be of low impact against the equality strands of Race, Gender, Religion, Disability Sexual Orientation and Age. A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment of this policy is available from the Principal's PA.

This Policy is available in alternative formats on request. If you think we can improve the fairness of this Policy, please contact the individual who has responsibility for its update.