

Bell Farm Primary School

Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) Policy



Definition

For the purpose of this policy sex and relationship education is defined as that part of a school's provision that is concerned with personal relationships and sexual health, accepting that this provision is rooted in the whole curriculum, the organisation and ethos of the school.

The sex education contained in National Curriculum science (Key Stages 1–4) is compulsory in maintained schools. All state-funded schools must have 'due regard' to the Secretary of State's guidance on SRE (DfEE, 2000).

This states that: *'All children, including those who develop earlier than average, need to know about puberty before they experience the onset of physical changes' (1.13) and 'Children should learn "how a baby is conceived and born" before they leave primary school' (1.16).*

Introduction

The governors believe that any statement of sex and relationship education policy for the school can only be effective as part of a broader personal and social education policy. It is also their firm belief that the implementation of such policy must be handled with a sensitivity which takes into account the needs of children at different stages of their emotional development, the growing diversity of family patterns and the multicultural nature of society.

Aims and purpose

Sex education has to have a wider purpose than the acquisition of knowledge. Thus it should be concerned also with the development of attitudes and values leading to behaviour based on responsible decision making. The areas, which the Governors feel should be covered by such education at some stage within our school, are:

- Knowledge – Plant and animal reproduction; the structure and functions of the human body; physical changes (e.g. puberty), health and care of the body.
- Attitudes – Society's attitudes and values; developing a personal moral code; self confidence and self esteem; gender roles; respect for others.
- Behaviour – Personal feelings; the importance of caring and loving relationships; changing relationships; friendships; loss and separation.

Equality

The Equality Act 2010 covers the way the curriculum is delivered, as schools and other education providers must ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Inclusive SRE at Bell Farm will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promote understanding and respect.

Curriculum

The Governors feel that sex education should be integrated across the whole curriculum to include safety, environment, personal relationships, sex education, family life, health related exercise, food and nutrition, personal hygiene and some psychological aspects.

From 2014 SRE is outlined in the National Curriculum clearly and is to be taught specifically through science in year 5. Areas which are covered are:

Animals including humans: describe the changes as humans develop to old age. Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. Children should learn about the changes experienced in puberty and the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals including sexual reproduction in animals (National Curriculum Science Programme of Study 2014).

Before these lessons are taught to the children a meeting will be held where parents are invited to view the materials that are taught and also provides an opportunity for teachers to answer any questions.

All classes have a 'question box' that pupils can anonymously post questions to. In turn, the teacher will try to answer the questions (as appropriate) whilst retaining the child's anonymity.

Language and terminology

SRE has a vital role to play in helping children develop a vocabulary they can use to communicate comfortably, respectfully and accurately about the human body, growing up, sex and relationships. This is only possible if adults teaching SRE are able to model use of this type of vocabulary.

It is good practice to use medically correct terms for genitalia and sexual parts of the body, for example vulva, vagina, penis and testicles. Ofsted provides full support for this approach (2013) and have raised concerns that some primary schools are currently failing to teach this vocabulary because this leaves children unable to describe abusive behaviours.

The use of respectful language which challenges sexism, homophobia and other forms of prejudice can be established in SRE and will have benefits for the whole school community – both in and out of lessons. Ofsted (2014) outlines the expectations that schools educate children and take actions to prevent discriminatory and derogatory language including homophobic language.

Choosing a resource

Individual resources may not meet all the above criteria but the programme should aim to use resources which, used together, promote inclusive SRE.

- Is the resource consistent with the values set out in the school SRE policy?
- Is it factually correct and up-to-date?
- Does it encourage active and participatory learning?
- Is the resource contemporary in terms of the realities of children and young people's lives?
- Does the resource portray positive images of a range of children and young people?
- Does the resource show positive role models for girls and boys / women and men and avoid stereotypes relating to gender and sexual orientation?
- Is the resource inclusive on the basis of home and family circumstance, gender, sexuality, race, faith, culture and disability?
- Is it appropriate for the age, ability and maturity of the children and young people?

- Have resources been evaluated by children and young people and feedback acted upon?
- Have parents and carers been consulted about resources?
- Are teachers confident about using the resource?

Answering children's questions

Unless in the anonymous box, questions should only be invited from the children in the context of work they have been involved in, or linked to previous learning – i.e. watching a DVD, part of a topic.

It is better to ask the children to generate questions as a group and ask them to be written down. The teacher is then able to group the questions under appropriate headings. Children should be encouraged not to use 'slang' or 'family' names and terms. The teacher should always correct biological terminology. This may mean that a teacher has to interpret a question before reading it out and answering it.

Where a question is deemed inappropriate either because it is not connected to the subject matter being dealt with or because it goes beyond the scope of the school's SRE policy or age/stage of development of the pupils, the teacher must either decide to:

- *Leave those questions to the end and invite children who have not had their questions answered to speak to the teacher after the teacher input*
- *Explain that they are only answering questions on a particular topic.*

In either case the most appropriate action may be for the teacher to suggest that the child asks their parents

At KS2 we do not discuss **any** vocabulary/topics which are **not** in the science curriculum e.g. contraception, STDs, homosexual sex acts, oral sex, sex toys, prostitution. When a child asks a question about sex, out of context of sex education lessons or a related topic the teacher should speak to the child individually to try to ascertain what has prompted the question e.g. *'Why did you want to know that?'*

Guidance on answering children's questions is as follows:

Difficult questions

1. 'Silly questions': children are testing boundaries and have no interest in the answer. In this case, teachers will not answer questions, and explain that they are inappropriate.
2. 'Concerning questions': these could possibly be indicative of safeguarding issues. In this case, teachers will follow the school safeguarding procedures.
3. 'Genuine questions': the child has a genuine but age inappropriate question. In this case, the child's question will be acknowledged, with a promise to return to it later. The class teacher will then consult with the child's parents so that it can be discussed sensitively at home

Children with special needs

Teaching and resources will be differentiated as appropriate to address the needs of these children in order for them to have full access to the content of sex and relationship education.

Child protection/confidentiality

Teachers need to be aware that effective sex and relationship education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, may lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.

The staff member will inform the Head Teacher /Designated Child Protection person in line with school procedures for child protection.

A member of staff **cannot** promise confidentiality if concerns exist.

Status of Policy	Date
Authored by Kelly Dixon, Ben Wasserberg	October 2015
Policy reviewed	January 2016
Agreed by Staff	
Agreed by Governors (C and L committee)	January 2016
Review	Annually (Jan 2017)

Appendix 1

Language

It is important to clarify which sexual language is to be used in the classroom. At Bell Farm, we ask that the biological terminology is used as this avoids any misunderstandings / misinterpretations. It is important that children should be made aware of this.

Exercises which can be used in the classroom to make this clear to students are shown below:

Exercise 1

Discuss the different ways in which we use language.
In small groups ask the students to think about the following 4 statements/ questions:

I want to go to the toilet!
I am going to be sick!
Please may I have one of your sweets?
I have a pain in my stomach!

Ask the groups to discuss and write down the different ways of making these four statements depending on whether they were talking to:

a) a friend **b) their parents** **c) a teacher** **d) a doctor**

Ask the groups to discuss and report back:

Whether different words were used- with examples?
Why did they choose to use different language?

NOTE: it should come out during the feedback that with a doctor / teacher they will always use '**correct**' language because that is one way of ensuring that they will be understood.

Exercise 2

Checking out we understand the correct words

- Compile a list of new words which may be introduced during the course of the work on puberty eg. penis, vagina, breasts, masturbation, sexual intercourse.
- Head up large sheets of paper with one of these words at the top.
- Working in small groups hand each group a large sheet of headed paper.

- Ask each group to write as many words as they can which mean the same as the one at the top.
- Write a definition for the word at the top.
- Pass the sheets around each group asking them to add any new information or make amendments.
- When each group has their own sheet back ask them to underline any words on the sheet which they feel are the most appropriate to use in the classroom.
- Were there any words they didn't understand?
- Ask for feedback on these words and why they were chosen.

NOTE: As before, students often choose the biological words to avoid misunderstandings. There may be some acceptable alternatives.