

Member(s) of staff Responsible: E. Pygas

Moral and Values Framework

Relationship and Sex Education and the school ethos

We believe that learning about their own sexual development, together with an awareness of their relationships with others, can greatly enhance pupils' ability to lead their lives competently and with fulfilment.

We also expect other learning outcomes to be enhanced by the increased self-esteem and confidence which a good relationship and sex education programme can bring about. Throughout everything we do at Springhead School, we make a commitment to developing learning and relationships through encouraging autonomy and the taking of responsibility.

At Springhead we value all staff and students as individuals worthy of dignity and respect.

The values of our Relationship and Sex education programme

- We believe that the basis of moral behaviour is that each of us feels valued for what we are, and that we feel of worth to others. Our students, with a variety of disabilities and from a range of backgrounds, need first to experience positive self-esteem before they can form satisfying relationships with others. They can then be encouraged to develop the skills to form loving and caring relationships during their lives. Our aim is to give our pupils the skills to conduct such relationships with dignity and assertiveness and to avoid being exploited.
- Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that relationship and sex education is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs.

Our aims for Relationships and Sex education

- To provide a climate in which sensitive discussions and learning opportunities can take place
- to provide knowledge and information to which all pupils are entitled.
- to clarify / reinforce the knowledge students have already acquired
- to raise self-esteem and confidence, especially in relationships with others
- to help students to understand their sexual gender and identity, feelings and behaviour, so that they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives
- to develop skills (language, decision making, choice, assertiveness) which are necessary in a range of situations
- to promote acceptable and appropriate behaviour in public and private situations
- to enable pupils to practice strategies which reduce the risk of exploitation, misunderstanding and abuse
- to support access to information and facilities
- to prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene

Our objectives for Relationships and Sex education

Initially:

- to learn an appropriate vocabulary for body parts
- to develop the concept of a variety of family units
- to develop the concept of what it means to have a particular peer friend
- to co-operate and work with health care agencies such as the doctor / school nurse etc.
- to understand the similarities and difference between most boys and girls, most males and females
- to develop sensible attitudes to body functions
- to build an awareness of self and others

Subsequently:

- to develop the ability to give and receive affection in an appropriate manner and at an appropriate time
- to develop the ability to express and control emotions
- to show respect for other people
- to develop an understanding of respect for their own body.
- to communicate 'no' and develop confidence when talking about own body and making choices about their own body
- to understand the importance of consent
- to be enabled to make informed choices about their own body and relationships.
- to develop an understanding of different types of relationships e.g. friendship, marriage, civil partnership
- to develop an understanding of the responsibility required in all relationships
- to develop an awareness of mass persuasion techniques and presentation of sex by the media
- to develop an awareness of possible risks when communicating and working online and an understanding of what can be done to reduce the risks
- to develop acceptable standards of personal / sexual hygiene
- to acquire an increased awareness of community health care, including the family planning service
- to be informed about sexuality and the law
- to be aware of different attitudes towards cultural and religious aspects of sexuality
- to develop understanding of their own sexuality
- to develop confidence and assertiveness to be - or not to be - sexually active, chaste or celibate
- where appropriate to be informed about the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases
- where appropriate to be informed about forms of contraception and risks related to unprotected sex

Equal Opportunities

All students should have access to a wide range of resources, materials and teaching methods.

Statutory Requirements

From September 2020:

Relationships Education is compulsory for all pupils of primary school age.

Relationships and Sex education is compulsory for all pupils of secondary school age.

Organisation within school

The relationship and sex education (RSE) programme at Springhead School is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum in Key stages one to five. In the Early Years Foundation Stage aspects of relationship education are taught within the Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) strand and permeate many areas of the curriculum. In addition, across all key stages, it is likely that lots of the topics covered will also be explored in a cross-curricular manner across teaching in other subject areas.

The governors expect a basic programme of relationship and sex education and personal development to be part of every pupil's entitlement in Springhead School from ages 3 - 19, planned according to individual and group needs and development.

Staff will decide the most effective methods to use in the classroom. We know that learning about personal matters is increased if students work in a supportive group where they feel safe, and if active methods are used which encourage practice of relevant skills. We understand the need for constant repetition and reinforcement.

We are aware that teaching RSE to students with learning difficulties means that classroom work may need to be made more explicit than in other schools. We support the use of correct words for body parts and functions and the use of visual material which is clear and unmistakable.

The detailed programme will be drawn up by the teachers responsible for each class within the broad outline above and as outlined in The Oxfordshire Special Schools Framework and the PSHE Association. The content of the programme will be shared with parents.

RSE will be taught by class teachers, who may decide to work on a team teaching basis. There will be times when gender groups work alone, and other times when students will be grouped according to their development and maturity. No teacher will be expected to undertake specific sex education teaching without the support of colleagues in the school and of attendance at training courses as necessary.

We expect that our General, Advanced, Senior and Higher-Level Teaching assistants, who have extensive experience of our pupils, will be involved in planning, taking part in and evaluating classroom work, although the overall responsibility rests with the teaching staff.

In classes in the Secondary and Sixth form departments, a specific time will be set aside within the timetable to teach RSE. This may also be appropriate for some primary aged pupils. For other younger pupils, it will be more appropriate to integrate the personal development programme with other work. This, however, will still need careful planning. Continuity and a common approach are essential throughout the school.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual, and Questioning (LGBTQ) content is taught alongside all information about heterosexual relationships and is fully integrated, as well as celebrated at Pride based events. This demonstrates our commitment to the Equality Act of 2010 and our desire to reflect our community and the wider world.

Specific Issues Statements

Contraceptive advice to students Students will be taught, in the context of sexual intimacy and safer sex, that intercourse always involves using a condom. Questions about forms of contraception will be answered accurately and honestly within the student's ability to understand. If students need further personal advice about contraceptive use, counselling and support will be sought from appropriate agencies and personnel. Our principle is that the individual concerned should make decisions about contraceptive use, as far as this is possible.

Confidentiality All sex education will be taught in a calm and supportive manner and in the strictest confidence. Teachers and other staff cannot offer or guarantee pupils unconditional confidentiality. All staff should follow CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING POLICY guidelines.

Sexual Identity and Orientation Within the programme of study for RSE it is entirely appropriate to address issues of sexual identity and orientation with individuals and groups. At Springhead School we will make positive and equal reference to a variety of sexual relationships.

Any issues relating to bullying will be referred directly to the headteacher.
See Anti bullying policy

Gender Identity Within the programme of study for RSE it is entirely appropriate to address issues of gender identity and orientation with individuals and groups. At Springhead School we will make positive and equal reference to how gender is identified and expressed.

Any issues relating to bullying will be referred directly to the headteacher.
See Anti bullying policy

Use of outside visitors

Delivery of RSE is not the sole responsibility of school. Elements of RSE may be provided by a range of people including health professionals, social workers, sessional workers and youth workers. Some people in the wider community have much to offer at all levels of planning and delivering RSE, bringing a new perspective and offering specialised knowledge, experience and resources. All of these people need to be aware of the school RSE policy and planning to meet individual's needs is best done as part of a multi professional team. Visitors to school have a discrete role and responsibility for providing RSE both formally and informally. Visitors should complement the planned provision.

Health professionals who are involved in delivering programmes related to RSE are expected to work within our school policy. However, when they are in their professional role, such as school nurse in consultation with an individual pupil, they should follow their own professional codes of conduct (this is the case irrespective of who is paying them).

Guidelines for all staff working with students in the context of personal care and development

- treat every pupil as an individual, with dignity and respect (refer to Intimate Care Guidelines – February 2006)
- relate language and behaviour to the chronological age of the student
- reinforce the ‘private’ concept in all situations.
- discourage pupils beyond Early Years from age - inappropriate behaviour - e.g. sitting on laps
- in all situations, informal and formal, we are all expected to follow the language and approaches identified within this policy

A partnership with families

We place the utmost importance on sharing responsibility with parents for their child’s relationship and sex education. We will do our best to find out from them any religious or cultural views they may have which may affect the sex education they wish to be given to their children, although we would consider very carefully any request which compromised our equal opportunities policy.

We are aware that some parents find it hard to cope with their children’s sexual development and are happy for the school to take the initiative.

We will take every opportunity to inform parents and guardians:

- by making our commitment clear in the school prospectus
- by inviting parents to discuss personal development when their child enters each department of the school
- by raising personal development issues at each Annual Review meeting
- by inviting parents to a meeting where resources are available and their use explained

Staff are willing to discuss with parents any matters which they are concerned about. It is important that there is no conflict of information given to the child.

Parents right to withdraw their child from sex education

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education, although not from the elements which are in National Curriculum science. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

If a parent wishes to withdraw a child, they are asked to discuss it with the headteacher, to be clear about what the student will do when withdrawn. We would like to make it clear that if students who are withdrawn from sex education lessons ask questions at other times, these questions will be answered honestly and appropriately by staff.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school will need to assess how effective are the aims, content and method in promoting pupils’ learning. Feedback from staff, parents and students will help judge this. The PSHE co-ordinator will be responsible for developing ways of collecting this information, monitoring teaching with support from the management team, reporting to the headteacher and presenting it to the governors within the school development plan.

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Signed off by Governing Body	December 2022