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THE BOLSOVER SCHOOL

A SCHOOL FOR EVERY FUTURE

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

2012

Sex and Relationships Education Policy 2012

1. Introduction

“Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make well informed decisions about their lives.” (DCSF 0116/2000)

The Bolsover School will provide learners with a positive, structured and developmental education on sex and relationships as part of a broader health education curriculum.

2. Definitions

What is Sex and Relationship Education?

The term ‘Sex and Relationships Education’ (SRE) is used in this policy rather than ‘Sex Education’. This is to stress that our approach goes beyond provision of biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values, and developing self- esteem and the skills to manage relationships.

According to DCSF “Sex and Relationships Guidance” (2000), SRE is “.....lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage, civil partnerships, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity.

3. Principles and Values

Sex and Relationship Education should:

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- i. be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life;
- ii. be an entitlement for all young people
- iii. encourage every student to contribute to the making of our community and aim to support each individual as they grow and learn;
- iv. be set in the wider school context and support family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just one model, e.g. nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure and acceptance of different approaches;
- v. encourage learners to share and respect each other's views. They are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure. The important values are love, respect and care for each other.
- vi. generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment;
- vii. recognise that parents/carers are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers and learners.
- viii. recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other advisers.

The guidance suggests that SRE should have three main elements as follows:

Attitudes and Values

- learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations;
- learning the value of family life, marriage, civil partnerships and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children
- learning the value of respect, love and care;
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas; and
- developing critical thinking as part of decision making

Personal and Social Skills

- learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- developing self-respect and empathy for others;

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- learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice;
- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made;
- managing conflict; and
- learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

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 health advice, contraception and support services
- learning about the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay
- the avoidance of planned/unplanned pregnancy leading to a reduction in student pregnancies

The school's approach to SRE consists of:

1. The taught SRE programme in PSHE
2. Pastoral support for students who experience personal difficulties or concerns and approach staff for support
3. Provision of appropriate information through leaflets and books in the LRC
4. Subject specific information e.g. Science

4. Why SRE?

Legal obligations

Maintained secondary schools in England and Wales have a legal responsibility to provide a 'Sex Education' programme. They also have a responsibility to keep an up-to-date written statement of the policy they choose to adopt which must be available to parents. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from 'Sex Education' lessons which fall outside those aspects covered in the National Curriculum Science – see section 14.

5. Aims

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The aim of SRE is to provide balanced factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious and moral dimensions of sexual health.

The SRE programme aims to prepare learners for an adult life in which they can:

- i. 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;
- ii. understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships
- iii. avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex;
- iv. communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues;
- v. develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity;
- vi. understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity
- vii. understand the reasons for having protected sex
- viii. 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;
- ix. be aware of sources of help and acquire skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary;
- x. know how the law applies to sexual relationships

Organisation and Content

The main SRE programme will be delivered as part of the school's approach to PSHE and Citizenship by a team of dedicated teachers. In addition, certain biological aspects are delivered through Science lessons and other aspects of SRE arise in RE, PE, English, Drama, Geography.

SRE lessons focus more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction are included. The Science Curriculum is delivered by staff in the science department. These lessons are more concerned with the physical aspects of development and reproduction, although the importance of relationships is not forgotten.

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Any SRE lesson may consider questions or issues that some learners will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When learners ask questions we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the learners, the question may be dealt with individually at another time. If a question is too explicit or inappropriate to answer in class the teacher will acknowledge it and attend to it later with the student who asked it.

If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of sexual abuse they will follow the school's Child Protection procedures.

The programme is regularly evaluated by the PSHE co-ordinators and PSHE teachers. The views of learners are also used to make changes and improvements to the programme.

6. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Young people may have varying needs regarding SRE depending on their circumstances and background. The school strongly believes that all students should have access to SRE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this, the school's approach to SRE will take account of:

- i. Ethnic and Cultural Groups/Varying home backgrounds**
We recognise that our learners may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. The policy is sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it may not be culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on home circumstances. The Bolsover School will respond to parental requests and concerns.
- ii Learners with Special Educational Needs**
The Bolsover School will ensure that all young people receive SRE and will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all learners, taking specialist advice where necessary.
- iii Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation**

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The Bolsover School aims to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that SRE is relevant to them. Our pastoral support will take into account the needs of gay, lesbian and bi-sexual students. We will also actively tackle homophobic bullying.

7. A Whole School Approach

A whole school approach will be adopted to SRE that actively involves the whole school community. All groups who make up the school community have rights and responsibilities regarding SRE. In particular:

Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will endeavour to support the provision and development of SRE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate training and resourcing.

PSHE Co-ordinators will maintain an overview of SRE provision and have overall responsibility for its development. This will include keeping up-to-date with developments and good practice, developing the provision to meet learners' needs, providing support and resources for staff, arranging staff training, liaison with outside agencies and monitoring and evaluation.

Teaching staff - All teachers are involved in the school's SRE provision. Some teach SRE through the PSHE programme and some through science and other curriculum areas. All teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to students. Any teacher may be approached by students who experience difficulty regarding sex and relationship issues.

Non-teaching staff may be involved in a supportive role in some SRE sessions and also play an important, informal pastoral support role with students.

Governors have responsibilities for school policies. They will be consulted about the SRE provision and policy and have reports at relevant governor's meetings.

Parents/Carers have a legal right to view this policy and to have information about the school's SRE provision. They also have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated sex education lessons if they wish (see section 14).

The school's approach to SRE will encourage dialogue between parents/carers and their children.

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The School Nurse plays a key role in SRE in terms of provision of pastoral support for students. The school will continue its on-going consultation and partnership with the School Nurse.

Outside agencies and speakers – The school will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to students' needs. We shall work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within the school.

Students have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate SRE and to pastoral support. They may be consulted about their SRE needs and their views will be considered when developing provision.

14. Right of Withdrawal of Learners from Sex and Relationships Education

Some parents/carers prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of this element of education. They have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex and relationship education except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (i.e. in Science lessons); the school will make alternative arrangements in such cases.

Parents/carers are encouraged to discuss their decisions with staff at the earliest opportunity. Parents/carers are welcome to review any SRE resources the school uses.

15. E-Safety – Use of Internet and Digital Technologies

The school expects all staff and learners to use the internet and other technologies responsibly and strictly according to the conditions below:

Users shall not visit Internet sites, make, post, upload or pass on, material, remarks, proposals or comments that contain or relate to;

- i. Indecent images of children
- ii. Other indecent images
- iii. Promoting illegal acts
- iv. Any other information which may be offensive to peers or colleagues e.g. abusive images

Incidents which appear to involve deliberate access to websites, newsgroups and online groups that contain the following material will be reported to the police:

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- i. Images of child abuse (images of children whether they are digital or cartoons, apparently under 16 years of age, involved in sexual activity or posed to be sexually provocative).
- ii. Adult material that potentially breaches the Obscene Publications Act in the UK
- iii. Other criminal activity

The Leadership Team and the Schools' Child Protection Officer will be informed if there are any concerns with students.

16. Confidentiality- Controversial and Sensitive Issues

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a student for help. Staff must make this clear to students. Child Protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures about abuse are made.

In a case where a teacher learns from an under 16 years old that they are having or contemplating having sexual intercourse they will be referred to the Child Protection Officer:

- i. the young person will be persuaded, wherever possible, to talk to parent/carer and if necessary to seek medical advice
- ii. child protection issues will be considered, and referred to the teacher responsible for Child Protection under the school's procedures;
- iii. the young person will be properly counselled about contraception (by the school nurse if appropriate), including precise information about where young people are able to access contraception and advice services.

In all cases 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.

Health professionals working in the school (e.g. School Nurse) are bound by their own codes of conduct.

17. Dealing with bullying

Bullying commonly includes inappropriate and hurtful comments and behaviour concerning sexism, homophobia, appearance and other sex/relationship issues. The school takes the issue of bullying very seriously which is reflected in the school's anti-bullying policy. Staff will challenge and deal sensitively with any evidence of bullying. Students will be encouraged to report any incidents. The SRE and PSHE programmes will consider bullying and aim to discourage bullying based on sexism, homophobia, appearance and other sex/relationship issues.

18. Dissemination of the policy

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The outline of this policy was written by J Stewart and further copies if needed are available on request. The policy will be regularly reviewed by the PSHE Department and the Senior Leader responsible for this area.

J Stewart
June 2012