



INTRODUCTION

The governors and staff of Applefields School believe that sex and relationship education is part of the educational entitlement of all pupils. Young people learn a great deal about their own sexuality through their relationships with staff and pupils at school. It is therefore essential that the aims of the sexuality education programme are part of the overall aims and educational philosophy of the school. At Applefields School we are concerned with educating the whole child and recognise that sexuality development is an integral part of a pupil's personal development.

Some pupils with special educational needs are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation than their peers, and others may be confused about what is acceptable public behaviour. Young people who experience learning difficulties often need to be taught the skills that other youngsters acquire incidentally. These children need help to develop skills to reduce the risks of being abused and exploited, and to learn what sorts of behaviour are, and are not, acceptable.

The law says that a compulsory programme of sexuality education, including teaching about HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases must be provided for all pupils of secondary age. This law also gives parents the right to withdraw their children from sex education at any age, except those parts which are in the National Curriculum science syllabus. These include naming body parts, puberty and human development.

The governing body of all maintained schools must keep up to date a written statement of their policy on sex education. Copies of this policy are issued free on request to parents.

MORAL AND VALUES FRAMEWORK:

At Applefields School we believe that the basis of moral behaviour is that each person feels valued for who they are, that we all should be respectful for the beliefs of others. We aim to provide an environment where each member of the school community is treated with respect and where dignity is paramount. Pupils will be encouraged to appreciate the value of stable family life, and the responsibilities of parenthood. We aim to present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, respecting the values of the school population, with awareness of the law on sexual behaviour.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES:

We strive to make the sexuality education programme relevant and accessible to all pupils regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion or social class.

The resources we use reflect the multicultural society in which we live and we will avoid enforcing racial or gender stereotypes.

ORGANISATION OF SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION PROGRAMME:

Sex Education is based within the PSHE programme. The subject will be taught in conjunction with colleagues from the local Health Trust. Students respond well to specialist input and we value greatly the health care team's contribution to sex education. We ensure that all visiting speakers are familiar with the schools sex and relationships education policy and that their philosophy is compatible with that of the school.

AIMS

The aims of sex and relationship education are to:

- give pupils information, help them acquire the skills and offer them the support they will need to meet the challenges and demands of life in the community,
- improve self esteem among the young people. We believe that the major part of human dignity is feeling good about oneself. As people who experience learning difficulties often have low self esteem we consider this element of sex education vital if young people are to develop caring relationships and not exploit or be exploited by others,
- support all pupils to extend their skills in communicating about sexuality issues; to help them access information and to enable them to express themselves most appropriately. Clear and unambiguous images are invaluable when trying to describe sexual matters and Makaton will be used where appropriate,
- improve the pupils' awareness of their own body, how it changes at different times of life and how these changes can best be dealt with,
- support the pupils to identify and understand their emotions and help them develop the skills to manage them,
- help the young person develop healthy and respectful friendships and relationships
- support pupils to foster an understanding of and a healthy attitude to, human sexuality and relationships in a moral, social and spiritual framework,
- help the young person to understand how relationships are formed, maintained and sometimes ended,
- establish an awareness of the importance of stable family life and the responsibilities of parenthood,
- develop a respect for diversity and the need to avoid prejudice and discrimination.

Sex and relationships education will be taught mainly in mixed classes of boys and girls, although certain issues, such as personal hygiene, will be discussed in single-sex groups. Boys and girls generally need to be taught the same material to encourage greater understanding, appreciation and respect for each other, as well as to ensure that important information is provided for all, irrespective of gender. Work within smaller groups may be required for pupils' specific needs. Staff will judge when pupils are ready to move on to more specific work on sexuality and sexual relationships. Some of these areas may be dealt with on a 1:1 basis. These include:

- masturbation and the related feelings
- sexual intimacy and relationships
- sexual preference
- pregnancy and birth
- safer sex and contraception

RESOURCES

Resources for supporting the teaching of SRE are selected very carefully and are only used with the approval from the Headteacher and governing body. The resources will be targeted for each key stage and then into topic areas. A catalogue of resources, including those provided by colleagues in the local Health Trust, will be compiled.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ADVICE:

Child Protection procedures will be invoked if pupils make disclosures of possible abuse; staff cannot offer complete confidentiality. At the same time pupils will be offered sensitive and appropriate support.

INVOLVING PARENTS:

We aim to provide information for parents about the health-related topics covered during each key stage and itemise what is covered with each year group. Where puberty-related changes are being taught parents will be informed about the content to be covered before hand and they will be invited to the school to review the materials to be used with the pupils.

At times moral and ethical issues may arise which require clarification for the pupils. When these questions arise within a National Curriculum subject or at pastoral and assembly times, as long as discussion takes place within the context of the subject, it will not be deemed to be part of the sex education programme and therefore not subject to the parental right of withdrawal.

Parents wishing to exercise the right to withdraw their child from part of whole of the sexuality education programme are asked to contact the headteacher. Once a pupil has been withdrawn from the sex education curriculum, they cannot rejoin lessons until the school has parental approval.

Complaints Procedure:

Any complaint about the sex education curriculum should be made to the Headteacher who will report it to the governing body.

PROCEDURES FOR POLICY MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed next year (April 2006) by the Governors' Curriculum committee, the Headteacher, the PSHCE coordinator, the health care team and with parental feedback. This will include and evaluation of current resources, staff training and implementation of the programme at each key stage.