

The Friary School
SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Issue 4
Summer 2009
Review 2011/12

This policy is intended to support Schools Aims Nos. 1 and 5 and Objectives 1, 5, 10, 12 and 19.

What is Sex Education?

“Sex Education provides an understanding that positive, caring environments are essential for the development of a good self-image and that individuals are in charge of and responsible for their own bodies. It provides knowledge about the processes of reproduction and the nature of sexuality and relationships in a responsible and healthy manner”. [Curriculum Guidance: Health Education]

1. **Aims of the Policy**

- 1.1. To enable young people to understand the nature of feelings and emotions experienced by themselves and others, and the importance of healthy personal relationships.
- 1.2. To enable young people to understand the biological facts related to human growth and development including reproduction and contraception.
- 1.3. To counteract misleading myth and folklore, to dispel false assumptions of ‘normal’ behaviour and to distinguish certain aspects.
- 1.4. To provide constant reassurance that change is part of the life cycle and to give help in adjusting to these changes.
- 1.5. To understand the value of family life, the implications of parenthood and the needs of the very young.
- 1.6. To understand and respect the varied cultural and religious influences of individual sexuality.
- 1.7. To develop a range of personal skills and qualities, such as self-esteem, communication, negotiation, listening skills, empathy, assertiveness and problem solving, which will help young people to have fulfilling personal and sexual relationships.
- 1.8. To be aware of sources of help and advice within the family, school and community; and to acquire the skills and confidence to use them.
- 1.9. To provide pupils with sufficient information to protect themselves and their partner from infection or unwanted pregnancy, and to encourage them to value their own body and to behave within a moral framework.

2. **Section 46 of 1986 Education Act states that:**

The Local Education Authority, Governing Body, and Headteacher -

“Shall take such steps as are reasonably practical to secure that where sex education is given to any registered pupil at the school it is given in such a manner as to encourage those pupils to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life”.

Therefore the curriculum content, style of delivery, and relationships with the school develop the following:-

2.1. **Skills**

- 1- making informed choices and reasoned decisions.
- 2- recognising a moral decision.
- 3- an awareness of the consequences of one's actions.
- 4- understanding of U.K. legislation regarding sexual behaviour.
- 5- an appreciation of the changing nature of sexuality over time and its impact on lifestyles.

2.2. **and attitudes**

- 1- to respect the views of others, recognising that people are ‘individuals’ as well as group members
- 2- to recognise that there can be more than one moral opinion on any issue
- 3- to recognise that one's sexuality is a matter of choice, and to appreciate the importance of positive feelings in a relationship
- 4- to develop an enquiring mind and to acknowledge that sharing opinions and doubts is a positive action.

3. **Withdrawal from Sex Education**

- 3.1. Sex education can be taught anywhere in the curriculum if no withdrawal has been requested. However if a withdrawal has been requested, note is taken of the following:

“schools should ensure that those aspects of the National Curriculum are structured in such a way as to enable a pupil to be withdrawn this should not affect spontaneous discussion or the honest answering of questions that arise naturally in other curriculum areas. Provided that such discussion is relatively limited and set within the context of the other subject concerned, it will not necessarily constitute part of a programme of sex education”. [Para.30]

- 3.2. If a request for withdrawal is made, the following procedure is followed:

- 1- Discuss with ‘parents’ the nature of their concerns. Can they be reassured?
- 2- Parents **do not** have to give reasons for withdrawal, but the school may invite parents voluntarily to indicate their reasons - so any misunderstandings can be resolved.

- 3- Schools should inform parents what aspects of sex education they may withdraw pupils from.
- 4- Could the programme be amended, without affecting the entitlement of others?
- 5- The withdrawal should cause minimal embarrassment to the pupil and minimal disruption to the programme.
- 6- In other lessons where a withdrawn pupil is present a teacher must balance the need to give proper attention to relevant issues with the need to respect pupils' and parents' views and sensitivities.
- 7- The withdrawn pupil may be vulnerable to teasing and distorted information. Parental access to appropriate material and information will enable the opportunity for personal delivery of the programme.
- 8- A young person could challenge their withdrawal from Sex Education under Section 8 of the 'Children Act' by applying to the court for a 'specific issues order'.
- 9- A request must be complied with until the parent changes or revokes it.

3.3. From what can parents withdraw pupils?

- All or part of sex education that does not form part of the Statutory National Curriculum. HIV, AIDS, STIs and non-biological aspects of sexual behaviour have been removed from the National Curriculum, and these are now part of compulsory 'Sex Education'.
- If a parent has withdrawn a pupil from sex education, a teacher cannot give advice to that pupil on sexual matters without parental consent; but (s) he could suggest the child sought confidential advice from a G.P., and would be merely giving information as to where advice/counselling could be lawfully given.

4. **Sensitive Issues**

We endeavour to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Avoiding sensitive/controversial issues is not recommended because of the danger that it will leave pupils confused and at risk.
- Advance warning to pupils will enable them to see the teacher if the issue is too sensitive for personal reasons.
- Pupils should be encouraged to air personal opinions, even if the teacher disagrees.
- Views should be valued and discussed.
- Teaching materials and delivery methods should essentially be:
 - o presented in a broad and balanced way.
 - o free from sensationalism and personal bias.
 - o sensitively pitched to the level of pupils' needs and experience.

4.1. Contraception

- 1- A teacher may give information about contraception without parental consent, but not personal advice to individuals under 16 years.
- 2- It is important to clarify a pupil's understanding in a manner related to age and experience.
- 3- A 'spiral curriculum' exists through which issues are approached each year in different ways and with increasing complexity.

- 4.2. HIV/AIDS
- It is essential to work to counteract prejudice and ignorance.
- 4.3. Homosexuality
- To counteract prejudice and victimisation and to support the development of self-esteem and a sense of responsibility.
- 4.4. Abortion:
- Should be presented with a balanced view, which respects a range of religious beliefs, and possible (unknown) experiences.
 - An awareness that there are differing opinions about the stage at which the foetus becomes an individual human being.
 - A consideration of genetic factors/medical conditions which could effect a mother's decision.
 - An appreciation that physical and emotional health can be affected, and the trauma experienced after the termination.
 - Discuss the difference between abortion and contraception.

5. **Confidentiality: Guidelines.**

5.1. Contraceptive Advice - a teacher can

- a) provide education about types of contraception and where they can be obtained.
- b) provide pupils with information about where and from whom, they can receive confidential advice and treatment.

5.2. A teacher should not promise confidentiality

Teachers should make it clear to pupils whether and on what basis confidentiality is possible; and encourage individuals to discuss concerns with parents and carers.

A teacher is **not obliged to break** confidentiality, but **disclosures to the Headteacher** must be passed on to parents.

“a teacher does not have a legal duty to inform the headteacher of disclosures by a pupil. The decision as to whether to do so must be a matter for a teacher's discretion, **unless the head issues an instruction that they should be informed** in which case the teacher is contractually obliged to comply”.

6. **Where is “Sex Education” Delivered?**

Key Stage 3 and 4 PSHE packages deliver the main elements, supplemented by the following:

6.1. English

Although there is no compulsory or consistent coverage of sex education, different aspects may arise through literature and discussion; including pregnancy and child birth, puberty and differences in maturation.

6.2. Biology

Key Stage 3 and Stage 4 consider the **biological aspects** of reproduction, adolescence, puberty and reproduction.

Key Stage 3 [Years 7-9]

Range and Content: 3.3 Organisms, health and behaviour

b. the human reproductive cycle includes adolescence, fertilisation and foetal development

c. conception, growth, development, behaviour and health can be affected by diet, drugs and disease

Explanatory notes:

Diet, drugs and disease: ... also includes the effects of bacteria and viruses, such as those associated with sexually transmitted infections.

Curriculum Opportunities

j. consider how knowledge and understanding of science informs personal and collective decisions, including those on substance abuse and sexual health

Explanatory notes:

Sexual health: This includes issues related to contraception, pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections

Key Stage 4 [Years 10-11]

Breadth of study: Organisms and Health

b. variation within species can lead to evolutionary changes and similarities and differences between species can be measured and classified

c. the way in which organisms function are related to the genes in their cells

Sixth Form

Discussions take place in General Studies lessons, supplemented by visiting speakers, including representatives from Health organisations.

6.3. Religious Education (GCSE Short Course)

Throughout Key Stage 4 and 5, aspects of sexual attitudes, abortion, family roles, child abuse, partnership, understanding and managing relationships, friendships, harassment, self-esteem, stereotypes, and influences of the media on sexual image; are all covered to varying degrees.

7. Information to Parents

This is given in the form of a curriculum statement in the School Prospectus and will be supplemented by a presentation and information session for parents where appropriate.