

SEX EDUCATION POLICY

PURPOSE

A key aim of Beechfield School is that each pupil will develop the skills and knowledge to make good decisions. Decisions about how they relate to others can only be made if they have adequate knowledge and understanding of their own physical and emotional development.

Sex education is part of the PSHCE and Science curriculum in our school. While we use it to inform children about sexual issues, we do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in such a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. We do not use sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

This is not a task for the school in isolation; we seek to work with parents to ensure the teaching of sex education reflects their expectations and compliments the teaching given at home.

CONTEXT

We teach sex education in the context of the school's aims and values. While sex education in our school means that we give children information about sexual behaviour, we do this with an awareness of the moral code and values which underpin all our work in school. In particular, we teach sex education in the belief that:

- sex education should be taught in the context of marriage and family life
- sex education is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process
- children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies
- children should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity
- it is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect

CURRICULUM ORGANISATION

We teach sex education through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main sex education teaching in our personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) curriculum, we also teach some sex education through other subject areas (e.g. science), where we feel that they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body, and how it is changing and developing.

In PSHCE we teach children about relationships, and we encourage children to discuss issues. We teach about the parts of the body and how these work, and we explain to them what will happen to their bodies during puberty.

In science lessons in Year 6, teachers inform children about puberty and how a baby is born. For this aspect of the school's teaching, we follow the guidance material in the Science National Curriculum.

In Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 we teach children that animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other.

In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

In Year 6 we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. We liaise with the Local Health Authority about suitable teaching materials to use with our children in these lessons. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care.

By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are conceived, born, how their bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children.

We inform parents and carers of children in Year 6 of this particular programme of lessons before they start, to explain what the issues are and how they are taught, and to offer the opportunity to see the materials the school uses in its teaching.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure:

- that both staff and parents/carers are informed of the school's sex education policy and that the policy is implemented effectively
- that members of staff are given sufficient training so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with confidence and sensitivity

The role of staff

Staff who teach sex and relationships education are expected to:

- provide sex education in accordance with this policy and in a way which encourages pupils to consider morals and the values of family life
- participate in training as required
- draw to the attention of the Headteacher any materials which they consider to be inappropriate
- respond appropriately to those pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from sex education

The role of parents and carers

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's sex education lies with

parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation.

In promoting this objective we:

- inform parents/carers about the school's sex education policy and practice
- answer any questions that parents may have about the sex education of their child
- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for sex education in the school
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to sex education, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home. We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing bodies and increasing responsibilities.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education programme that we teach in our school. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from sex education lessons, they should discuss this with the Headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in.

The school always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Teachers conduct sex education lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence.

However, if a child makes a reference to being involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. If the teacher has concerns, they will report their concerns to the Designated Senior Person for child protection (Headteacher). The DSP will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals (see also Child Protection Policy).

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Headteacher will report to governors annually on the implementation of the sex education programme, together with a record of any parental/pupil complaints, the number of pupils withdrawn from lessons, and the number of staff involved in sex education training.

The governing body gives serious consideration to any comments from parents and carers about the school's sex education programme.