



## THE FOREST FEDERATION

# Sex and Relationships Education Policy

### Introduction

We have based our schools' sex education policy on the DfEE guidance document Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (ref DfEE 0116/2000). In this document, sex education is defined as 'It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, 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 – this would be inappropriate teaching.

It has three main elements:

#### attitudes and values

- learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations;
- learning the value of family life, marriage, 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;
- 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 sexual health advice, contraception and support services;
- learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay; and the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

### Aims and objectives

We teach children about:

- the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults;
- the way humans reproduce;
- respect for their own bodies
- the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term, and loving relationship;
- the importance of family life;
- moral questions;
- relationship issues;
- respect for the views of other people;
- sex abuse and what they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters.'

### Context

We teach sex education in the context of our schools' aims and values framework (See Curriculum Policy values statement.) While sex education in our schools means that we give children information about sexual behaviour, we do this with an awareness of the relationships, moral code and values which underpin all our work in schools. In particular, we teach sex education in the belief that:

- sex education should be taught in the context of marriage and family life, long-term and loving relationships;
- 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;
- children need to learn the importance of self-control.

## Organisation

We teach sex education through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main sex education teaching in our personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, we also teach some sex education through other subject areas (for example, science and PE), 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.

We believe it is important to teach about relationships throughout the children's school life and in PSHE we teach children about relationships and we encourage children to discuss issues. In science, we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for science. In PE we consider health and hygiene.

Foundation Stage we explore:

- relationships and belonging including getting on and falling out and anti bullying.
- managing conflict
- who to ask for help
- feelings
- similarities and differences
- respect including self respect
- values, love and care
- choices
- gender, equal opportunities and stereotyping
- good and bad touches
- cleaning and washing
- changes
- personal space
- life cycles
- animal babies
- weddings and christenings (not limited to Christianity)

In Key Stage 1 we teach:

- relationships and belonging including getting on and falling out and anti bullying.
- Respect, self respect
- managing conflict
- who to ask for help
- feelings
- empathy
- similarities and differences
- respect including self respect
- values, love and care
- choices
- gender, equal opportunities and stereotyping
- cleanliness
- changes
- personal space and inappropriate touching
- life cycles and babies
- weddings and baptism (not limited to Christianity)
- how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce
- the main parts of the body.

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

In lower Key Stage 2 we:

- place a particular emphasis on health education
- look at changes from birth to death but not the details of how a baby is made.

In years 5 and 6 we also place an emphasis on health education and look at puberty in more detail as some children experience puberty at this age and many are preparing for high school. We liaise with the Local Health Authority, specifically our nurse about suitable teaching materials to use with our children in these lessons. By the end of Key Stage 2 we teach about::

- reproductive parts of the body and how these work
- how a baby is made
- what will happen to their bodies during puberty. (For example, we tell all of the children about changes in boys and girls but elaborate with the boys about developments pertaining to them and we explain to the girls about menstruation in more detail.
- identify, without great detail, the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy
- choices, peer pressure and the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay
- sexuality
- sexual health
- recognising and avoiding exploitation

We always teach with due regard for the emotional development of the children (as stated earlier in this policy).

### **Support for all**

**Teachers** are consulted on the content of their teaching and the resources available and should discuss with the headteacher if they are uncomfortable in any way.

We encourage the **children** to ask for help if they need it through direct questions or a discrete question box. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care and we have agreed that **all** questions will be answered in a passive, factual way. If questions are raised by year 3 or 4 children the teacher will first consult the parent as firstly the child's parent may wish to have the discussion themselves with their child, may not feel they are ready and indeed the child may not mean what we think they do.

Parents are involved in the development and review of this policy and the resources we use. We arrange a meeting for all **parents** and carers of children in Year 6 to discuss this particular programme of lessons, to explain what the issues are and how they are taught, and to see the materials the school uses in its teaching with the support of the school nurse.

### **The role of parents**

The schools are 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 schools through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we:

- inform parent of and involve parents in the schools' 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 our schools;
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the Federation policy and making modifications to it as necessary,
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to sex education, so that the teaching in our 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 body and their increasing responsibilities.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education programme that we teach in our schools. 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 schools always comply with the wishes of parents in this regard.

### **The role of other members of the community**

We encourage other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support to the children with regard to health education. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as our school nurse and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our sex education programme. Other people that we call on include local clergy, social workers and youth workers.

### **Confidentiality**

Teachers conduct sex education lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the Headteacher as child protection officer. (See also Child Protection Policy.)

### **The role of the Headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our sex education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

The Headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the schools' sex education programme, and ensures that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the federation policy, and that they work within this framework.

The Headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

### **Monitoring and review**

The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors our sex education policy on an annual basis. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification. The Curriculum Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the sex education programme, and makes a record of all such comments. Governors require the Headteacher to keep a written record, giving details of the content and delivery of the sex education programme that we teach in our schools.