

Bryn Offa CE Primary School

Sex Education Policy

(Updated Summer 2013)

Introduction

We have based our school's 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 'learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding 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'. Sex education is part of the personal, social and health education curriculum in our school. While we use sex education to inform children about sexual issues, we do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in 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.

Aims and objectives

We teach children about:

- the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults, reassuring them that such changes are normal;
- the need to discuss sex education issues, at home or school, without embarrassment;
- counteracting misleading or false information and challenging sexism or prejudice;
- the way humans reproduce;
- respect for their own bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term, and loving relationship;
- the importance of family life and proper care of all young creatures;
- moral questions;
- relationship issues, including issues of self esteem and assertiveness;
- equal opportunity issues;
- exploring attitudes and emotions;
- 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 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 / stable relationships 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 based upon trust and respect;
- children need to learn the importance of self-control.

Equal Opportunities

At Bryn Offa CE School the notion of equality of opportunity is highly valued. The sex education curriculum should offer children the opportunity to clarify and develop their attitudes and values relating to gender roles and stereotyping.

Account is taken of the following equality issues:

- sex
- race and culture
- disability
- ability e.g. differentiation
- religion
- sexual orientation

Sex education may also help to counteract certain assumptions and influences in society such as:

- females being more passive than males;
- women always being the homemaker;
- men always working as the "breadwinner"
- males being aggressive and dominant.

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.

In PSHE 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. For example, we tell the boys that their voices will change during puberty and we explain to the girls about menstruation. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it, providing reassurance that changes are part of life's cycle.

In science lessons in both key stages, 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 National Curriculum for Science. In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

In Year 5 and 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. The school Nurse also assists with these lessons, becoming a natural part of the teaching team. 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 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 (as stated earlier in this policy).

We provide the opportunity for all parents and carers of children in Years 5 and 6 to discuss this particular programme of lessons. We are happy to explain what the issues are and how they are taught, and to show them the materials the school uses in its teaching, should they wish to preview them.

The Role of Other Community Members

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 the school nurse and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our sex education programme.

Use and Abuse of Technology

It has become increasingly common for children to be exposed to sexual images and actions through their use of technology. The technology curriculum at Bryn Offa covers the following concepts for Key Stage 2:

- What to do in the event of seeing an inappropriate image, sound or text
- How people can misrepresent themselves online
- How to ensure online safety

Parents are also invited into an 'Online Security' briefing in which the materials used with the children are shared with the parents and additional information regarding home safety

The Role of Parents

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 co-operation. In promoting this objective we:

- inform parents 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;
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school 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 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 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, 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. In these circumstances the teacher will talk to the child as a matter of urgency. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the headteacher. The headteacher will then deal with the matter in accordance with the 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 school sex education programme, and ensures that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school 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 Policy and Procedures Committee of the governing body monitors our sex education policy every three years. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification. The 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 school.

Policy Reviewed – Summer 2013

Next Review Due – Summer 2015