





ASHLAWN SCHOOL
'A High Performing Specialist Academy'

**SEX & RELATIONSHIPS
 EDUCATION POLICY**

Policy & Procedure Number		AP034				
Date Approved for use by The Governing Body		2 nd December 2015				
Next Review Date		1 st December 2017				
School Link		R Kelly				
Acknowledged & signed by	Headteacher	 				
Acknowledged & signed by	Chair of Governors					
Circulation	Internal	✓	External	✓	Website	✓
<i>PRINTED COPIES ARE UNCONTROLLED</i>						

Ashlawn School Sex and Relationships Education

P.S.H.E. DEPARTMENT

Preamble

- This policy was developed in response to Sex and Relationship Education Guidance DfES 2000, the National Teenage Pregnancy Strategy and National Healthy Schools Programme.
- Ashlawn School & Science College believes that, in common with other learning experiences, Sex and Relationships Education (S.R.E.) is a lifelong learning process based on the acquisition of knowledge and skills and the development and utilisation of positive values and attitudes.
- We acknowledge that education about sex and relationships originates from a range of sources, both informal and formal. We believe that the responsibility for the sex and relationships education of children and young people should be shared between parents, carers and appropriate professionals including specialist teachers, youth workers and health professionals.
- We recognise that children learn about sexuality and relationships from a very early age. We believe that formal S.R.E. should therefore ideally begin at nursery school and that age-appropriate S.R.E. should be a core component of the curriculum entitlement for all students from KS1.
- We believe that S.R.E. should help equip young people to enjoy the sexual partnerships and relationships that they will experience in their lives. Our teaching will emphasise the importance of founding these relationships in interactions that include mutual respect, trust, negotiation and enjoyment.
- We believe that school-based S.R.E. should seek to meet the needs of all, that is: boys and girls, young people from different socio-economic groups, those from ethnic minority groups, gay and lesbian people, young people with physical disabilities and those with special educational needs. We recognise that young people learn in different ways and endeavour to ensure that our methodologies and resources meet this range of needs.
- S.R.E. should value all people, irrespective of their sex, gender or sexual orientation. Through S.R.E. an understanding of, and support for, other people's sexual orientation will be developed.

Rationale

- Education has always been recognised as more than just the development of knowledge and academic skills. It plays a key role in helping to develop well-balanced, mature and healthy young people who are equipped to lead successful lives. This role has become increasingly prominent in recent years with society looking to schools to assist in dealing with numerous social issues. Among other issues health studies, drugs education, crime, relationships, parenthood and family breakdown have all been addressed as the school develops PSHE courses and citizenship education.
- Against this background, sexual health and relationships are clearly critical areas for attention. Sexuality is a central part of being human and has biological, cultural, spiritual, social and psychological aspects. It is particularly involved with relationships, caring and procreation.
- It is also an area of significant social change and challenge. Sexual behaviour that is premature or ill considered can lead to personal unhappiness, confusion and problems in later relationships, as well as the more obvious risks of unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. In the context of earlier physical maturation, wide media attention to sexual behaviour, family dysfunction and breakdown and the current statistics on teenage conception and sexual infection, there is an understandable demand for a response from schools and education authorities, albeit only as one of many important contributors in a complex and ongoing campaign to bring about necessary changes in societal attitudes.
- Evidence from research and, in particular, from the World Health Organisation has given support to the view that effective sexual health education, delivered at an early but appropriate age, will delay the onset of sexual activity and reduce the level of risk-taking in those who are already sexually active.
- We recognise that Ashlawn School & Science College needs to give a clear lead by adopting a policy for Sex and Relationships Education. This policy is realistic and acknowledges the natural limitations to the contribution that the school can make in these complex areas of young people's personal lives and behavioural choices. This policy intends to encourage a confident, coherent and consistent approach to S.R.E., without undue rigidity of content or delivery.

Aims

- The aims of the policy require to be stated in order to clarify its purpose to staff, parents, carers and the wider community, to shape methodology and to provide a set of criteria whereby the effectiveness of S.R.E. can be evaluated.

The policy seeks:

- a) To develop a responsible and moral attitude to sexuality and its place within relationships
- b) To give clear and age and ability appropriate information to children and young people on sexual health and development
- c) To promote high standards of personal health care within sexual contexts
- d) To create an environment which helps young people develop the self-esteem, awareness and social skills to allow them to cope with the sexual pressures inherent in modern society

Policy Principles

- At Ashlawn School and Science College the main forum for Sex and Relationships Education lies within the domain of the PSHE Department. While aiming to give clear information to young people, as a matter of priority it seeks to impact on the critical areas of personal values, relationships and responsible, moral behaviour. S.R.E seeks to equip young people to develop an awareness of how peer and social pressures are exercised. It also seeks to help them develop and maintain their self-esteem, whereby they can avoid involvement in premature and ill-considered sexual behaviour.
- In order to be effective, S.R.E seeks to engage young people actively and create an atmosphere of trust and confidence that allows them to explore the attitudes and feelings that underpin sexual behaviour. While this approach is child-centred and open, it is not one that is laissez-faire and value free.
- We recognise that parents and carers should be the prime educators of their children and this primacy must be especially respected in areas like sexual behaviour, which are personal and value based. At both school and authority level we acknowledge that it is important to consult and communicate with parents and carers with regard to S.R.E., to give them clear information as to what will be taught in the school at various stages and to elicit their support for our work. Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their child from any aspect of S.R.E. with which they do not agree. Should they elect to do this we will advise them of the implications of following such a course of action.

Good quality S.R.E. respects the individuality and unique needs of young people. Disability, gender, maturity and deprivation should all be taken into account in forming suitable approaches. In particular, the following important principles are borne in mind:

- a) Disabled young people and those with special educational needs are also sexual beings with a right to recognition and knowledge. S.R.E. needs to be geared to their particular needs rather than ignored.
 - b) Boys and girls bring their own background and needs to sexual knowledge, attitudes and behaviour. Care must be taken that the appropriate gender mix and groupings are available. Where single sex settings are utilised there should be a recognised goal of mutual awareness, so that young people have an understanding of the perspective of the opposite sex group.
 - c) There is evidence that certain groups of young people are particularly vulnerable in relation to sexual health. Those who are emotionally disturbed, socially deprived or being looked after by Social Services have been shown to be particularly at risk. S.R.E. bears the needs of such groups in mind and is presented in ways that meet their particular needs.
 - d) There is a growing awareness of transgender issues and homophobic bullying that is important to enable young people to feel safe in the school environment. There is a growing awareness of the sensitivity to transgender students who need the necessary protection in school to feel safe and secure. There needs to be an understanding of how schools can deal with homophobic and any other form of discrimination and bullying to do with sexuality.
- Religious beliefs are a further critical factor in formulating an approach to S.R.E. that respects individual differences. Sexual behaviour and morality are central concerns for many religious groups. Care and sensitivity are exercised in dealing with teaching groups in which a range of religious faiths is represented. Our approach is one that is child-centred, encourages active participation and open discussion and avoids simple sermonising.
 - At Ashlawn School and Science College a small team of skilled, experienced and specialist PSHE teachers deliver the S.R.E. Programme. Members of the teaching team share the creation of all Schemes of Work, Lesson Plans and supporting resources. Programmes are scrutinised by the Department's S.R.E. Co-ordinator to verify consistency in approach and to ensure that the highest standards are met.

Implementation

Ashlawn School and Science College puts this S.R.E. policy into action in the following ways:

- The Department's S.R.E. Co-ordinator is responsible for the planning and delivery of the S.R.E. programme
- Suitably qualified and experienced staff will manage the delivery of the programme
- The Department regularly revisits its policies to ensure that they meet current statutory and regulatory requirements
- Where appropriate other health professionals and specialist agencies will be involved in the planning and delivery of S.R.E.
- It is the responsibility of the Department's S.R.E. Co-ordinator to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of PHSE, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning
- The Governors are responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the Sex and Relationship Education Policy

Conclusions

- This policy statement is designed to give S.R.E. an appropriate position within the Ashlawn School and Science College curriculum. It recognises that effective S.R.E. is of crucial importance to young people, parents, carers and society and that the school has an important role to play. This policy is set against a context of much good work already taking place in the school and local communities.
- By adopting this policy, and using it as a basis for maintaining a focused drive to ensure responsibility, morality and care in relationships, significant steps in improving the lives and life chances of the young people of Ashlawn School and Science College will be secured.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy