

QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

RATIONALE

Sex and Relationship Education is life long learning about emotions, relationships, sexual health and ourselves. Good quality Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is mindful of young people's early experience and is based on their development and expressed needs. It provides consistent messages, is ongoing and progressive, and supports children and young people's confidence as they move from childhood to adulthood. It helps them understand themselves, negotiate their relationships and prepares them for adulthood.

QEHS believes that SRE should

- Provide ongoing, truthful and honest information in a non-judgemental way, in a relaxed and confidential setting
- Be focussed on the positive and negative aspects as part of an ongoing programme
- Encourage young people to make informed decisions
- Include working in partnership with parents and carers

It is a legal requirement for schools to provide Sex and Relationships Education. The Education Act (1996) has now been supplemented by Sex and Relationships Education Guidance (DfEE 0116/2000) and the Learning & Skills Act (2000).

The Sex Education elements contained in the National Curriculum Science Orders are mandatory and for all students. Sex education in the National Science Curriculum covers anatomy, puberty and biological aspects of sexual reproduction.

Outside of the Science Curriculum, secondary schools are required to provide an SRE programme which includes (as a minimum) information about sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS.

All schools must provide an up to date policy which describes the content and organisation of SRE provided outside the Science Curriculum.

ORGANISATION

There are three key elements to SRE:

- 1) acquiring information
- 2) developing life skills
- 3) exploring attitudes and values

All 3 elements are closely inter-related.

1) Acquiring information

Young people are entitled to clear and relevant information which is accurate and non-judgmental. The content of SRE should address:

- what young people know already
- what young people say they need
- the emotional, biological, legal, social and cultural aspects of growing up, sexual development, sexual behaviour, sexuality and sexual health

- the potential consequences of unprotected sex, for example unintended pregnancy, young parenthood, abortion, and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV
- the effect and impact of ignorance, prejudice, discrimination and stigma
- the advice and confidential support available to children and young people including leaflets, websites, help-lines and other health and support services e.g. the QEHS Young People's Health Project
- how they are able to participate in their own learning

2) Developing life skills

Young people are entitled to learn and practice key life skills which should include:

- emotional skills – managing emotions confidently, developing empathy for others, building emotional resilience and resourcefulness, developing independence of thought and behaviour.
- social skills – developing and maintaining relationships with others, taking responsibility for their own and others' emotional and sexual health
- communication skills – learning to participate effectively, to listen and ask questions, express emotions, give opinions, challenge and to be challenged
- negotiation skills – resisting peer pressure and ensuring that they get what is best for them, managing and resolving conflict, asking for what they want and not pressurising others
- practical skills – caring for self and others, accessing support and advice
- decision making skills – managing real life dilemmas, assessing risk, making informed choices and being able to act on them.

3) Exploring attitudes and values

By exploring and challenging attitudes and values, children and young people can be helped to develop a positive attitude to sexual health and well-being through:

- developing a positive values and moral framework that will support their decisions, judgements and behaviour
- gaining an understanding of the range of different social, cultural, ethnic and religious frameworks and their value systems
- developing a critical awareness of value systems represented in the media and amongst peers
- recognising that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable
- understanding that sexual intimacy involves strong emotions, and should involve a sense of respect for one's own and others' feeling, decisions and bodies
- understanding that all rights have responsibilities and all actions have consequences
- recognising the value and right to active participation in their learning.

PROCEDURES AND PRACTICE

QEHS will focus on the delivery of SRE, in the context of relationships, using a variety of formal and informal opportunities and strategies.

This will be achieved by

- allocating designated time within the curriculum, either within the guidance programme or via occasional off-timetable experiences such as health days; and within science
- supporting the training needs of all staff who are expected to deliver SRE
- working in partnership with the Local Authority, school health advisor, parents, Teenage Pregnancy Team, voluntary and statutory youth agencies, and Connexions
- Offering a young people's health drop-in with specialist health staff

The content will be delivered by

- establishing a safe learning environment in which open and non-judgmental discussions about relationships, sex, sexuality and sexual health can be held
- developing a group agreement to ensure acceptable boundaries for discussion that safeguard young people and professionals

- ensuring that one-to-one work also acknowledges the need for boundaries and supportive frameworks
- respecting the privacy and confidentiality of young people within the boundaries of child protection, and informing young people of these rights (see also Confidentiality Policy)
- linking SRE to information about advice and support services that young people can access
- using a range of strategies including health days and drop-in facilities

Resources will

- be age appropriate and up to date
- avoid racism, sexism, gender and homophobic stereotyping.
- include positive images of a range of young people
- encourage active and participatory learning methods

The needs of children with special educational needs will be met by

- policy and programme involvement for those who teach young people with SEN
- consideration of the needs of each young person
- consultation with appropriate people including parents
- appropriate training for staff working with young people with SEN

Practice will be reflected on by

- assessing what young people have learnt and understood
- monitoring and evaluating the methods used to deliver SRE to ensure effective future planning (staff and student review)

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ETHICAL ISSUES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Child Protection Policy and Confidentiality Policy.

Parents/carers can withdraw young people from non-statutory parts of the curriculum only. If a parent/carer wishes to withdraw their son/daughter, the young person would spend time with a learning mentor or in Turning Point.

CONSULTATION

Key stakeholders are involved in the review of this policy.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Both young people and adults involved will be fully engaged in evaluation of SRE. Lesson observation and student feedback will be an integral part of the review process. The SRE policy will be reviewed bi-annually.

This policy was agreed by the Pupil and Curriculum Development Committee at their meeting on Wednesday 19 May 2010.

Signed		Chair of Pupil & Curriculum Development Committee (Adrian Woolley)	Date	
Signed		Headteacher (Neil Morrison)	Date	
Review Date:	May 2012			