

# MERSTONE SCHOOL



## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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## **1. Introduction to the Policy:**

In writing this policy, special consideration was given to the current guidance from the QCA. In particular significant reference was made to the following:

"Supporting the Target Setting Process", QCA (2001)

"Planning, teaching and assessing the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties, PSHE&C", QCA (2001)

"Citizenship, a scheme of work for Key Stage 2", QCA (2002)

"Citizenship; a scheme of work for Key Stage 4", QCA (2002)

"PSHE 2000, Personal, Social and Health Education at Key Stages 1 to 4, QCA (2000)

"Citizenship at Key Stages 1-4, Guidance on assessment, recording and reporting" QCA (2002)

Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) - guidelines for schools in Solihull.

Pupils at Merstone School demonstrate a wide range of abilities needs and personal attributes. In order for them to benefit from the learning experiences that are offered a considerable number of factors have to be considered by all staff. These factors relate to influences of emotion, behaviour, social interaction and capacity to comprehend.

Pupils at Merstone School experience emotions related to puberty and personal development in much the same way as their counterparts in mainstream education. Our pupils also experience additional difficulties as a result of:

- A limited ability to communicate their emotions and express their needs.
- Difficulties in establishing inter-personal relationships.
- Difficulties in demonstrating appropriate behaviours in a variety of social settings.
- Limited ability/willingness to participate in personal care routines.
- Limited comprehension of the implications of appropriate personal and or/sexual behaviour.
- Limited cognitive understanding.
- Limited appropriate peer behaviours to model.

The Governing Board has determined that the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education be available to all pupils. It may also be appropriate to provide specific education in response to individual need in consultation with parents. It may also be appropriate to include an IEP specific to Relationships and Sex Education for the student. The programme will be flexible as determined by pupil needs .

In this document the term s relationships education rather than sex education is used. This is to stress that sex education needs to go beyond biological information, focussing on clarifying attitudes. This is in line with current DfEE guidance, stating that SRE 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'.

The policy has been written with regard to the current national framework, which is currently underpinned by 'Every Child Matters' and includes:

Children's Act (2004)

National healthy Schools Standard

Sex and Relationship Education Guidance DfEE July 2000

Safeguarding Children 2004

### Rational

RSE is a lifelong process of acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex, sexuality, relationships and feelings (Sex Education Forum 1999).

At Merstone RSE should contribute to preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of adult life.

It should empower all pupils, regardless of sexuality, gender, ethnicity, faith, ability or disability. This RSE policy is based on both national and local guidance. It has clear links with the school's Citizenship policy and the Child Protection policy. RSE is part of the PSHE curriculum at Merstone School. Pupils at Merstone have a right to an appropriate RSE based on their individual needs. We aim to not avoid issues that are important in the lives of our pupils, but also not go beyond what they can comprehend. Care needs to be taken not to underestimate pupils' feelings, understanding, current and possible future relationships and sexual experiences. It is also important to remember that pupils may be vulnerable to abuse and being taken advantage of.

The SRE programme will be divided into six main themes:

Body parts

Gender

Public and private

Feelings

Relationships

Life cycle

Each of these themes can be developed at different levels. In addition, there are the basic RSE skills of permission, decision-making and assertion.

## ***2. Principles that underpin the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education.***

Students at Merstone will have full rights and responsibilities as regards their personal relationships and sexuality including the right to:

- Receive structured education about human development including sexuality and to be supported to develop a positive self image of themselves.
- Learn to communicate about sexuality and to develop the appropriate language (including nonverbal) and the vocabulary to do so.

- Be provided with information advice and guidance on inappropriate sexual behaviour that might be socially, culturally or legally unacceptable.
- Be taught about sexual exploitation. To be aware of situations when they are at risk of exploitation or of exploiting others. Such teaching or training should include both information and skill development.
- Information about help with contraception and safer sex.
- Be equipped with coping strategies with regard to the physical and emotional aspects of growing up.
- Relationships and Sex Education within a school curriculum that is not a discrete subject on the timetable but features within the broader context of personal development activities.
- Be presented with Relationships and Sex Education that takes due regard for the multicultural society in which we live.

### ***3. Aims of the Relationships and Sex Education Policy.***

The 1996 Education Act requires all maintained schools to offer a curriculum which prepares students for:

***"The opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life"***

Relationships and Sex Education clearly play a part in meeting this requirement and in a secondary school for students with severe and complex needs it should clearly support young people in coping with adolescence and relationships and prepare them for an adult life in which they can:

- Be aware of their sexuality.
- Behave responsibly within their sexual and personal relationships.
- Develop and clarify a set of values that will guide their decisions, behaviours and judgements.
- Express and manage emotions.

- Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves from infection and unwanted pregnancies.
- Have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others.
- Communicate effectively.
- Neither exploits nor be exploited.
- Identify the security offered by consistent and stable partnership relationships.

The Relationships and Sex Education Policy should also be considered in relation to the Gender Equality Scheme and action plan.

#### ***4. Roles and responsibilities within the policy:***

- The Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that resources and facilities are maintained at an appropriate level and that special educational provision within the school is fit for purpose.
- The Principal has the responsibility for ensuring that the personal, social and educational needs of each pupil are appropriately accounted for within the management and organisation of the school and for advising the Governing Board.
- The role of the subject leader will be to provide a sound body of knowledge and support other members of staff. To co-ordinate and update effective use of resources and update school policy and practice, as and when necessary, in line with LEA and National guidelines.
- All staff have a responsibility to ensure that pupils receive appropriate information, advice and guidance regarding Relationships and Sex Education and that students receive a personalised approach relevant to their understanding.
- All staff have a responsibility to ensure that materials, resources, language, labelling and terminology used by adults should be relevant, meaningful and not stereotypical or patronising. Issues of gender, race, disability and sexual orientation should be presented in an equal and non-judgemental manner.
- Teachers have a responsibility to obtain written permission from parents/carers before teaching Sex and Relationship Education and for informing them that they have the right to withdraw their child if they so wish. (sample permission letter)

- Parents / carers have an important role to play in liaising closely with members of staff to support, commit and contribute to Relationships and Sex Education that may be supported at home.

### 5. Curriculum approach:

At Merstone School teachers use a variety of teaching styles and will adapt them so they will allow pupils to observe, explore and discover, thereby enabling progress and development. The school nurse is happy to assist teaching of RSE and is a source of expertise and extra resources.

The following strategies are particularly relevant to the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education:

- "Ice breaker" activities to promote inclusion and contribution.
- Individual support from a staff member to present facts to encourage relevant and specific discussion.
- Small group activities and discussion sessions.
- Role Play
- Setting the scene to encourage individual contributions.
- Story telling
- Clear, unambiguous verbal information.
- Visual material in the form of diagrams, pictures, slides and video material.
- Scenarios to identify appropriate and inappropriate behaviours.
- Audio materials.

### 6. The Curriculum

Each group follows an SRE programme at a level, which is commensurate with their age and physical development.

Staff will judge when older pupils are ready to move on to more specific work on sexuality and sexual relationships. Some of these areas may only be dealt with on a 1:1 basis. These include:



Masturbation and the related feelings

Sexual intimacy and relationships

Sexual preference

Pregnancy and birth

Safer sex and contraception

Work on relationships, self-esteem and emotions will be supported by areas of the RE curriculum. Many pupils in school will be given support in the development toilet and hygiene skills on a daily basis.

Some pupils may require unplanned support and guidance, in response to individual need or circumstance. Any matters that arise are treated with confidence and sensitivity, and adhere to the principles of this policy.

Some elements of RSE are integrated into the whole curriculum, such as toilet and hygiene skills, social skills etc. In addition, termly modules are planned for RSE, as part of the current PSHE cycle. These are planned by the PSHE Subject Leader. Staff plan and teach individual sessions, using their termly modules as a base.

Termly modules are studied in specific subject areas, at Key Stage 4/5 many link in with the ASDAN curriculum - 'Transition Challenge' and 'Towards Independence'.

Weekly lessons are taught and planned by KS4/5 staff. Key Stage 4 and 5 students are taught in ability groups for SRE to better meet their developmental needs.

#### Criteria for evaluating the success of this policy

At Merstone we recognise that policy development is not a "once and forever" process. As the school develops and the curriculum evolves further there may be need to adapt the policy. It is the responsibility of the PSHE/SRE subject leader, as the person responsible for SRE, to review this policy annually.

A range of strategies will evaluate the success of this policy

Evidence of a full, balanced and appropriate SRE curriculum being delivered throughout school.

Evidence that there is a range of teaching and learning styles evident in the classrooms.

Evidence that pupils have a high self esteem and feel valued.

#### Parental Involvement/community links

The aims of the school cannot be met effectively without parental involvement; a partnership between home and school is essential. At Merstone we ensure that parents are kept well informed and involved in all aspects of their child's education and we endeavour to be a support to parents.

As RSE can be an area of the curriculum of concern to our parents, we make every effort to inform parents of the content of our RSE curriculum. Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in all stages of their child's development and learning.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from those areas of RSE that are not identified in the Current Science Guidance. Consequently, concerned parents are invited into school to discuss curriculum content with the relevant class teacher, and the PSHE subject leader/Head Teacher if appropriate.



The emphasis is upon learning within the home, school and community. Pupils must be given the opportunity to transfer the knowledge, skills, attitudes and concepts that they have learnt in other situations.

#### Equal Opportunities

All pupils should have access to a relevant curriculum, which meet individual needs. Materials used should reflect the multicultural society in which we live. Materials should also be checked for racial or gender stereotypes.

#### Staff Development

In service training will be given, where needed, in order for all staff to familiarise or widen their knowledge of issues relating to RSE. The PSHE subject leader should disseminate information to staff regularly.

#### Governors

The school and Governors should ensure that they have knowledge of the policies and their implication for the school. It is the responsibility of the RSE/ PSHE subject leader to inform the Head teacher and the Governors of any amendments to the policy.

It is important to endeavour to develop the Governors' awareness and understanding of the school's RSE policy and its implications.

The Governors approved this policy:

Date:

Named Governor:

#### ***6. Associated Policies and Guidelines:***

To be read in conjunction with this policy document:

- Child Protection Policy.
- Safeguarding Policy.
- Policy for Pupil Behaviour and Discipline.
- Equalities Policies.

## Appendix 1 - RSE Curriculum content

### Key Stages 1 and 2

These aspects of Sex and Relationship Education will be taught through the Science and are statutory.

#### At Key Stage 1

Recognise the main external parts of human bodies

Animals and humans grow.

#### At Key Stage 2

Animals and humans grow and reproduce

The main stages of the human life cycle

This is what will be taught as part of the Relationship and Sex Education Curriculum at Key Stage 1 and 2

Body parts - recognition and naming of body parts including by the end of Key Stage 2 the external sexual body parts.

Gender - identifying male or female, physical differences.

Public and private - public and private places at home and school

Feelings - recognising and naming feelings and recognising that they can have an effect on others.

Relationships - recognition of self and others; recognising difference. Developing friendships and identifying the range of relationship in and outside school including family, friends and strangers.

Life cycle - identifying the life cycle; baby, child, teenager, adult. This will include body changes and puberty.

### Key Stages 3, 4 and 5

These aspects of Relationship And Sex Education will be taught.

#### At Key Stage 3

The physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence recognise the main external and internal reproductive parts of the human body.

The work Key Stage 2 would be reinforced and extended.

Body parts - naming public and private body parts and understanding body functions including menstruation and masturbation.

Gender - understanding the differences between men and women.

Public and private - understanding the privacy required for masturbation and developing their understanding of their rights to privacy.

Feelings - understanding the changes in and consequences of feelings.

Relationships - understanding the importance of their peer group and how they relate to one another. Develop strategies for forming friendships.

Life cycle - understanding body changes as they grow and change.

At key Stage 4 and 5

The work from Key Stage 3 will be reinforced and extended.

Body parts - understanding the sexual body parts and similarities and differences between the sexes.

Gender - exploring the and recognising stereotypes.

Public and private - offering opportunities to create a private space. Developing a sense of Privacy such as in the bedroom and bathroom.

Feelings - recognising physical responses and developing a language for them.

Managing responses to feelings including sexual feelings and arousal.

Relationships - developing skills for friendships.

Life cycle - understanding sexual body changes and changing relationships with friends and families.

Older pupils 16-19

Much of the work will be to repeat and reinforce earlier learning.

Body parts - including the sexual function of the body parts. Understanding the range of physical abilities and disabilities and awareness of race, culture and faith.

Gender - exploring and challenging gender and racial stereotypes and different roles in parenting.

Public and private - understanding their own and other's need for privacy.

Feelings - understanding sexual feelings, sexual desire and sexual response.

Relationships - skills for developing an intimate relationship. Developing an awareness of the range of sexual relationships include same sex relationships.

Developing their understanding of sexual health, safer sex and HIV.

Life cycle - learning about the use of contraception, understanding conception, pregnancy and birth including parenting and child rearing. Sources of support.

