

# Relationships, Sex and Education Policy

*From little rivers mighty oceans grow*

*Riverbank Academy is an outstanding broad-spectrum special school for students aged 11-19 within the Sidney Stringer Multi-Academy Trust.*

*Our safeguarding ethos is “beyond compliance”. There is an absolute commitment at Riverbank to educate and safeguard all our students particularly in e-safety. We offer a fully inclusive environment and ensure everyone feels safe and happy irrespective of gender, disability, ethnicity and social, cultural or religious background. This is particularly relevant for our students with ASC where the school’s environment, staffing structure, assessment model and curriculum is tailored to meet individual needs. With this in mind, we do not have one curriculum model, we have 158 curriculums that are designed around each individual.*

*Through our policies and practice we aim to help all Riverbank students uphold the schools core values of being Motivated, Creative and Caring.*

This policy has been developed in accordance with the relevant legislation and takes account of the revised National Curriculum, the new PHSE framework, and Sex and Relationship Guidance (draft DFEE March 2000).

### **Legislation**

The 1998 Education Reform Act, Section 5, requires all maintained schools to provide a balanced and broadly based curriculum that:

- a) Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural mental and physical development of students at the Academy and of society: and
- b) Prepares students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The guidance recommends that the Academy provide a programme of relationship and sex education as part of the Personal, Health and Social Education and Citizenship frameworks in addition to the National Curriculum subjects.

Special schools have a particular sensitive role to play. Students with learning difficulties are entitled to the same opportunity as other students to benefit from sex education. They may need more help than others in coping with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up: they may also need more help in learning what sorts of behaviour are and are not acceptable by adults/peers. Riverbank also bears in mind that some parents of children with special educational needs may find it difficult to come to terms with the idea that their child will someday become sexually active.

To ensure a safe and supportive environment for discussing issues which many students might find confusing or embarrassing, teachers at Riverbank use a set of six ground rules for Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) lessons. (See appendix)

Relationship and Sex Education Has 3 Main Elements:

#### **Attitudes and values**

learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral considerations;

- learning the value of family life, marriage and stable 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;
- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made; and
- managing conflict and learning how to avoid exploitation and abuse.

### **Knowledge and understanding (at appropriate stages)**

- learning about the understanding physical development;
- understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sex health, emotions and relationships
- learning about contraception, and the range of local and national health advice and support services available; and
- learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity and how to avoid unplanned pregnancy.

### **The Key Learning Objectives that follow from this area:**

- To give young people an understanding of human development: biologically, emotionally and socially.
- To develop individual responsibility for behaviour and increase awareness of the effects which that behaviour may have on the individual and on other people in the community.
- To help young people to deal successfully with difficult moral and social issues.
- To help young people to learn the significance of stable relationships as key building blocks of family life and of the wider community and society. Curriculum Area Responsibility The main responsibility for the structured delivery of Relationship and Sex Education rests with the Science and the Personal Health and Social Education coordinator, however every teacher is involved in RSE in its widest sense.

## **Science National Curriculum Requirements**

At Key Stage 3, attainment target 2 is concerned with life process and living things. Within the context of humans as organisms it requires young people to be taught: reproduction

- about the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence
- about the human reproductive system including the menstrual cycle and fertilization
- how the foetus develops in the uterus and the role of the placenta.

Attainment target 2 continues life processes and living things at Key Stage 4 and requires the teaching of hormones

- the way in which hormonal control occurs, including the effects of hormones
- some individual uses of hormones, including the control and promotion of fertility.
- It also requires the teaching sexual reproduction as a source of genetic variation.

## **Safeguarding**

RSE covers a wide range of topics relating to educating students about keeping themselves safe. These include healthy relationships; CSE and keeping yourself safe.

## **Organisation**

Elements of relationship and sex education are taught to all students through the PSHE/Citizenship programme

Topics are introduced at an appropriate stage and groups organised flexibly according to the needs of students and the topics being covered.

The programme is planned in the belief that the context of teaching is as important as curriculum content in maintaining student confidence and securing effective learning. The PHSCE programme with its wider health, social and moral remit provides such a content.

## **Parents/carers**

The Academy is well aware of the essential role of parents in helping their children to cope with their physical and emotional development and offers its support to assist parents in this task. The DFEE circular N1187 underlines the importance of close liaison between students, parents and schools:

“the teaching offered by Academies should be complimentary and supportive to the role of parents.”

The Academy is proud of its reputation as a caring institution and is confident that the mutual trust and understanding that exists between parents, students and teachers provides a secure base from which to support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development by providing them with clear information and opportunities to relate this to wider considerations.

However, parents have the right to withdraw their child from any part of the relationship and sex education provided except for that which is included within the Science National Curriculum.

If after consultation and discussion, a parent exercises this right, the Academy will make appropriate alternative arrangements for the child.

**Review date September 2019**

## **Appendix: SRE Ground Rules.**

### **Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) Ground Rules.**

It is useful to set these rules up at the start of any sensitive topic and remind pupils of them at the start of each lesson on the topic. Comments in italics are for the Teacher's benefit.

"We are going to be talking about growing up, so we need to do it in a grown up way. We need to respect each other and feel safe talking about things that we all need to know and understand."

1) No-one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question.

(May need firm, polite reminders as incidents happen.)

2) No-one will be made to join in a discussion.

(But if they don't want to join in, they must listen to everyone else's point of view.)

3) Only the correct names for body parts will be used.

(May help to get pupil's own words out of the way first, then agree to use the correct terms to avoid confusion.)

4) Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

5) No question is too silly to ask, but sometimes people might say things that are too private.

If they do, I will stop them and talk to them about it after the lesson.

6) To keep people's privacy we don't use names, just 'what if' or 'I know someone who.'

Remember, you wouldn't want people in other classes talking about you. We don't make personal comments about others because this upsets people and disrupts the lesson.

(If someone uses a name, thank them for helping remind everyone of the rule. If students make personal comments about others, refer them to this rule.)

When a teacher thinks that a pupil's safety might be at risk it is our job to tell Gaynor or Mrs Heavey so they can help keep that person safe.

(Remember if a pupil discloses an issue that might relate to child protection, we must let Gaynor or Jayne Heavey know.)