



**Cabot**  
Learning  
Federation



## Sex & Relationships Education Policy

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## 1 The scope and role of sex education within the curriculum and Academy life.

One of the main aims of work relating to sex education is the development of positive self-esteem for young people which will help them to face up to, respond and cope with the challenges of personal growth. It is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills, attitudes and behavioural patterns, which can lead to a better understanding of one's own and others' sexuality.

Values and feelings should be addressed and discussed at every stage so that students develop a responsible attitude to relationships. Such a responsible attitude is born of students' understanding of their own sexuality, self-image and self respect, together with a moral consideration for the needs and rights of others. This is why a substantial part of the taught sex education programme will reside in the Academy's programme for Personal Social Health and Economic education (PSHE). It is hoped that students will develop the skills and confidence to respond to each other positively in their learning and to make informed moral decisions in adult life. Sex education should, therefore, also be seen in the context of students' wider moral, spiritual, social and cultural development.

Sex education should be presented in a balanced way so that many points of view are discussed within a framework that recognises cultural and social differences. It encompasses many aspects of individual and family relationships. Policy and programmes should therefore be developed in consultation with parents so as to ensure that teachers have regard to the cultures and beliefs of students' families and communities.

One of the main challenges facing teachers responsible for planning and delivering the sex education programme is the creation of a supportive atmosphere in the classroom so that barriers, myths and problems can be both minimised as impediments to learning and utilised creatively as learning opportunities. Students are taught as groups, so the way in which they relate to each other becomes a primary consideration. Interpersonal relationships within the group need to be fostered which will enhance rather than impede learning. To this end the programme will be structured and integrated, with close and continuous liaison between the two key curricular areas, Science and PSHE and the Academy's welfare structure. All staff will need to develop a shared ownership of and commitment to the values which the programme promotes, and will need to be equipped, through training, to be mutually supportive in securing high standards of student behaviour and response.

## 2 Aims of the Academy sex education programme

The Academy seeks to involve all staff in developing a programme which can:

1. Convey factual information and alert students to the sources and dangers of misinformation;
2. Develop understanding of factual information and encourage further exploration of facts;
3. Encourage respect for self and others;
4. Develop a sense of personal responsibility for the making of informed decisions within a moral framework.

### 3 Background information

#### Moral and values framework

##### DfE guidance

Circular 5/94, *Education Act 2002: Sex education in schools*, gives clear guidance as to the role of morality and values in a secondary education programme. In addition to developing knowledge and understanding about the processes of human reproduction, 'sex education should provide knowledge about loving relationships ..... It must not be value-free'. Awareness of the law on sexual behaviour is an essential component of such a programme but it is clearly expected that sex education should go beyond knowledge of the external constraints of the law, so as to foster each student's own well-developed moral sense

'Pupils should be encouraged to appreciate the value of stable family life, marriage and the responsibilities of parenthood. They should consider the importance of self-restraint, dignity, respect for themselves and others, acceptance of responsibility loyalty and fidelity.'

Bristol Metropolitan Academy's task is to devise structured routes towards such understanding which take into account students' varied backgrounds and experiences. The circular gives further guidance in dealing with this tension:

'Teachers need to acknowledge that many children come from backgrounds that do not reflect such values or experiences. Sensitivity is therefore needed to avoid causing hurt and offence to them and their families; and to allow such children to feel a sense of worth but teachers should also help students, whatever their circumstances, to raise their sights.'

In March 2017 the Government tabled amendments to the above legislation which would see it becoming mandatory to teach all students sex and relationships education (currently Academies are free to choose to follow the above legislation or not). It is expected that this mandatory legislation will be introduced in 2019.

#### 4 A framework for interpretation of guidance at Bristol Metropolitan Academy

In the light of the above, it is helpful to think of values issues in two categories: core or universal values and diversity of values. There are underlying principles and values which the Academy programme will seek to foster but an enriched understanding can be developed through accepting and celebrating differences. These two headings will be used as a framework for managing debate amongst teachers about appropriate curriculum content and structure and when working with parents and councillors in the further refinement of policy and programmes.

#### 5 Core or universal values

Respect for self and others are the twin pillars of the Academy Personal, Social, Health and Economic education programme. All of its aims and objectives are derivative of these. The Academy's sex education programme fits into this context. The programme will equip students with the skill, knowledge, understanding and attitudes to enable them to make informed moral decisions in sexual matters. Decisions are informed and moral in that they are based upon:

- valuing of self: an informed concern for one's own physical and emotional well-being;
- valuing of one's sexual partner: an informed concern for their physical and emotional well-being;

- a consideration of the interests of all others who could be affected by one's own sexual behaviour, and the ability to exercise self-restraint or safe practice accordingly.

These two values, respect for self and respect for others, thus underpin sex education, causing it to fit into the patterns of continuity and progression within the Personal, Social, Health and Economic education programme.

The programme will therefore also present as an ideal, with due sensitivity to student experience, the desirability of sex within long-term relationships of loving commitment.

The Academy will refine further its shared definition of core values through staff training and ongoing consultation with parents and councillors.

## **6 Diversity of values**

The Health Education Authority pamphlet, '*Sex Education, values and morality*' gives guidance in this area:

'Promoting any one lifestyle to young people is not good practice. Children need to develop an understanding of the diversity of lifestyles. Teachers have a responsibility to clarify their own values and attitudes so that they do not promote them inappropriately or unconsciously. They need to develop the ability to listen to the opinions, views and beliefs of other people.'

Teachers and Councillors of Bristol Metropolitan Academy will therefore consult widely within the communities served by the school to explore differences and deepen understanding of sexuality and personal relationships. Training programmes for Academy teaching staff will encourage them to examine their own values and attitudes and to reflect upon the ways in which these influence their students.

Ultimately, values cannot be imposed but students can be equipped with the examples, experiences and skills needed to help them develop their own. Respect for students' background and an acknowledgment of their own emergent moral sense, can only assist in this development.

## **7 Morality, values and management**

It is the responsibility of the PSHE Co-ordinator and senior team to help teaching staff, collectively, to make judgments about where consensus about values is necessary (and how to arrive at it) and where acceptance of diversity is appropriate. The management of this process will involve parents and councillors.

## **8 Homophobia Statement**

In line with the Equality Duty 2010, and within but approach to community cohesion, intolerant and offensive views with regard to homophobia in particular will be challenged during the lesson and beyond.

## **Procedures in support-of this policy**

## 9 Content headings for Academy sex education programme

The planned delivery of sex education at Bristol Metropolitan Academy will take place through two curricular areas: Science and Personal, Social Health and Economic education. These two areas will compliment each other, PSHE education drawing upon and encouraging personal reflection upon the implications of the factual understanding gained in Science.

## 10 The Science curriculum and sex education

In accordance with the new national curriculum orders published 2015, at Key Stage 3 students will be taught:

### *Reproduction*

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

### *Health*

- that the abuse of alcohol, solvents and other drugs affects health
- that bacteria and viruses affect health
- that the body's natural defences may be enhanced by immunisation and medicines

At Key Stage 4 students will be taught:

### *Hormones*

- the way in which hormonal control occurs, including the effects of insulin and sex hormones
- some medicinal uses of hormones, including the control and promotion of fertility and the treatment of diabetes

### *Health*

- the defence mechanisms of the body, including the role of the skin and blood
- the effects of solvents, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs on body functions

## 11 Personal, Social, Health and Economic education and sex education

From Years 7 to 11 the programme will address the following issues:

### *Family life*

- family relationships/roles
- family patterns and responsibilities
- independence
- changing relationships
- awareness in emotional and physical changes
- gender roles

### *Self image*

- making informed choices
- personal safety and sexually transmitted diseases
- how to say 'no'
- comfort with body functions
- responsible decision making
- expression of feelings
- self awareness of body changes/puberty
- awareness of own sexuality
- gender roles
- awareness of independence

### *Social, cultural and moral issues*

- family roles, different cultures' values
- peer group pressure
- avoidance of stereotyping
- religion and sexuality
- influences on behaviour - alcohol, drugs, AIDS
- abortion
- media pressures
- the right not to participate in sexual activity
- helping to understand rules of behaviour
- the law

### *Relationships*

- coping with stress
- changing attitudes to the opposite sex
- understanding affection
- changing relationships
- developing and maintaining relationships/friendships
- responsibility and attitude to marriage
- responsibility within a relationship

### *Growth, development and responsibility*

- preparation for changes at puberty
- conception
- the birth process understanding the reproductive process
- contraception
- personal hygiene
- child development and care
- choosing to become a parent
- fertility and infertility
- responsibility within relationships

### *Support services and systems*

- visits to or from a range of health agencies
- info about support agencies

## 12 Organisation of Academy sex education

Detailed planning and delivery of the PSHE education programme will fall to the PSHE Co-ordinator and delivering staff.

Detailed planning and delivery of the Science programme is the responsibility of the Head of Science Faculty.

## 13 Training provision

Basic training is given to all staff in the delivery of SRE. Specialist training will be sought where it is anticipated that it will enhance the delivery of SRE and increase the skill level of the staff delivering this content.

## 14 Curriculum entitlement

All students are entitled to sex education and the programme will be planned and delivered with regard to the needs of every student ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all. Both the science curriculum and the PSHE programme are compulsory for all students in Years 7 to 11, thus ensuring common experience and entitlement for all.

## 15 Procedures for reviewing effectiveness

Throughout the programme there will be continual evaluation and feedback by individual teachers to teams. This will take the following form:

- **PSHE Intensive Team meetings:** the PSHE programme has an in-built evaluation system which will help to identify and clarify if the objectives are actually being met. Delivering staff will have the opportunity to review the programme at regular PSHE meetings.
- **Science faculty meetings:** teachers responsible for the delivery of sex education during Science will also review effectiveness during faculty meetings.
- **In-service training** when staff will have the opportunity to discuss and review existing policy.

## Statements about specific issues

### 16 Contraceptive 'advice', information and referrals to under 16s

Particular care will be exercised in relation to contraceptive advice to students under the age of 16, for whom sexual intercourse is unlawful.

In line with guidance in DfEE Circular 0116/2000, the Academy will make a distinction between, on one hand, providing education generally about sexual matters and, on the other, counselling and advice to individual students, particularly if this relates to their own sexual behaviour. It is proper for tutors to take an interest in the pastoral welfare and well-being of students but this function must not trespass on the proper exercise of parental rights and responsibilities, nor attempt to take the place of health professionals' expertise.

Giving advice about contraception to an individual student (as opposed to a group or class as part of a teaching programme) is therefore deemed to be an inappropriate exercise of professional responsibility. A teacher approached by an individual student for specific advice on contraception or other aspects of sexual behaviour will, wherever possible, encourage the student to seek advice from his or her parents and, if appropriate, the student's GP or the school nurse.

In addition, where the teacher has reason to believe that the student has embarked upon, or is contemplating, a course of conduct likely to place him or her at moral or physical risk or in breach of the law, the teacher will inform the Principal. The Principal will arrange for the student to be counselled and, where the student is under 16, for the parents to be made aware, preferably by the student himself or herself.

### **17 Withdrawal procedures**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from any or all parts of a school's programme of sex and relationships education. However, parents **do not** have the right to withdraw students from those elements which are required by the National Curriculum Science Order.

Parents do not have to give any reason for withdrawal. Once a request that a child be excused has been made, that request will be complied with until the parent changes or revokes it. However, if the child makes it clear that they wish to have access to SRE provision and that is contrary to the parents expressed wishes then we will discuss each case on an individual basis to ensure we reach the best outcome for all parties.

If you wish to withdraw your child from SRE provision then please contact their Head of House or through Main Reception.

### **18 The involvement of health professionals and visitors**

When using health professionals, professional consultants in health education, other providers of in-service training or visiting speakers about matters relating to sex education, the Academy will ensure that personnel involved are familiar with the Academy's sex education policy and have the opportunity and encouragement to discuss it.

### **19 Working with parents**

The development of sex education programmes in the Academy should enhance rather than detract from parental responsibilities, promoting co-operation between home and school. In order to secure maximum support for the Academy's programme of sex education, the Academy will ensure that parents are fully informed.

Current parents will be informed of the content of Academy sex education programmes and of how they can play a part in influencing the development and review of these.

In line with statutory requirements, information about the Academy's policy for sex education will also be included in the Academy prospectus. Councillors of the Academy are responsible for ensuring that the Academy policy on sex education is kept up to date and made freely available to parents.

Information for parents will include an explanation of the right of withdrawal.

## 20 Reviewing this policy

The Academy recognises that there are many different opinions about Sex and Relationships Education and that PSHE is to become statutory. The Academy Council will review this policy as a minimum, every 3 years, to ensure that teaching is consistent with current guidelines and also with the views and experiences of the school community.