



Faith, Aspiration & Unity

Education in Sexuality Policy Statement

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This policy supports Holy Trinity Academy's (HTA) motto of Faith, Aspiration and Unity.

This policy and procedures must be applied and used alongside statutory legislation and guidance.

Purpose:

The Christian Church recognises the right of all children throughout the world to receive appropriate education in matters of sexuality. Both Church of England and Catholic churches give importance to the responsibility of education in sexuality within school settings.

In the current world young people as they grow and develop may be exposed to a range of sexual images, information from their peers, the media and online through social media, websites etc. Some of this material may be helpful and supportive and informative, some of it can be confusing, inaccurate and potentially harmful.

This policy and educational intent is to support young people when they may experience confusion or challenges in life with areas regarding sexuality and to provide appropriate guidance and direction to receive help and support.

Legal and Statutory Context:

The Education Act 1993 requires all secondary schools by law to:

- i provide sex education (including information about HIV/AIDs and other sexually transmitted diseases) to all students
- ii develop a policy outlining how and where sex education will be taught;
- iii ensure that the policy and details of the programme be made available to parents.

This policy and procedures are informed by and developed in the framework of :

- Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (DfES 2000)
- 2010 Equalities Act
- Sex and Relationships Education in Schools (England) BRIEFING PAPER Number 06103, 16 December 2016
- Sex and Relationship Education Guidance Curriculum & Standards Head teachers, Teachers & School Governors Status: good practice Date of issue: July 2000 Ref: DfEE 0116/2000

Definition of Sexuality and Education

Human Sexuality is seen as a positive God given dimension of what constitutes us as integral human persons. Governors employ the term “sexuality” to describe this.

It is the scope of education in sexuality to involve the following factors:

- Lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development.
- The understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care.
- The teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health.

It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity. This would be inappropriate teaching.

It has three main elements:

1. Attitudes and values

- learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations
- learning the value of family life, marriage, and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children
- learning the value of respect, love and care
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- developing critical thinking as part of decision making

2. 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 and with an absence of prejudice and developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Managing conflict, learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

3. Knowledge and understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages, understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- Learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained

Procedures & Practice

Aims

Education in sexuality aims to support Holy Trinity Academy's purpose to offer positive person centred education to all its pupils.

Our mission is to play our part in the development and growth of all members of our community on their journey to becoming fully active and human unique creations made in God's image. Education in sexuality is part of supporting this development and growth. It seeks to ensure that all students accept their own and other's sexuality positively in order to enjoy relationships based on mutual respect, dignity and responsibility.

Objectives

- Encouraging the recognition that each of us is created in the image of God
- Exploring with students the meaning and value of life
- Engendering growth in self-respect and self-worth
- Enabling students to reflect on their own relationships in order to recognise the qualities that help relationships grow and be sustained
- Developing in all students an understanding and appreciation of value and values of family life
- Ensuring that students understand that love is central and the basis of meaningful relationships
- Allowing students to consider the beliefs, values and cultures of others
- Encouraging students to develop attitudes and values that result in a sense of responsibility about themselves
- Enabling students to make informed choices that they can then be responsible and accountable for
- Provide supportive and sensitive opportunities where students can share thoughts, feeling and concerns
- Assist students to be aware of the values conveyed by the media including the internet and support students with developing critical faculties in response to values and evidence portrayed
- Provide good quality information and challenge misinformation
- Support students to resist inappropriate peer , social and media pressure
- Having an awareness of each students personal needs with regard to knowledge and understanding of sexuality and respond to each individual appropriately and proportionately
- Enabling students to be sensitive to their own and others emotional and physical development including monthly female fertility cycle, constant male fertility, and the impact of hormonal changes on emotional responses.

- Exploring process of human procreation
- Within a respectful belief and Christian framework provide support regarding family planning and contraception that upholds emotional, belief and faith values and principles as well as responding to physical needs.
- Within a respectful belief and Christian framework provide support and teaching of sexuality that upholds emotional, belief and faith values and principles

Roles & Responsibilities

All members of the school community

Ultimately each person has the responsibility to form their own conscience as well as possible and always to follow their own conscience. To respect the views of all members of the school community and wider community is in the end to respect their conscience and this is an obligation on every member of our community

Home and parents and guardians

The governors and school community recognise the value of the role that parents and guardians have regarding education in sexuality. Governors will seek to include and involve parents and guardians in the sexuality programme. This will include sharing and updating the content of the programme supporting parents to explore the content directly with their son/daughter/s and what has been discussed within school. Constructive feedback is always welcomed

Tutors

Governors acknowledge that education in sexuality may raise some professional and personal challenges for teaching staff that may cause anxiety and uncertainty. To address these concerns and provide clarity Holy Trinity Academy provides guidance to support education in sexuality within a Christian community.

This supports the intent to ensure that all students are familiar with the teaching of the Christian church on issues relating to sexuality. This will thus allow all students to be allowed to consider for themselves in a rational, social and autonomous manner what is acceptable for them.

Therefore, ensuring the values of the gospel are always in evidence teachers should use their own professional expertise to allow students to explore issues freely and frankly within a supportive and non-threatening environment.

Staff and personal and religious belief

For any individual with strong religious and/ or moral beliefs there will be within their community challenges of difference of opinion. This is reflected within the church communities. It is our responsibility as a school to foster an environment that

encourages a good understanding and thoughtful response to the church's teachings.

It is the schools responsibility to respect all individual views sincerely held. This is in harmony with Christian belief and Churches teaching.

If a member of staff feels uncomfortable participating in being involved in the education in sexuality programme there will be no immediate obligation to participate. It is for the governors through the head teacher however to assess the cause for concerns and respond with an appropriate plan for support to eradicate the concerns to ensure all teachers can meet his/her duties.

Provision, delivery and student support

The Sexuality in Education programme is delivered through the curriculum for Science, Religious Education and PSHE.

Sexuality and personal relationships lessons within the sexuality in education and citizenship curriculum are planned by a team of teachers who have worked together on their planning to ensure age appropriate learning objectives for each year group.

If an outside agency such as the school nurse is used to deliver part of the programme, the content is discussed before and after their visits with the relevant member of the teaching team. Students can be referred to the school nurse or other outside agencies on an individual basis if appropriate. They can also access information and advice through the weekly drop in facility. Students will always be encouraged to speak to their parent/guardian unless there is a disclosure of abuse where Children's Safeguarding procedures apply.

Teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality over information provided by students in relation to Sexuality in Education and will follow the guidance provided by the school's Children's Safeguarding procedures when necessary.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The aspects of Sexuality in Education that are delivered within the school are monitored and evaluated within those curriculum areas. The aspects of Sexuality in Education that are delivered within the Science/R.E. programme are monitored and evaluated by a combination of people.

The lead governors for safeguarding will seek assurance from the lead teacher/s that learning objectives have been met and evidence that learning objectives are reviewed for students annually in each year group.

The lead teacher uses information from teachers, Year Heads and outside agencies to review the learning objectives appropriate for students in each year group. This is formally done in the summer term and informally throughout the year.

Observation of Sexuality in Education lessons is undertaken by the lead teacher and safeguarding governors.

Students are increasingly encouraged to evaluate their own learning within Sexuality and education programme and to feed back this information to their teachers and Student Safeguarding Council.

Information to parents

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from either part, or all, of the Sexuality in Education provided by the School apart from that taught in National Curriculum Science. Parents/guardians who wish to withdraw their children from all, or part of, the Sexuality in Education programme should inform the Head teacher of their decision. Parents/Guardians are welcome to meet members of staff to discuss their decision and to view materials they may be concerned about, but they are under no obligation to do so. Students who are withdrawn from Sexuality in Education will be provided with alternative work, and the situation will be handled with sensitivity.

Guidance

Marriage

- a) In its teaching and practice the church views Christian marriage as a faithful loving creative and permanent relationship in which a man and woman give themselves to each other for life in love. Married love is about commitment and generosity and that attitude of the two partners to each other rightly extends to having a family and looking after a family.
 - b) The Christian church reflecting Christ's own teaching is committed to upholding and supporting marriage. The broader Christian faith and communities, and indeed people outside Christian faith also see this as important too: though they follow various paths in doing so.
 - c) At Marriage the partners promise a total lifelong gift, something that was emphasised by Christ. The Catholic Church does not accept that anyone has the right to decree a divorce. However both churches accept that some marriages break down with conflict that cannot be resolved. There is challenge when divorced people enter a new marriage as this will not be recognised by the Catholic Church. These individuals can be encouraged to take an active part in the life of the Catholic church but are not free to receive communion. In some circumstances people can have their former marriage annulled.
- Many people do live out a life as described as above by providing a stable, loving home for their children. Relationships between marriage partners are not always as they should be; sometimes they may become abusive and destructive. The Christian church also has the responsibility of providing pastoral care and support to those that have suffered the breakdown of their marriage. (Whether or not the partners have been civilly divorced). As a Christian school community we will ensure the sex education and personal

relationships programme not only celebrates marriage but be sensitive to the needs and circumstances of those students whose parents are separated or divorced.

- As a Christian school and community we will be sensitive to the particular feelings and difficulties experienced by those who remarry without the Catholic Church's blessing – as well as their children.

Sexual Activity, Orientation and Transgender

- a) The proper setting for full sexual relationship between a man and a woman is in the Church's teaching a marriage relationship.
 - b) Sexuality has many dimensions- biological, social, political, cultural, philosophical, theological, spiritual, moral and pastoral.
 - c) The Catholic Church's understanding the fact that homosexual orientation is distinguished from the evaluation of the sexual activity of homosexual people. The latter is deemed unacceptable as it does not respect the complimentary nature of male and female since it lacks the life giving potential to proper sexual love.
- It is the responsibility of teachers and appropriate members of our school community to enable students to reflect on their sexuality and gender identity and what it means for them individually. We will provide opportunities to help students make responsible decisions, based on Christian values about sexual activity and gender identity.
 - We will help students to understand and appreciate their own sexuality, gender identity and that of others and support them pastorally with this task
 - We will ensure that students have an awareness of the best information about all aspects of sexuality and gender identity.
 - Within the Catholic context recognise the important distinction between homosexuality as a personal sexual orientation (permanent or temporary) and homosexuality as sexual activity between persons of this orientation. This includes supporting the Catholic church's view that Catholics that are homosexual are to be accepted as full members of the church
 - Ensure the school community and foster in students an attitude of respect for the dignity of every human person without exception, which entails rejecting prejudice or discrimination directed against people on the grounds of their sexuality or gender identity.
 - The treatment of this topic must be sensitive to the needs of individual students so that any student who might question their sexual orientation or gender identity would feel he/she could confide to a member of staff without fear or rejection

Contraception

- a) Within the setting of marriage Catholic Church documents like “Humanae Vitae” speak of “responsible parenthood”. “Natural” methods are seen as acceptable, because they are based on natural cycles of fertility, whereas “artificial” methods in one way or another obstruct or prevent the ordinary biological realities and processes. However, many do not follow or accept The Human Vitae teaching on contraception and it is accepted widely that there remains within the Catholic Church disagreement about the teaching on contraception.
 - b) The Church of England does not regard contraception as a sin or going against God’s purpose
- School will respond to needs of students regarding contraception both educationally and pastorally. It must be acknowledged that some of our students will be already involved in or about to enter sexual relationships.
 - We will ensure that students have the opportunity to be helped and supported to reflect on personal values that are to be respected in moral decision making.
 - In the school as a Christian community an understanding of both Churches teaching is important. It is therefore the schools responsibility to ensure students are well informed about contraception and related issues.
 - In the school if an individual student needs information regarding contraception this will be responded to sensitively and appropriate professional guidance sought with regard to statutory responsibility and directive.

Abortion

- a) The Catholic Church teaches that abortion is wrong. That is not to say that those who feel driven to seek abortion are to be condemned.
 - b) The Church of England combines strong opposition to abortion with a recognition that there can be strictly limited conditions under which it may be morally preferable to any available alternative.
- The school will be sensitive to the fact that some students may have had direct or indirect experience of abortion.
 - The school will reflect the Catholic churches’ teaching on abortion. In responding to individual students needs in response to pregnancy the school must support the belief that every individual human life is owed respect throughout that life. Support and help will be offered that provides alternative to abortion.

- The school will respect the right of individuals to seek advice and guidance outside of the school community. This may include pastoral and educational support to inform decision making from external agencies.