



# The WASP Centre

## Sex and Relationships Education Policy

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## The Purpose of Relationships and Sex Education

The WASP Centre has a commitment to understanding the importance of learning about relationships and offering comprehensive and diverse learning opportunities to our students, mainly within the PSHE curriculum.

The Department of Health has highlighted the need for all children and young people to receive high quality sex and relationships education in the Sexual Health Improvement Framework (2013), while the Department for Education's paper *The Importance of Teaching* (2010) confirmed that, "Children need high quality sex and relationships education so they can make wise and informed choices". The school has a key role, in partnership with parents/carers, external professionals and agencies, in providing RSE. Our approach goes beyond the provision of biological information to focus on clarifying attitudes and values, and developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships. According to the latest DfE guidance (Sept 2012), *Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) at Secondary level ...*

"includes learning how to develop mutually respectful personal relationships and the importance of stable relationships to family life and how risky sexual behaviour contributes to the spread of STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infections) and unplanned pregnancy"

Research has shown that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about sex and relationships, are more likely to be more discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours, and are more likely to have fulfilling relationships. By using the PSHE Association's curriculum guidelines, we aim to provide essential and valuable *age appropriate* sex and relationship education to all students at the WASP Centre.

## Topics and Issues

### Attitudes and values

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations
- Learning the value of marriage, civil partnership, family life, 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
- Learning to respect and value difference and diversity
- Learning the implications (social, emotional and economic) of lifestyle choices in relation to relationships and families
- Rights and responsibilities, for self and others
- Commitment to their own safety and that of others
- Gender equality
- That violence and coercion in relationships are unacceptable

### Personal and social skills

- Learning to identify their own emotions and those of others
- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- Learning to manage change

- Developing self-respect and empathy for others
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice
- Learning to make and carry out informed decisions
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made
- Managing conflict
- Learning how to identify risk
- Coping with and resisting unwelcome peer pressure
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse
- Communicating openly and respectfully about sex and relationships
- Asking for help and accessing advice and services

#### Knowledge and understanding

- Learning and understanding emotional and physical development at appropriate stages
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- Learning about a safe and healthy lifestyle based on accurate information
- Learning about seeking appropriate help and advice
- Understanding the benefits of loving, rewarding and responsible relationships
- Learning how to resist unwelcome pressures to be sexually active and protective behaviours
- Learning how to avoid unplanned pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
- Learning about pregnancy and the choices available
- Understanding legal aspects of sexual behaviour
- Learning about the links between sexual health and alcohol/drugs
- Learning about the impact of coercion and violence and understanding that consent is critical

#### All of the topic areas may be delivered:

- within the taught, age appropriate spiral PSHE Association programme, taught by WASP teachers, and managed by the Head of Centre;
- through Science taught by the WASP science teacher;
- via targeted pastoral support and intervention where appropriate;
- by the provision of appropriate information through leaflets, books and websites;
- via drop in clinic (school nurse) or other forms of enhanced provision where appropriate;
- in response to incidents of concern.

## **Safe Learning Environment**

RSE is taught and explored in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that students are not put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. For example:

- Nobody, (teacher or student) should be expected to answer a personal question
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion
- In most cases the correct names for body parts will be used by the teacher
- No student will be reprimanded for using incorrect wording, only encouraged to use a more appropriate term
- The meanings of words will be explained in a sensible, age appropriate and factual way

## **Pastoral and Individual Sexual Health Support.**

Centre staff are aware that some students may not have access to the confidential and free youth sexual health services available in Wiltshire. All students will have access to pastoral support which may include:

- signposting to local sexual health services
- confidential discussions regarding sexual and relationship concerns (this will only be done with a trained Wiltshire Pathways Level 1 (or higher) Sexual Health member of staff.)
- At all times, the safeguarding of students will be paramount and all contact will adhere to the Safeguarding Policy.

## **Resources**

According to Brook, the PSHE Association and the Sex Education Forum in their supplementary advice document SRE for the 21st Century (2014): "A trained, confident and competent teacher is better than any video, card pack or other teaching material.... Resources – especially those that are freely available on the internet – should be checked to make sure they support inclusion, contain accurate information from authoritative medical sources, and clearly separate opinions, beliefs and facts." Visitors such as a School Nurse or Sexual Health advisor may supplement the RSE curriculum as planned events with the teacher present. On occasions, a teacher other than the usual tutor may take the class to deliver a particular aspect of the course. Teaching resources are selected on the basis of their appropriateness to students. Students are able to access information independently and confidentially via the Pastoral Coordinator, School Nurse, and advertised websites.

## **Answering and Asking Questions**

In most cases teachers will attempt to answer students' questions and concerns in a sensitive, age and development appropriate manner. Individual teachers will use their skill and discretion in these situations and if necessary refer to the WASP Principle for advice and support. Teachers will also follow the following guidance:

- Teachers will establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting.
- If a student's question is inappropriate to address with the whole class, the teacher should acknowledge the question and attend to it later on an individual basis.

- If a question is too personal the teacher should remind the students of the ground rules.
- Teachers will set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that students discuss issues in a way which encourages thoughtful participation.
- If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of sexual abuse the Child Protection and Safeguarding Team should be informed and the usual child protection procedures followed.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Students may have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. The school strongly believes that all students should have access to RSE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this, the school's approach to RSE will take account of:

- The needs of boys as well as girls - Girls tend to have a greater access to RSE than boys, both through the media (particularly magazines) and the home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.
- Ethnic and cultural diversity - Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to RSE. The school will consult students and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups in line with Safeguarding Policy.
- Varying home backgrounds - We recognise that our students may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of students based on home circumstances.
- Sexuality – we are aware that some of our students may go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or trans-gender (LGBT). Some students may have LGBT parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our students will meet and work with LGBT people at some point in their lives. Our approach to RSE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. We shall actively tackle homophobic bullying (see Anti-bullying policy).
- Special Educational Needs - We shall take account of the fact that some students may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical disabilities that result in particular RSE needs at times.

### **Parental concerns and withdrawal of students**

All parents/carers have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated 'sex education' lessons delivered outside the Science curriculum. They do not have a right to withdraw their children from those aspects of RSE that are taught in National Curriculum Science or where RSE issues arise incidentally in other subject areas. We will work in active partnership with parents/carers, value their views and keep them informed about our RSE provision. If a parent/carer has any concerns about the RSE provision we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have. If any parents/carers decide to withdraw their child we shall work with them and their child to explore possible alternative provision.