

4.5

ELTHAM COLLEGE SEX EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT

The Need for Sex Education

The 1988 Education Reform Act, (Section 2), states that schools should provide a curriculum which "promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural mental and physical development of pupils.....and prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life". Sex Education is an important dimension of this statutory provision. The School should therefore recognise the entitlement of the individual to learn about, understand and come to terms with his or her own sexuality.

The 2002 Education Act, (Sections 80 and 101), requires schools to provide sex education, (including education about HIV, AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections), for all registered pupils within the school.

A recent national survey indicated that 96% of parents wanted schools to provide sex education. Many parents recognised that their own sex education was inadequate and are grateful for school support.

An understanding of the sexual aspects of the human mind and body can help foster self-esteem, self awareness, a sense of moral responsibility and the skills to enter a loving relationship and avoid and resist unwanted sexual experiences.

The Aims and Objectives of Sex Education

Aims:

To support the personal and social development of all pupils.

To ensure that pupils have the ability to accept their own and other's sexuality and express it in positive ways.

To enjoy relationships based on mutual respect and responsibility, free from any abuse or exploitation.

Objectives:

To create a programme for progressive and differentiated learning, which caters to pupil's needs and is sensitive to individuals and groups.

To encourage unembarrassed acceptance of sexuality by providing appropriate vocabulary for all parts of the body and encouraging positive attitudes to all bodily functions.

To generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment.

To counteract misleading myth and folklore about human behaviour and bodily functioning.

To enable pupils to accept variation in rates of growth and development, (physical, emotional, social), and in ages when puberty and social activities commence.

To provide reassurance that change is part of the life cycle, and to give help in adjusting to these changes.

To recognise the value of intimacy in loving and caring relationships.

To understand the value of marriage, family life and the implications and responsibilities of parenthood.

To understand and respect the varied cultural and religious influences on individual sexuality.

To develop awareness of sexual identity, to challenge sexism and prejudice in society and to promote equal opportunities.

To help children to affirm their rights, to be able to resist unwanted touching or advances and to communicate about such matters.

To develop understanding of risk and safety and to promote strategies for personal safety.

To be aware of sources of help and to acquire the skills and confidence to use them.

Implementation of the Sex Education Programme

The core sex education programme is delivered by the Biology Department, School Nurse, Chaplain and other approved outside specialist agencies. Moral issues are further explored by form tutors during weekly PSE periods. The programme is organised, monitored and coordinated by the PSE Coordinator with the approval of the Headmaster.

Parental Right of Withdrawal

Section 405 of the Education Act 1996 gives parents the right to withdraw their children from any or all parts of a school's programme of sex education, *other than those elements which are required by the National Curriculum Science Order.*

Parents are informed of this right in writing by the Headmaster.

Contraception and Advice on Sexual Matters

The Sex Education Programme includes detailed, frank and up to date information on contraception and other sexual matters. However teachers should not give specific advice on contraception or other aspects of sexual behaviour to an individual pupil. Teachers approached by an individual pupil on these matters should, wherever possible, encourage the pupil to seek advice from his or her parents, and, if appropriate the School Doctor, Nurse, or the pupil's own GP.

If a teacher believes that a pupil has embarked upon, or is contemplating a course of conduct which is likely to place him or her at moral or physical risk or in breach of the law, the teacher should ensure that the pupil is aware of the implications and seek advice as above. In such circumstances the teacher should inform the Headmaster.

Ethos and Morality

Although many aspects of sex and sexuality will be objectively discussed during the course of the Sex Education Programme, the underlying ethos and message given to pupils will always be the promotion of morality, responsibility and regard for the Christian principles of the school.

This policy is under review and any amendments will be put on the school website.