



# Lidget Green Primary School

## Sex and Relationship Education Policy

Approved by the governing body on: 6<sup>th</sup> February 2018

To be reviewed on: February 2020

Signed on behalf of the governing body: *S. Mitchell*

NB. This guidance will be retained for a period of 7 years from replacement.

Version 2 / Dated: February 2018

This policy is reviewed: **biennially** by the **Governing Body**

This policy is shared with staff: **in Policy file**

This policy reflects Guidance provided in the 2016 Briefing Paper Sex and Relationships Education in Schools (England) which refers back to the DfES 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' (DFE0116/2000) and was drawn up after consultation with parents. It should be read in conjunction with our PHSE policy.

*The Department recommends that all primary schools should have a sex and relationship education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the children. It should ensure that both boys and girls know about puberty and how a baby is born.*

*All children, including those who develop earlier than the average, need to know about puberty before they experience the onset of physical changes. In the early primary school years, education about relationships needs to focus on friendship, bullying and the building of self-esteem.*

We believe that effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. Giving children accurate and appropriate information about relationships, their rights and responsibilities, particularly with regard to consent and their bodies and the risks they may face when going online is increasingly a key element in our approach to safeguarding.

While parents should be seen as the main educators of their children in terms of sex and relationship education, we acknowledge that many parents find this a difficult subject to talk about and hope that the work done in school will support a dialogue between parent and child.

Our sex and relationship education programme is firmly rooted within our framework for PSHCE, the appropriate strand of the Science curriculum and the online safety element of our Computing curriculum. By teaching sex and relationship education within our PSHCE programme, we aim to teach young people to respect themselves and others, to help them move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood and to support them through their physical, emotional and moral development.

Younger children will learn about the importance of relationships and of being cared for; they will consider the special role of the family in society and how they as individuals relate to others. They will become aware of themselves as growing and changing individuals, with rights and responsibilities and will be encouraged to think about the role they and others play in keeping them safe and healthy, including what they must do to keep themselves safe online and when using technology. They will learn that their body belongs to them and that they can say who has access to it and they will learn to respect boundaries and understand that everybody has the right to offer or withhold consent for any activity. Any questions they may ask about sex will be answered honestly in a way appropriate to their age.

Older children (Upper Key 2) will build upon this work and will be taught how increasing independence brings with it increasing responsibilities for their own health and safety; they will practise problem solving and decision making skills and will learn how the decisions they make can affect themselves and others. They will also learn about boundaries and consent.

It is vital that children know the internet and social media are important resources for learning and information, and a great opportunity to build social networks, as well as learning about the risks and how to stay safe online. In a framework of respect for other people's needs, culture, lifestyle and point of view they will learn about the changes they will go through as they reach puberty and adolescence as part of the science curriculum. In Year 6 children will also be taught, at a very simple level in line with Government recommendations, about how a baby is born. Parents will be informed when this more formal sex education is to take place and will be invited to discuss the content of these lessons. Parents will also be informed of their right to withdraw their children from sex education and will be offered advice regarding resources and sources of information they can use with their children, should they wish to take this option.

We believe that sex and relationship education should be closely linked to the understanding of the importance of stable and caring relationships, of the need for respect, love and care in our lives, and of the importance of family life.

We would like sex and relationship education to be taught by teachers with whom the children are familiar and these teachers will be offered training, support and resources as they feel appropriate. We do, however, recognize that the Upper Key Stage 2 teachers may not be willing or feel able to deliver all the content and in this case, the children may be taught by other staff in school or if necessary, by the school nurse.

#### Formal sex education

In Year 5, children will be taught in separate gender groups about the changes their bodies will undergo as they approach puberty, with an emphasis on the importance of hygiene. Both groups of pupils will be given the same information, although the girls group will have more focus on the practicalities of dealing with menstruation. The emotional aspects of puberty and changing feelings and attitudes will also be discussed. At this point, any questions about sex will be discussed at an individual level.

In Year 6, after parents have been consulted and told of their right to withdraw their child, children will learn again about the changes the body undergoes at puberty, in separate gender groups; this time links to sexual maturity and relationships will be made. Simple explanations about the conception and birth of a baby will be given, using published resources, and

will be placed firmly in the context of a stable relationship and family life, which in many cultures will only be sanctioned by marriage.

Sex and Relationship Education may be considered to be a sensitive area and so consideration must be given to issues of appropriate information and confidentiality.

Teachers (or Health professionals delivering the lessons) need to have established ground rules for discussions within sex and relationship education; a set of ground rules will help teachers create a safe environment in which they do not feel embarrassed or anxious about unintended or unexpected questions or comments from pupils. Teachers can avoid embarrassment and protect pupils' privacy by always depersonalising discussions. For example, role play or appropriate videos, can help pupils discuss sensitive issues and develop their decision-making skills in a safe environment.

The following ground rules are offered as an example, but teachers may wish to develop a set of rules with each individual class:

- no one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question
- no one will be forced to take part in a discussion
- only the correct names for body parts will be used
- meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way
- some questions may be more suited to individual discussion

If a question or comment is made that is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis.

**If, at any time, a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse, they must follow the school's safeguarding procedures.**

*Draft letter to parents re. Sex and Relationship Education in Year 6*

Dear Parents

As you may know, in year 6 we teach a more formal unit of sex and relationship education as part of our Personal, Health and Social Education curriculum. This is timetabled to be taught **this term** and so we are sending you brief details of what will be taught **and when**.

We believe that parents are the best people to teach children about sex and relationships but we also know that many parents and children find this a difficult subject to talk about. Children are faced with a lot of information – not all of it accurate – from the television and from their friends. We believe that it is important that children are given accurate information about sex and relationships to help them to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives.

Within these lessons (in separate groups of boys and girls), we will be giving the children simple facts about how a baby is conceived and born but more importantly, we will be talking with them about the importance of developing self-confidence and self-esteem, of forming good, stable and supportive relationships and of making their own decisions as they face a time of great change in their lives.

If you would like to know more about the programme of study for sex and relationship education in Year 6 and the resources we will be using, please contact **your child's class teacher before** ..... You do have the right to withdraw your child from sex and relationship education in school if you would prefer to teach your child about these matters yourself but we hope that you will come and talk to us before you take this step - we know that children talk about these things among themselves and cannot guarantee that your child will not be given information (accurate or otherwise) by their friends.

Yours faithfully

## **Notes for Parents**

### **Why do we need to teach sex education in a Primary School?**

1. So that children will know that they will be growing and changing throughout their life, particularly when they are teenagers.
2. So that they know that physical changes and emotional changes are a part of growing up and that lots of people feel the way they do.
3. So that they are not frightened by these changes, for example by hair growing where it didn't grow before and girls starting periods.
4. So that they can become aware of the importance of strong relationships in life, how people can support each other and the role of marriage and the family in their own and others' cultures.
5. The Government say that we should teach children how a baby is conceived and born in Year 6 so that they are learning about it at the same time as they are learning about how important strong relationships, marriage and family life are for supporting individuals and society.
6. Children may see a lot of things relating to sex on the television, in soap operas, in discussion programmes or even on the news. Even if children don't watch programmes like this, they might hear their friends discussing it in the playground or in the street or they might see it in newspapers or teenage magazines. Learning about sex in this way gives children confusing messages about how adults should relate to each other.
7. Many parents find it very difficult to talk to their children about puberty and sex – even more children find it difficult to listen to their parents talking about it. By introducing the subject at school, we hope that parents will be able to talk to their children a bit more easily, knowing that their children know the 'basics'.
8. Research does show that the more young people know about sex, especially where it has been taught with an emphasis on relationships and responsibility, the less likely they are to 'experiment' and the more likely they are to wait until they are in a committed relationship or marriage before having sex.

Some things you might be wondering about.

Boys and girls will be taught about puberty and sex separately; they will be given the same information, but we feel that separate groups will help children to discuss situations sensibly. Other aspects of relationship education will be in class groups.

It doesn't matter what teachers' personal views about sex are, they will teach that it is something that should happen in a strong committed relationship and that for many people, this can only be within a marriage.

Teachers will not discuss personal questions or make any comments about particular family circumstances.

If a child asks questions that we think are inappropriate for the class, we will either discuss the question later with the child who has asked, or, depending on the question, will refer them back to their parents.

We will use the correct names for parts of the body.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from sex education; the lessons about changes in the body and puberty are part of the science curriculum and parents may not withdraw children from that.

**Formal sex education will take place towards the end of year 6 and parents will be informed in plenty of time that it will be happening. They will be invited to a meeting to find out exactly what will be taught and to see the books or video that we will be using.**