

SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION POLICY

JUNE 2014

Introduction

The STEP Academy Trust Board of Directors has agreed this Policy and, as such, it applies to all Academies within the Trust.

Rationale

Throughout the STEP Academy Trust, we believe that all children should receive teaching that supports their development into mature, active citizens. As part of the Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Emotional (PSHCE) curriculum, Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) builds on the statutory national curriculum for science. Our teaching ensures that pupils consider the moral aspects of sex education, and also encourages our pupils to develop loving and caring relationships.

Throughout STEP Academies, we believe that each child should have the opportunity to learn and to achieve to their highest attainable level. We strive to meet the needs of all children across the spectrum of abilities, regardless of age, gender, ethnic or social background and taking account of their individual talents and special educational needs.

We will provide, in a safe and welcoming setting Sex and Relationship Education that is challenging, interesting, informative and relevant. We believe that our teaching should promote our pupils' spiritual, moral, social, physical and cultural development and also prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

Status

STEP Academy Governing Bodies and Directors are required to maintain a policy for Sex and Relationships Education by provision in the Education (Terms of Reference) (England) Regulations 2000: SI 2000/2122. This policy for the STEP Academy Trust fulfills this statutory requirement. Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) was introduced in the National Curriculum in 1999. Guidance was provided by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in 2000: DCSF Guidance – Sex and Relationship Education 2000 and this policy has been developed using these guidelines. Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, Head Teachers, Head of Schools and Governors have a statutory responsibility to have regard to such guidance when developing SRE policies, and also to protect pupils from inappropriate teaching materials.

Ethos

The objective of SRE is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. Its purpose is to help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood. SRE is always taught within the context of the PSHE curriculum (Personal, Social and Health Education).

This curriculum places sex and relationships education with teaching about the importance of marriage within family life; stable and loving relationships; respect; love and care. SRE is also about 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 (SRE Guidance DfES 2000).

Aims and Objectives of our SRE Policy

We teach children about:

- the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults;
- the way humans reproduce;
- respect for their own bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term and loving relationship;
- the importance of family life;
- moral questions;
- respect for other people;
- the existence of sexual abuse, and what they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters;
- generate an atmosphere where children can be comfortable about asking questions about sexuality, sexual relations and reproduction;
- provide an acceptable vocabulary for all parts of the male and female bodies and their functions;
- explain the nature of human reproduction using age appropriate language;
- stress the value of family life (widely defined) and the importance of proper care and nurture;
- enable children to understand the danger from strangers and help them to develop strategies to resist such situations;
- help children to understand that they have rights and control over who touches their bodies;
- help children understand and communicate about forthcoming pubertal changes;
- provide explanations and reassurances about these physical and emotional changes and help children to adjust to them;
- answer awkward questions honestly and frankly, whilst reserving the right to refer age-inappropriate questions to parents or guardians;
- help children to be aware of the importance of personal hygiene;
- provide a variety of resources appropriate to the age and ability of the child;
- enable children to understand the danger from strangers and help them to develop strategies to resist such situations.

Organisation of sex and relationships education

The STEP Academy Trust follows the Sex and Relationships Scheme of Work and also the 'Living and Growing' resources (version 2). The scheme is divided into three main elements:

1. Attitudes and Values

Sex and relationships education will include learning about the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships. Learning the value of respect, love and care and developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.

2. Personal and Social Skills

SRE will develop children's self-respect and empathy for others. STEP Academies will teach the importance of values and moral considerations and how to make choices based on an

understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice. Children will be taught how to develop an appreciation of the consequences of choices made; how to manage conflict and how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

3. Knowledge and Understanding

Sex and relationships education will include learning and understanding about physical development at appropriate stages. This includes understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health.

Links with PHSE and Science Curriculum

The Science National Curriculum includes learning about the reproductive system of humans; this is taught within Year 5 and is statutory. We believe it is good educational practice for sex education in school to be embedded within the PSHE curriculum; many of the skills learned in PSHE are transferable to SRE. Parents and Carers are notified in advance, by letter, when the children in Year 5 will be learning about the statutory Science, PHSE and SRE.

The teacher is the main person to teach SRE, however sometimes we use age appropriate outside agencies to support and enhance our programme eg Academy nurses. Teachers must be careful to ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not influence the teaching of PSHE. No one (teacher or pupil) should be expected to answer a personal question. It is normal practice for more than one teacher to deliver this information, and where appropriate (eg question time) we may use relevant gender group.

Parents/Carers right to withdraw their children

Parents/Carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex and relationship education provided at school except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (Science). If parents wish to withdraw their child from aspects of SRE, not in the Statutory National Curriculum, parents must make an appointment to speak to either the PSHE coordinator or Headteacher. If concerns still exist and are not part of the national curriculum, then alternative arrangements will be made.

Working with Parents and Guardians

Parents and Carers are the key figures in helping their children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up, and also in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities which sexual maturity brings. We consider that our teaching of SRE is complementary and supportive to the role of parents. In this regard, parents are invited to offer their views about its content and presentation, and are encouraged to review our teaching materials.