



# ABINGDON

## SEX & RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

### 1. Aims of sex education

Abingdon School believes that sex education is an educational entitlement of all pupils and an integral part of each pupil's emergence into adulthood.

Sex Education at Abingdon aims to improve the boys' ability to:

- value themselves and others.
- discover their own views on human sexuality.
- respect different individuals' consciences.
- judge what kind of relationships they want.
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and nonsexual relationships.
- communicate effectively.
- know how to gain access to confidential sexual health advice, support and if necessary treatment.
- know how the law applies to sexual relationships.
- understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity.
- understand the reasons for having protected sex.
- to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from unintended and/or unwanted conceptions, and sexually transmitted infections including HIV.
- avoid being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.
- use social media appropriately.

One of the aims of sex and relationship education is to deal with the issue of homophobic bullying.

The aim of this policy is to communicate clearly to staff, parents, visitors and pupils the manner in which sex education will be delivered at Abingdon. Sex and relationship education should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and of society and preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. In reviewing our Sex and Relationships Education we feel we already meet the parameters outlined by the [Government's Policy Statement on this issue in March 2017](#).

### 2. Organisation

Sex Education is co-ordinated by the PSHCE co-ordinator. He is responsible for the overall planning, implementation and review of the programme.

Delivery is through

- planned aspects within the science, PSHCE and religious studies curricula;
- addressing moral and ethical issues which may arise from apparently unrelated topics in any subject, or in tutorial time, or at any time on school business when the occasion requires intervention.
- a dedicated Sex and Relationships Day in the Third Year.

## Teaching approaches

A variety of approaches are used to give pupils relevant information; to enable moral issues to be explored through discussion; and to acquire appropriate skills. Visiting Health professionals (such as the School Doctor and nurse practitioners) as well as theatre groups deliver workshops in the Third Year and the School Health Centre plays a role in providing information through literature and drop-in sessions. Chlamydia screening information is also made available to our 5th and 6th form and boys can access further support through our health centre.

### 3. **Specific issues**

The following issues may occur as part of education.

#### a) *Confidentiality and advice*

Pupils will be made aware that some information cannot be held in confidence, if only in the interests of the pupil himself. Pupils will need to understand that, if certain disclosures are made, certain actions may ensue. At the same time, pupils will be offered sensitive and appropriate support.

Where the pupil concerned is “Gillick competent” staff will maintain the appropriate level of confidentiality, with due reference to the need to safeguard the wellbeing of the pupil, and with reference to the Abingdon School [Safeguarding Policy](#).

The following guidelines will be adhered to by all staff:

- i) Staff should be alert to the possibility of giving inappropriate advice on sensitive issues and should draw on the pastoral resources of the School for consultation and support.
- ii) Staff are expected to consider the moral dimension of pupils' sexual dilemmas by representing a variety of opinions and attitudes.
- iii) With regard to the disclosure of pregnancy or advice on sensitive issues such as contraception or homosexuality: the intention is to ensure that pupils who are in difficulty know that they can talk to an adult in school and that they will be supported. Where appropriate, the pupil will be asked to consider whether he should consult with his parents or with a health professional or with another member of staff.
- iv) With regard to the disclosure or suspicion of possible abuse: this would be deemed a safeguarding issue so would need to be dealt with in accordance with the Abingdon School [Safeguarding Policy](#).

#### b) *Family life*

The value of family life is an important aspect. This will be approached largely through a consideration of the quality of relationships with an emphasis on stability, respect, caring and support.

#### c) *Problem issues*

As part of the sex education programme, issues of contraception, HIV/AIDS, sexuality, ‘sexting’, pornography and abortion are addressed in age appropriate ways. Facts are presented in an objective and balanced way, with pupils being encouraged to consider their attitudes and values. They will be made aware of the differences between fact, opinion and religious belief.

A teacher may judge that a pupil's line of questioning requires advice from a health professional. In such cases, the teacher will advise the pupil's tutor. The tutor will then discuss the business of obtaining advice with the pupil.

d) *The teacher's personal opinions and experiences*

Members of staff might feel it is relevant to discuss their own personal viewpoint on sexual issues so long as that viewpoint is broadly commensurate with the framework indicated in this policy. They are required to make it clear that it is their own viewpoint.

Members of staff are not permitted to describe their own sexual experiences to pupils.

e) *Complaints procedure*

Any complaints about the sex education curriculum, or its delivery, should be made to the Head.

f) *Parental partnership*

At Abingdon School, parents do have the right to withdraw their sons from part or all of the sex education programme delivered as part of statutory RSE (Relationships and Sex Education), where it does not form part of the Biology GCSE syllabus. If their son is studying GCSE Biology, then he will be required to cover the relevant syllabus content through teacher guided, independent work. He would be withdrawn from class work on sex education topics because class work would very likely go beyond the GCSE syllabus. He would be able to take Religious Studies examinations because the sex education syllabus in those lessons does not, by and large, address the same syllabus content as the GCSE Biology syllabus.

The government's guidance on parental withdrawal is as follows: *"Where parents wish to withdraw their child from part of all of sex education (as part of statutory RSE) the school would typically discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Good practice is also likely to include the school discussing with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although the detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead). Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However there may be exceptional circumstances where the school may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.*

4. **Monitoring and review**

a) Sex education will be monitored by the Senior Academic Staff and the Head of Wellbeing who is the PSHCE Co-ordinator.

b) Where appropriate, any possible need for policy change will be brought to the attention of the pastoral committee.

5. **Dissemination of the policy**

The policy and the scheme of work are available on request to parents, governors and inspection bodies through the Head's Office.

6. **Other policies** which have relevance to sex education are the Anti-Bullying and Safeguarding Policies. The School is also aware of the [Government's draft guidance on RSE 2020](#) and is working towards its implementation.

**Deputy Head Pastoral**

Last internal review: January 2020

Last governor review: May 2019

Next governor review: May 2020

**Appendix:**



**Abingdon School Sex and Relationships Education overview**

Academic Subjects where sex education material is covered includes:

**First Year Biology –**

- puberty in boys & girls, including physical and emotional changes, relationships,
- reproductive systems,
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- pregnancy and birth;
- sexual intercourse.

**Second Year Religious Studies** - Jewish marriage and Bah Mitzvah.

**Third year Religious Studies** - medical ethics to include abortion and contraception

**GCSE Religious Studies (optional subject)** - The marriage and the family unit examines the place of sex in society, promiscuity and the role of the family in bringing up children.

**Fifth Year Biology –**

- Review of first year topics
- Evaluation of different methods of contraception
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Common cancers of the male and female reproductive systems

**Third Year Geography of Health and Disease**

- The geography of HIV/Aids is covered leading to discussions on HIV transmission and disease prevention.

## **RSE Topics covered within the Personal Development Education Programme**

PSHCE, and therefore the RSE topics, are delivered by a broad range of teachers in the Middle School so that we can tackle these topics in small groups of approximately 12 students. In the 6th form the Mindsets topics are delivered by 6th form tutors in tutor groups. The school is also currently rolling out Youth Mental Health First Aid 2 day training to all staff which will significantly help in delivering this programme of study (accredited by MHFA England).

### **3rd year**

Wellbeing, values and decision making, making positive friendships, the teenage brain, the importance of kindness

British Values

Equality Act 2010, the protected characteristics

Challenging discrimination, including ageism, racism mental health and disability discrimination

Anti-bullying, including homophobia and transphobia. Case study of Gareth Thomas coming out.

First Aid training either in CCF or as part of the Service and Citizenship Programme

Alcohol and drugs, as well as the dangers of prescription drugs and addiction. The UK law surrounding drugs and substances

Healthy and unhealthy Eating

Love and commitment

Marriage and relationships including civil partnerships

Parenting and Trust

Menstrual wellbeing, the menopause and feminism

Pregnancy, choices, miscarriage and the law, reasons why people might delay sex

**3rd year Health Centre nurses' talk.** Michaelmas term

Covering personal hygiene, infection, dental care and oral hygiene. Michaelmas term

**3rd year Drugs talk.** Lent term

**3rd year RSE morning event off timetable.** Summer term

Loudmouth Theatre company production covering Child Drug Exploitation, sexual harassment and County Lines with an effective Q/A follow up.

The school doctor runs sessions on men's health issues in general as well as sexual health  
External registered nurses lead sessions on STIs, practical application of condoms and sexual consent.

**3rd year Mental Health and Wellbeing morning event off timetable.** Summer term

After a visiting drama production on mental health and wellbeing there are 3 presentations delivered by our Youth Mental Health First Aid team promoting positive mental fitness. Information will include awareness of anxiety, depression, self harm, eating disorders, suicide and psychosis.

### **4th year**

Emotional wellbeing and resilience

Managing stress and the mental health continuum

Depression and Anxiety and how to help others

Examining modern masculinity today through the lens of Grayson Perry's work

Prevent and radicalization

Human Rights and responsibilities

Navigating the online world: digital footprints, online risks, gaming, security online and fraud, online streaming, vlogging and mental health

Sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, rape, forced marriage, honour based violence, FGM, domestic abuse

Sexual harassment

Pornography, sexting and the law

Body image

Gambling addiction

### **5th year**

Health centre talk on chlamydia screening

Ways to wellbeing, healthy habits

Healthy living and the impact of a poor diet and inactive lifestyle

Dangers online

The science related to blood, organ and stem cell donations

Smoking, vaping, lung cancer and the benefits of quitting

### **L6th form**

Wellbeing

Stress and sleep hygiene

Anxiety and stress management

Love and relationships

LGBTQIA+

Everyday sexism

### **6th form lectures**

Rebecca Root talk on LGBTQIA+

Emma Cole talk on STIs

Dick Moore talk on mental health and wellbeing

Patrick Foster talk on gambling and addiction

Natasha Devon MBE talk on promoting positive mental health and wellbeing

### **U6th form**

Dealing with conflict in relationships

Gratitude and generosity

Preparing for wellbeing at university and what support is offered at higher educational level

In addition the school runs annual themed weeks which pick up on various RSE themes such as:

**Anti-bullying week** - picks up on ideas and issues such as bullying due to disability, racism, ageism or sexuality or indeed any other protected characteristic

**Mental Health awareness week** - encourages the students to think about positive mental fitness and to be more aware of mental ill health and how to get help either for themselves or a friend

**International Men's week** - focus on the contribution men make to society and an opportunity to thank men in our lives

**International Women's week** - focus on the contribution women make to society and an opportunity to thank women in our lives