

SWANMORE COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Sex Education Policy

Philosophy and Rationale

At Swanmore, sex education is seen as an integral part of our Personal, Social and Health Education programme. The PSHE programme aims to provide pupils with opportunities to develop into well-informed, thoughtful, responsible, healthy people who can make choices and decisions which are right for them. This programme supports both the College's aim to help each pupil to achieve his or her full potential in life, and the caring ethos that exists at Swanmore.

The law states (Department of Education Circular 5/94) that pupils must be taught about the biological aspects of sex as part of National Curriculum Science. Other aspects of sex education, including relationships, responsibilities and choices are covered at Swanmore as part of our PSHE Programme. Education about HIV and AIDS also takes place within the PSHE programme. Care is taken to ensure that Sex Education is set within a very clear moral framework.

Aims and Objectives

Sex education is not treated in isolation. The skills needed to cope successfully with other aspects of life, such as informed decision-making skills and self esteem, are transferable from areas such as careers or substance misuse to sexual relationships.

Within our programme, we aim to present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within a clear framework of values and an awareness of the law on sexual behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate the value of stable family life, marriage and the responsibilities of parenthood. They are helped to consider the importance of self-restraint, dignity, respect for themselves and others, acceptance of responsibility, sensitivity towards the needs of others, loyalty and fidelity. They are helped to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications, and risks, of certain types of behaviour, and to accept that both sexes must behave responsibly in sexual matters. Teachers are sensitive to the fact that not all children come from backgrounds that reflect such values or experiences and are supportive of pupils whatever their family circumstances.

Implementation

At Swanmore, the Science and PSHE departments work together to ensure that Science covers the biological aspects of sex education whilst PSHE covers relationships, responsibilities and choices concerning sexual behaviour.

Sex education which falls outside National Curriculum Science is delivered by specialist teachers and visiting experts during a 'special events' day or part of such a day.

The methods used for delivery include the following:

- video material with follow-up discussions
- information-giving sessions
- role play / drama productions
- group discussions
- answering general queries

There are also some books and leaflets available in the library that pupils can borrow or take which cover various aspects of sexual relationships.

Use of Other Agencies

Within the programme, the College will use other agencies to help deliver aspects of sex education. These could include family planning nurses, workers from special clinics and HIV and AIDS prevention specialists.

All visitors will be made aware of the College's policy on sex education and will have to agree to work within its guidelines and within the law.

We recognise that sex education extends beyond the taught curriculum and can be delivered incidentally in various subject areas and in the pastoral context where the welfare of the children is paramount. All adults working alongside the young people in the College are aware of and support the College's policy on sex education and are clear about the legal side of sex education.

Staff Development

A copy of the sex education policy is included as part of the Swanmore Staff Handbook. In addition to this, the Headteacher and/or nominated staff, ensure that in-service training is given to make staff aware of the legal implications and their professional responsibilities. This INSET takes place early on in the College year, and when there are any new developments that staff need to know about.

All staff new to Swanmore, not just those new to teaching are given a specific INSET session as part of their induction package. This acquaints them with Swanmore's policy and allows them the opportunity to seek clarification over any matters related to it.

Parents and Sex Education

Parents are key figures in helping their children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects for growing up and preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities which

sexual maturity brings. At Swanmore, our aim is that the teaching offered is complementary and supportive to the role of parents.

When the sex education policy is being reviewed or at other appropriate times, parents are invited to an informal meeting at the College, where they can view the materials being used and discuss aspects of the sex education programme with teachers and governors.

The College welcomes comments and enquiries from parents about sex education at any time, and expects parents to use the parent-governors to represent their views on sex education.

The arrangements by which parents may withdraw their child

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from any sex education which falls outside National Curriculum Science.

In order to withdraw a child, the parent should make a request, in writing, to the Headteacher. This request will be complied with until the parent changes or revokes it.

Although parents are not obliged to give reasons for their decision to withdraw their child, the College will encourage them to do so in order to discuss what the concerns may be.

An explanation of the right to withdraw can be found in the College prospectus and in the Key Stage 3 curriculum booklet.

Sensitive Issues

Teaching and discussion about the range of human sexual orientation should provide information to challenge discrimination, prejudice and fear. If the College is to have equal opportunities for all, the concerns of young people who think that they may be homosexual need to be acknowledged.

Other sensitive issues, such as abortion, will be dealt with as objectively as possible, with due consideration being paid to the beliefs and values of different groups within society.

Our programme does not aim to make judgements on sensitive issues and expect young people to follow them. We want them to have been given information and the opportunity to think things through for themselves, whilst recognising that what might be the right decision for them might not be correct for someone else in different circumstances.

Date of Policy: January 2011

Date of Review: January 2012