



RELATIONSHIPS & SEXUALITY EDUCATION POLICY

Chair of Governors:

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A Policy for Relationships and Sexuality Education

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Introduction

The governors of Ysgol Bryn Derw believe that relationships and sexuality education is part of the educational entitlement of all pupils and as part of a “whole school approach.” All young people, whatever their ability, develop physically and emotionally and therefore need to be helped to understand their bodies and their feelings. This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of relationships and sexuality education at Ysgol Bryn Derw for all its pupils.

Overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy rests with the teaching staff. The Governing Body, however, will not insist that a teacher who has strong reservations about providing sexuality education takes part in the programme.

The nature and values of relationships and sexuality education

The governors believe that pupils’ ability to lead their lives competently and with fulfilment can be greatly enhanced by learning about their own sexual development and by developing their awareness of their relationships with others. Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) explores the interconnected ways in which a wide and diverse range of social, cultural, technological and biological influences affect the ability to form and maintain positive relationships. The Governing Body also believes that the basis of moral behaviour is that each of us feels valued for what we are, and of worth to others. Our pupils have ASD and a variety of additional needs and come from a range of backgrounds, but they all need to experience self-esteem and the forming of satisfying relationships with others. It is vital that all of our students are able to form loving and caring relationships throughout their lives.

The change in the name of the policy from the previous Sex and Relationships Policy reflects the internally recognised World Health Organisation (WHO) standards for sexuality and is adopted in line with the Welsh Government’s Relationships and Sexuality Education in schools guidance, February 2019.

Consequently, the overriding aim of this policy at Ysgol Bryn Derw is to give our students the skills to conduct such relationships with dignity and assertiveness and to avoid being exploited. This overriding aim is supported by the following objectives: -

- To provide knowledge and information to which all students are entitled
- To clarify / reinforce knowledge students have already acquired
- To raise students' self-esteem and confidence, especially in their relationships with others
- To help students to understand their sexual feelings and behaviour, so that they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives
- To develop skills (language, decision making, choice, assertiveness) which are necessary in a range of situations
- To give practise of strategies which reduce the risk of exploitation, misunderstanding and abuse
- To provide the confidence to be an active member of society
- To support access to information and facilities

Entitlement and statutory requirements

The law requires that a compulsory programme of sex education and diseases must be provided for all pupils of secondary age (11yrs+), whatever type of school they attend. This law also gives parents the right to withdraw their children from sex education at any age, except those parts which are in the National Curriculum Science syllabus.

The sex education programme provided at Ysgol Bryn Derw has been carefully planned to take account of students' age, maturity, and stages of emotional and physical development. It will develop slowly throughout the time the young people are in school, using well proven methods which allow time for repetition, practice of relevant skills and reflection. It will be fully and constantly evaluated.

Implementation

In the Primary department (before the age of 11yrs) sex education is integrated into the whole curriculum and not taught separately. Significant aspects of sex education are part of the statutory National Curriculum for Science. The biological elements of sex education, including naming body parts, puberty and human development are all compulsory parts of the National Curriculum Science. Consequently, the following areas MAY be covered at school during the primary years, depending on the abilities and needs of pupil's including: -

- Relationships
- Values, rights, culture and sexuality
- Self-awareness – who am I? What can I do?
- Identifying and naming body parts
- Understanding Gender.
- Staying safe & privacy
- Family and friends – who do I know?
- Skills: choosing, making decisions, saying yes and no
- Human body and development
- Sexual and reproductive health
- Preparation for puberty – periods (at appropriate age)

In the Secondary aged classes, the areas covered within the Primary department will be reinforced and other areas will be added, depending upon the students' ability to understand them, as part of a

Personal and Social Health Education programme, as well as part of National Curriculum Science, MAY BE covered depending on the abilities and needs of pupils, including: -

- Private body parts; identification and correct names
- Body changes, growing up, puberty
- Privacy
- Skills, choosing, decision making, assertiveness
- Menstruation and masturbation: coping with changes
- Friendships: same sex, opposite sex

In the secondary and tertiary departments appropriate work will continue according to the profile of pupils individual needs, as a class and department and depending on the abilities and needs of pupils MAY include: -

- Sexual intimacy
- Sexual relationships
- Pregnancy, birth and contraception
- Sexually transmitted diseases

Staff will decide on the most effective teaching approaches to use in the classroom, dependent on the needs and abilities of the pupils on an individual, group, class and department basis. The Governing Body believes that learning about personal matters is increased if pupils learn in a small supportive group where they feel safe. The Governing Body also believe that teaching sex education to pupils who have difficulty understanding concepts means that teaching may need to include more opportunities for repetition and reinforcement, than that at certain other schools. The Governing Body support the use of correct words for body parts and functions, and of visual material which is clear and unmistakeable.

Sex education will be taught by teachers, who may decide to work on a team basis. There will be times when gender groups will need to work alone, and other times when pupils will be grouped according to their development and maturity. No teacher will be expected to undertake specific sex education teaching without the support of colleagues in the school, and of attendance at training courses as necessary. However, the Governing Body will not insist that a teacher who has strong reservations about providing sex education takes part in the programme. On some occasions the school may work in partnership with other agencies e.g. community nurses, psychologists, other schools and community projects.

The Governing Body expect non-teaching staff, who have much experience of the pupils' abilities and needs, to be involved in planning, taking part and evaluating classroom work, although the overall responsibility rests with the teaching staff.

In classes in the Secondary and Tertiary department specific times may be set aside for the programme. In the Primary department it will be more appropriate to integrate the PSHE programme with other work in a thematic approach. However, this will still need careful planning. Continuity and a common approach throughout the school will be essential.

Pupils with severe learning difficulties are not excluded from the programme. Using appropriate methods, they will experience most of the basic content including; self awareness, body parts recognition, privacy.

The most valuable resource in the education of our pupils is to be found in the understanding, experience, skills and creativity of school teaching and non-teaching staff. The use of everyday objects and opportunities can be used in the teaching programme and to avoid confusing pupils, some explicit resources will be needed: illustrative material; cut outs of bodies and body parts; and anatomically correct models. In this event, parents and carers will be invited to meet the staff who plan and deliver the programme.

The Governing Body expect all staff who work with pupils in the context of personal care and development to treat every student as an individual with dignity and respect. Staff will make a conscious effort to discourage older students from behaviour which is inappropriate to their age.

The Governing Body are aware that for many parents the whole issue of sexual development is a sensitive one. Consequently, every opportunity will be taken to inform and involve parents and carers: -

- By making our commitment clear in the school prospectus.
- By reporting on sex education in the Annual Report to parents.
- By inviting parents to discuss personal development at Annual Review meetings, Parent Evenings or additional meetings.
- By inviting parents to a meeting prior to an explicit programme of work where resources are available, and their use explained.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education, although not from those elements which are in National Curriculum Science. If a parent wishes to withdraw a child, they are asked to discuss it with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher, to be clear about what they will do when withdrawn from lessons.

Link to other school policies

- Safeguarding
- Anti-Bullying
- Health Schools
- Intimate Care Guidelines
- Special Educational Needs
- Whole School Curriculum

Review

This Policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every three years, or sooner if statutory guidelines change.