



Sex & Relationships Education

Introduction

Section 46 of the Education Act (1986) required that,

“The Local Education authority by whom any county, voluntary or special school is maintained, and the governing body and head teacher of the school, shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that where sex education is given to any registered pupils at the school it is given in such a manner as to encourage those pupils to have regard to moral considerations and the value of family life.”

The Government believes that all pupils should be offered the opportunity of receiving a comprehensive, well-planned programme of sex education during their school careers, in fulfilment of the requirement of section 1 of the Education Reform Act 1988 that the school curriculum should be one which:

- a. *“promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and*
- b. *prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.”*

The Government has therefore provided that, when the changes introduced by section 241 of the Education Act 1993 come into force on 1 September 1994, schools will have the legal powers and duties summarised below:

- *in maintained secondary schools, sex education (including education about HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases) must be provided for all registered pupils. As in primary schools, the governing body must make a written statement of their policy on sex education available to all parents;*
- *in all maintained schools any sex education must be provided in such a manner as to encourage young people to have regard to moral considerations and the value of family life. The parents of a pupil at any maintained school may, if they wish, withdraw that pupil from all or part of the sex education provided.*

Sex Education in Schools – circular no. 5/94

Cottenham Village College

Cottenham Village College is an integral part of the Community serving the villages of Cottenham, Landbeach, Rampton, Waterbeach and Willingham. Currently, it provides full time statutory education for 900 students aged 11-16 and part-time education, leisure and recreation for over 2000 adults.

The principle aim of the College is to serve the community by providing facilities and opportunities for education and leisure for people of all ages.

Students at the College are placed in seven mixed-ability forms on entry and remain within this group for their whole College career.

In the various subject areas the students are initially taught and are then placed into sets at various points for some subjects.





Hearing and Language Centre

The Centre, which was opened in 1994, caters for all secondary age Hearing and Language Impaired students in the South Cambridgeshire area, who would find it difficult to progress through secondary school without the additional support that a specialist centre provides.

It has built upon the expertise gained during the twenty years in which there has been a Hearing Impaired Unit within the College.

The aim of the Centre is to support students, families and school to promote the most effective inclusion of these students into the life of the Village College, and ultimately into the outside world. Students are supported in main school lessons in order to access the curriculum and are withdrawn for specialist sessions for speech and language therapy, language and literacy development and tutorial work.

Primary Liaison

The Village College takes pride in the excellent relationship built up over the years with our local Primary Schools. Whole-school and subject area meetings have been held to ensure continuity of curriculum on transfer. The Primary Liaison Co-ordinator is a regular visitor to the schools and much cross-phase liaison takes place.

As far as sex education is concerned, staff from Waterbeach, Willingham and Cottenham primary schools have helped over the years to develop a picture of the range of experiences which the students have already had in this area before joining the College. This is valuable information when trying to build a spiral programme.

Visitors to the College

Anyone who visits the College to speak to the students on a topic related to sex education will be advised of this policy and asked to abide by it.

Sex and Relationships Education (Sre)

We believe that Sex and Relationship Education is an educational entitlement of all students and is an essential part of each student's development from adolescence.

Aim

To support the personal and social development of all students, ensuring that they have the ability to accept their own and others' sexuality, to express their sexuality in positive ways and to enjoy relationships based on mutual respect and responsibility, free from any abuse.

Objectives

- To discover what students know, understand, think and feel and to identify their needs.
- To teach human reproduction with clarity (including an understanding of contraception and sexually-transmitted diseases).
- To create a programme which caters for students' needs and is sensitive to individuals and groups.
- To generate an atmosphere where questions can be asked and discussions on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment.
- To discuss the physical and emotional changes which take place during adolescence and provide reassurance.
- To understand the value of family life, the implications of parenthood and the needs of the very young.





- To develop skills in personal relationships, such as communication, assertiveness and decision-making.
- To help children affirm their rights, to be able to resist unwanted touches or advances and to communicate about such matters.
- To develop growing understanding of the risk and safety and the motivation and skills to keep themselves safe.
- To be aware of sources of help and to acquire the skills and confidence to use them.
- To encourage parents to be partners in this learning process by keeping them informed and reassuring them.

Governors' Policy Statement

The governors recognise that the development of young people to mature and responsible adults is achieved by a variety of processes influenced by background, upbringing, family life, friends, the community and to an ever-increasing amount, the media. However, it is the parents who are the key figures in helping young people cope with the physical and emotional aspects of growing-up and in preparing them for the responsibilities that maturity into adulthood brings.

It is incumbent upon the College to work as a partner in that preparation, recognising its duty to offer complementary and supportive teaching, (for there may be parents who find it difficult to discuss freely such matters with their children).

At Cottenham Village College, Health Education is taught mainly in science lessons and as a part of the Conference (PSE) Days. However, certain aspects, including work on Drugs are also covered in Drama. A sensitive approach, with due regard to different cultural heritages and different moral and social conventions is essential.

Not all the teachers may be "comfortable" in fulfilling this aspect of education and so where possible, staff who have empathy with the young people and who are sympathetic to the aims of the course are the tutors. At all times, the College is mindful of the concern that parents have over some aspects of Health Education and is careful not to undermine the responsibility and authority of parents.

The College, through its published aims and statement of values, strives to create an ethos that give high priority to moral considerations, places emphasis on responsibility and respect for others, implicitly and explicitly expressed through action and reactions to situations and through individual and corporate decision making. The implementation of this policy will further advance these College aims and values.

The right of withdrawal

Section 241 of the Education Act 1993 gives parents the right to withdraw their children from any part of sex and relationship education, with the exception of those components which fall within the statutory **National Curriculum**. We hope that all parents would wish their children to take advantage of the sex education programme. However, if you decide to withdraw your child you should write to the College at your earliest convenience. Letters should be addressed to Ms H Turner, Personal and Social Education Co-ordinator. Whilst you are under no obligation to give a reason for your decision, if you are willing to do so, we may be able to put your mind at rest.

What Is Sex Education?

Today, sex education is generally considered to be much more than just delivering biological facts and information about hygiene. It often forms part of the much wider programme of Personal and Social Education (or Health Education). It should include the following aspects:-

- Knowledge of how the body functions
- Exploration of feelings about love, sexuality and responsibility towards oneself and others.
- The moral, legal, cultural and ethical dimensions.





It also has a skills base involving assertiveness, communication and decision making.

According to the National Curriculum Council sex education provides;

"...an understanding that positive, caring environments are essential for the development of a good self-image and that individuals are in charge of, and responsible for, their own bodies. It provides knowledge about the processes of reproduction and the nature of sexuality and relationships. It encourages the acquisition of skills and attitudes which allow pupils to manage their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner."

Why Should Sex Education Be Taught In Schools?

For many people, in any age-group, topics such as sexuality, relationships, contraception and sexually-transmitted diseases can be difficult to discuss, especially when entwined with feelings and emotions.

John Balding's Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire (University of Exeter 1987), involving 18,000 11 - 16 year olds, showed that most young people thought that in their main source of information about sex should be their parents, followed by teachers, In reality, however, especially amongst the boys, friends were the major source of information, with teachers coming third after parents. The figures indicate that young people often rely on information from friends which is perhaps inaccurate, rather than getting it from home or school.

The 1994 version of the John Balding questionnaire was carried out at Cottenham Village College with the students in Years 8 and 10.

The results for the College were as follows:-

Main Source is:

BOYS		GIRLS	
Parents	27%	Parents	24%
Lessons	43%	Lessons	32%
Friends	17%	Friends	24%

Main Source should be:

BOYS		GIRLS	
Parents	47%	Parents	54%
Lessons	44%	Lessons	35%
Friends	3%	Friends	4%

These results should be compared with those the SHEU (Schools Health Education Unit) would **expect** to see in Year 11.

Main source is:

BOYS		GIRLS	
Parents	15%	Parents	30%
Lessons	10%	Lessons	10%
Friends	35%	Friends	35%

Main Source should be:

BOYS		GIRLS	
Parents	50%	Parents	65%
Lessons	15%	Lessons	10%
Friends	10%	Friends	10%

More recently, the questionnaire was repeated with similar results.

Sex and Relationships Policy 09.08





Policy Formulation

The policy for sex education at Cottenham Village College was first drafted in 1988. It was decided that a small group of staff should discuss the sex education already established at the College and consider how it could be improved. The "steering" group included:

Mrs J Doody	(PSE Co-ordinator)
Mrs S Raven	(Deputy Head)
Mrs M Starkie	(Head of Year)
Mrs J Briggs	(Governor)

The aims, method of delivery and content of the sex education were then presented to the Governing Body at a meeting with Mrs Doody and were agreed as acceptable.

An invitation was sent to parents (primarily of Year 9 students), to visit the College for an informal evening to discuss this sensitive area. Feedback from this meeting was very favourable.

Although changes have been made to the detail of the content of sex education, year by year, the overall policy and underlying aims have remained constant.

In 1992 - 93 the policy was further considered and updated by:

Mrs J Doody	(Co-ordinator of Curriculum Enrichment)
Mrs S Raven	(Deputy Head)
Mrs M Starkie	(Head of Year)

In recent years, the Governor with a special interest in Health Education (including Sex Education), has been with Mrs Jill Briggs. As from 2001 the named Governor has been Krystyna Kelly.

Further policy revision has taken place during 1994, 1998 1999 and 2002.

Curriculum Summary

Year 7

The topic of "Human Reproduction" is covered in Science lessons and is taught by the Science teachers. Useful resources here are the prepared student booklet on Reproduction (produced in-house), and the video Fertilisation. After this topic has been completed, a Nurse Advisor from the "always & TAMPAX" Education Service visits the College to speak to Year 7 girls. She uses a range of visual aids to help discuss the topic of "Puberty", including biological and emotional aspects. (Please see enclosed information from "always & TAMPAX"). While the girls are with this visitor the boys have an opportunity to discuss aspects of puberty with Mr Roger Daw.

These talks on puberty form part of one of our Conference days. During the day students participate in other related activities, including discussing what they would value in a friend/partner, and seeing a video called First Date. Another of the Conference days focuses on Healthy Lifestyle and Risk, and may also link up with the Sex and Relationship work. During the Conference days the students work mainly with their form tutors.

Year 9

In science lessons work on Human Reproduction is revised and extended. Reasons why people make love i.e. not just to make a baby, are discussed. There is also more detailed discussion on contraception and sexually transmitted diseases. Students are also taught the basics of genetics and variation.

A Conference day for year nine is designed to give students the opportunity to discuss different types of relationships, as well as to recap on topics including sexually-transmitted diseases such as HIV, partnership and negotiation etc.

Useful resources include a video called "From Conception to Birth", a set of plastic embryo/foetus models and examples of a full range of contraceptives.

Resources have also been used from 'Safe and Sound' by Julian Cohen.





Year 10 and 11

The National Curriculum Key Stage 4 requires more detailed work to be followed on from the reproduction topic of Year 9. Aspects of sex education may be discussed in lessons on "Drugs", linked with prevalence of HIV in intravenous drug-users. A range of controversial issues related to Sex and Relationship education are discussed in English, Humanities and Drama.

On one of the Conference days, year 10 girls are invited by the Nurse Advisor from the "always & TAMPAX" Education Service to her lecture on Well Woman issues. (See enclosed information). The boys discuss Well Man issues with Mr Roger Daw. We also invite in speakers from DHIVERSE and do some drama activities around the topic of negotiation

One of the year 11 Conference days includes a range of speakers. Students have the opportunity to participate in a session about Relationships. (Roger Daw).

Resources

Other resources not yet mentioned include:

"Make Love Last" video and teacher's pack

"Taught not Caught" book including many activities, including questionnaires

"Yes, AIDS again" book including quizzes, activities, games role plays etc.

"Teenscape" questionnaires for older and younger students

"Sexually transmitted diseases" video

"POWER" PSHE for KS 3

Keeping Parents Informed

During the Year 6 Primary Week, or during the first few weeks of Year 7, students are given a letter for parents/carers. This informs them of their right to withdraw their son/daughter from certain aspects of the Sex and Relationship education programme. A completed tear off slip is required to be signed by the parent and returned to the College.

Parents are also informed :-

- Shortly before the reproduction topic is started in Year 7.
- Before the Nurse Advisor lecture on Puberty for Year 7 girls.
- Before the Nurse Advisor lecture on Well Woman Issue for Year 10 girls.

Recently (November 2001) I was invited to speak to the College's Parents' Association about our Conference (PSE) days. This included a brief mention of the work we do, at Cottenham, on Sex and Relationships Education.

Staff Training

Most of the health education training in recent years has been "in-house" following the attendance of the PSE Co-ordinator on relevant "Health Education" courses over a number of years. Topics have included sex education, drugs, sexually-transmitted disease (HIV/AIDS), active methods of teaching etc.

The greatest need for training has been for the Year 9 "Relationships" course:

For September 1992

The year team, along with College Nurse Plunkett-West and College First-Aider Mrs Ayling decided to teach the course themselves. Staff were given the option of teaching their form on their own, with help from the nurse etc (ie team teaching) or observing and joining in where appropriate. In the event, all taught at least part of the course and good use was made of the medical staff.

Sex and Relationships Policy 09.08





Training took various forms:

A preliminary meeting for all involved, to discuss the lesson plans and overall objectives for the "Relationships" course as a whole. Resources were reviewed and video shown (INSET in school time). A year team meeting after school to discuss the presentation of lessons on "contraception" and "sexually-transmitted diseases". Informal meeting between individual staff or groups of staff, with the Nurse, to discuss team-teaching tactics.

For September 1993

The Year Team decided each to deal with a separate CE topic on a carousel basis. One member of staff who is a trained nurse and also teaches Science (especially Biology), covered the "Relationships" course after discussion with the CE Co-ordinator. The College medical staff were also involved.

For September 1994

The above course was taught by the Year Head. Training included a meeting to discuss the content of the course and the methods of delivery. The CE Co-ordinator taught the first form group in the carousel, observed by the Year Head. This was followed by further discussion and monitoring from then on. College medical staff have agreed to help.

The College takes advantage of any suitable courses, available through the Curriculum Agency, Lifespan Healthcare etc.

For September 1995 – 2002

In-house training has been given to Year Teams as appropriate.

Ground Rules

As with many sensitive topics, it is useful to provide comfortable surroundings for discussion. Here the students feel more supported and able to talk more readily and, hopefully, without embarrassment. It is worthwhile spending some time negotiating a list of ground rules within which the students are able to work most effectively.

The list below was negotiated by a group of 11 year olds. (Taken from Curriculum Guidance, Number 5, Health Education).

Older students may be more concerned about aspects such as "confidentiality".

Sensitive Issues (See "Keeping Parents Informed")

Contraception

Particular care must be exercised in relation to contraceptive advice to students under 16, for whom sexual intercourse is unlawful. The general rule must be that giving student advice on such matters without parental knowledge or consent would be an inappropriate exercise of a teacher's professional responsibilities.

Accordingly, a teacher approached by an individual student for specific advice on contraception or other aspects of sexual behaviour should, wherever possible, encourage the student to seek advice from his or her parents, and, if appropriate, from the relevant health service professional (e.g. their GP or the school doctor or nurse).

Where the circumstances are such as to lead the teacher to believe that the student has embarked upon, or is contemplating, a course of conduct which is likely to place him or her at moral risk or in breach of the law, the teacher has a general responsibility to ensure that the student is aware of the implications and is urged to seek advice as above.

Paragraph 39 – Circular Number 5.94 – Education Act 1993 : Sex Education in Schools

However, it must be remembered that following the publicity given to condoms in the HIV/AIDS campaigns, there is now more informal knowledge about contraception among even very young children. It is important that students' understanding is clarified in a manner related to their age and





experience. Students need to assimilate knowledge and understanding of contraception some time before they need it, hence the value of the spiral curriculum.

Hiv/Aids

Health campaigns and media attention have put AIDS into the language of even very young children. Some may use it as a term of abuse in the playground; some worry unduly because of inaccurate interpretation; many exhibit misunderstanding and prejudice. Teachers can do much to counteract these negative effects on informal learning.

Students of all ages need to know the difference between HIV and AIDS, modes of transmission, basic hygiene and risky behaviours (for younger children, for example, picking up discarded needles or any skin piercing; for older students sharing needles and specific sexual behaviour). All can learn that there is no danger from PWAs (People with AIDS) in normal social contact. All need to learn that there are no risky people, only risky behaviours and that anyone, regardless of sexual orientation, is potentially at risk.

Sexual Orientation

The Secretary of State for Education and Employment is clear that teachers should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer questions and offer support. It is clear that teachers are expected not to promote specific sexual orientation, forms of relationship or sexual behaviour.

Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988, applies to Local Education Authorities and does not apply to teachers or schools. It does not, therefore, constitute a reason to avoid objective discussion of homosexuality.

Some adolescents experience strong emotional attachments to people of their own sex; feelings which may or may not be physically expressed. Many move on to form heterosexual relationships; some remain homosexual or bisexual. Within society there are many opposing views and beliefs about sexual orientation.

Caring teachers, whatever their own views, will want to counteract prejudice and victimisation and support the development of self-esteem and a sense of responsibility in every student.

Abortion

Students need to be presented with a balanced view, which respects a range of religious beliefs and experiences. It provides an opportunity to distinguish between fact and opinion e.g. the stage at which life commences, and may help to clarify values e.g. in what circumstances, if any, abortion is a positive choice.

Sexual abuse

Increasing public concern about the occurrence and long-term damaging effects of sexual abuse has been expressed in recent years.

For teachers there are two dimensions:-

1. Teaching for prevention, i.e. the promotion of self-esteem, the skills of assertiveness, lack of guilt or embarrassment about sexual matters and skills of self-expression including appropriate language and understanding.
2. Recognising signs of abuse, physical, emotional and social. The teacher has a significant part to play in early detection. It is essential that the correct procedures are followed as outlined in "Education Department Child Protection Procedures".

In circumstances where a student wishes to talk about such a problem, the teacher should give them time to talk, but without probing. They should not promise to keep secrets and should state that they may have to tell someone else. As a rule the information should be passed to the "named person" at the school. At Cottenham, the named person is Sue Raven.





The "Parents' Handbook" at Cottenham states the following, under the heading:-

Child Protection

"It may be helpful to parents to know that the Authority requires Head Teachers to report any obvious or suspected case of child abuse – which includes non-accidental injury, severe physical neglect, emotional abuse and/or sexual abuse. This procedure is intended to protect children at risk and schools are encouraged to take the attitude that where there are grounds for suspicion, it is better to be safe than sorry. This does mean that Head Teachers risk upsetting some parents by reporting a case which, on investigation proves unfounded. In such circumstances, it is hoped that parents, appreciating how difficult it is for the Head Teacher to carry out this delicate responsibility, would accept the Head Teacher was acting in what were believed to be the child's best interest."

Equal Opportunities

It is the norm at Cottenham Village College for boys and girls to be taught together for Sex and Relationship education, as they would for any other subject. (Please see information about the visiting speakers in years 7 and 10 where the sessions are taken in single-sex groups). The content and range of teaching methods used must ensure access and relevance to all abilities.

However, if parents so wish, they may withdraw their son or daughter from any part of sex education, (except those which are required by the National Curriculum).

Teaching Methods

At Cottenham Personal and Social Education is delivered in mixed ability form groups. Students within any form group will be at varying stages of development both physically and emotionally. It is important, therefore, that these lessons, including Sex and Relationship Education, should be delivered using a balanced range of teaching methods. (See next page).

These may include:

Brainstorms:

to stimulate and to record immediate ideas quickly. They can help to set out an agenda.

Check lists:

can raise awareness of issues quickly. Participants respond to statements using categories such as "true", "false", "don't know", or "agree", "disagree", "don't know". Answers and opinions are fed back to the group.

Group work:

pairs or small groups may be most useful to allow more people to contribute. Ideas may then be pooled. A group of three would allow for one to be an observer and to feed back to the other two. Students should not be pressurised into disclosing things they do not wish to.

Quizzes:

these can check knowledge, awareness etc. They are not tests. They could be carried out individually and then answers shared with a partner. Full answers should be available to be read to the students.

Videos:

these must be checked for suitability. Students may be asked to pick out a number of main points as a basis for discussion. A small section of a video may be used as a trigger.

Case Studies

these could be used to look at values, feelings etc.

Situations: could be given a list of suitable questions to discuss, in relation to the case study. Role play could also be used here.





Value

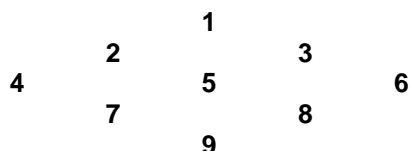
students are asked to mark on a line from

Continuum:

- **strongly agree** -----> **strongly disagree**
- their opinion on a certain statement. These can then be used as triggers for discussion.

Diamond 9:

9 statements on a particular issue are prepared, each on a separate card. One set is given to each group who are asked to prioritise them as follows.



1 = most agree with.

9 = least agree with.

It is hoped that the group will come to a consensus of opinion although the preliminary discussion is the most valuable outcome.

For any one topic, using a range of teaching methods will add variety and interest.

Evaluation:

A number of the above teaching methods, along with interviews and questionnaires can be useful evaluation tools. At times, a formal evaluation may be used. Formal and informal discussions with students and staff can also help to clarify points which may need further consideration.

It is also important to give opportunities for the students to reflect on what has been learnt, and to consolidate new learning and promote new understanding, skills and attitudes.

Further Resources

These can be found in the cabinet in the staff room and with Miss Turner in S2.

Useful Contacts

Always & TAMPAX

Education Service

0345 661117

Brook Advisory Centres

Head Offices

153a East Street

London SE17 2SD

020 7708 1234/1390

Centre 33

33 Clarendon Road

Cambridge

CB1 1JX

(Helpline)

01223 316488

Childline

020 7239 1000

Durex Information Service for Sexual Health

North Circular Road

Chingford

London





E4 8QA

020 8527 2377

Family Planning Association

27 Mortimar Street
London
W1N 7RJ

020 7636 7866

National AIDS Helpline (24 hour)

0800 567 123

Relate

01223 357424

Terrence Higgins Trust

52 – 54 Grays Inn Road
London
WC1X 8JU

020 7831 0330 (admin)
020 7242 1010 (helpline)

The Ark (Health Clinic)

Auckland Road
Cambridge

01223 217533

The Samaritans

0345 909090

The Bridge Project

01223 214614

**Emergency Contraception
(Recorded Information)**

01223 533320
01480 415290

References

Education Act 1993: Sex Education in Schools – Circular number 5/94

Curriculum Guidance: Number 5, Health Education

Sex Education: A Guide for School Governors and Teachers

School Sex Education: Why, What and How. Doreen E. Massey (FPA)

Cottenham Village College School Report : Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire

Sex and Relationship Education - Guidance for Cambridgeshire Schools

