



Baston House School

Sex and Relationship Education Policy

Ethos

Baston House School is an Independent school for primary and secondary pupils with statements of need that describe their primary need as being within the Autism Spectrum. Pupils may encounter barriers to learning within speech, language, social communication, social interaction, social imagination and sensory differences; all specific features of Autism.

Our goal is to break down the barriers to learning that our students encounter and to help them to equip themselves for as independent a life as possible outside of school.

Our approach is based on an eclectic fusion of child-centred and autism-specific strategies and techniques, with a clear focus on improving communication and interaction skills through positive interventions.

Staff at Baston House School have a positive, 'can do' attitude and use solution focused approaches to create a no blame culture. Staff seek to understand how the Triad of Specific Features (Wing 2010) impact upon the developmental needs of our students and enables them to develop appropriate strategies, which capitalise on their strengths. Our core values of respect, caring, listening, fairness, trust, cooperation and consistency define our ethos, which gives this policy a solid foundation for enabling the development of our pupils.

Policy Statement

SRE is lifelong learning process of acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex, sexuality, relationships and feelings (Sex Education Forum 1999).

Effective SRE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain relationships; an area of particular difficulty for young people who have Autism. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being.

The 1996 Education Act consolidates all relevant previous legislation and states that all primary schools must provide an up to date policy that describes the content and organisation of SRE provided outside the National Curriculum Science Order. The DFE Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (2002) support this legislation and

recommends that all primary schools should have a sex and relationship education programme tailored to the age and physical and emotional maturity of the children. In the case of Baston House School, it is clear that the particular needs of pupils who have Autism must be carefully considered.

Other related policies and documents include the PSHE & Citizenship policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Aims and Objectives

This policy is a working document which provides guidance and information on all aspects of SRE in the school for staff and parents/carers. To be accessible to all of these groups the document needs to be available on request and presented in a way that is easy to understand.

The aim of SRE is to provide children with age appropriate information, explore attitudes and values and develop skills in order to empower them to make positive decisions about their health related behaviour. This should take place with consideration of the qualities of relationships within families.

The objectives of Sex and Relationship Education are;

- To provide the knowledge and information to which all pupils are entitled
- To clarify/reinforce existing knowledge
- To raise pupils' self esteem and confidence (commonly problem areas for children who have Autism), especially in their relationships with others;
- To help pupils understand their sexual feelings and behaviour (the understanding of cause and effect being particularly problematic for children who have Autism), so they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives;
- To help pupils' develop skills (language and communication, decision making, choice, assertiveness) and make the most of their abilities.
- To provide the confidence to be participating members of society and to value themselves and others;
- To help gain access to information and support
- To develop skills for a healthier safer lifestyle
- To develop and use communication skills and assertiveness skills to cope with the influences of their peers and the media
- To respect and care for their bodies
- To be prepared for puberty and adulthood

The teaching programme for Sex and Relationship Education Legal requirements

All schools must teach the following as part of the National Curriculum Science Orders; parents do not have the right to withdraw their child/children from teaching and learning in these areas.

National Curriculum Science

Key Stage 1

- b) that animals including humans, move, feed, grow, and use their senses and reproduce.
- a) to recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans and reproduce.
- f) that humans and animals can reproduce offspring and these grow into adults.
- a) to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and treat others with sensitivity.

Key Stage 2

- a) that the life processes common to humans and other animals include nutrition, growth and reproduction.
- f) about the main stages of the human life cycle.

Every child is entitled to receive SRE regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, age, culture, disability, sexuality, language special needs, disadvantaged and looked after children.

It is our explicit intention that all children have the opportunity to experience the programme of SRE at a level which is appropriate for their age, maturity and physical development with differentiated provision to take into account the social understanding differences commonly experienced by children who have Autism.

Moral and Values Framework

The SRE programme at Baston House School reflects the school ethos and demonstrates and encourages the following values:

- Respect for self;
- Respect for others;
- Responsibility for their own actions;
- Responsibility for their family, friends, schools and wider community.

Equal Opportunities Statement

The school is committed to the provision of SRE to all of its pupils. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of children's special needs (in particular, Autism), cultures, faiths and family backgrounds. Equal opportunity for time and provision will be allocated for all groups.

SRE Content

Key Stage 1

In key stage 1 pupils learn to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others, identify and share their feelings with each other, recognise safe and unsafe situations and identify and be able to talk to someone they trust.

Through work in science, children learn about life cycles of some animals, understand the idea of growing from young to old and learn that all living things reproduce. They learn about the importance of personal hygiene to maintain good health. In RE and Citizenship children reflect on family relationships, different family groups and friendship. They learn about rituals and traditions associated with birth, marriage and death and talk about the emotions involved. They begin to co-operate with others in work and play and begin to recognise the range of human emotions and ways to deal with them. They also learn about personal safety.

In key stage 2 pupils learn to express their opinions about relationships and bullying and to listen to and support others, including respecting other people's viewpoints and beliefs (a particular area of difficulty for many children and young people who have Autism). They learn to recognise their own worth and identify positive things about themselves and try to balance the stresses in life in order to promote their own mental health and well-being of others. Life processes are discussed including the physical changes that take place at puberty, why they happen and how to manage them; keeping in mind the fact that the concept of change is usually an area of challenge for people who have Autism.

In science children build on their knowledge of life cycles and learn about the basic biology of human reproduction including birth of a baby on years 5 & 6.

Children are taught about the physical, emotional and social changes (often heightened in Autism) at puberty, which include personal hygiene. In RE and Citizenship, they continue to develop an understanding of relationships within a family, between friends and the community and that there are different patterns of friendship. They will develop skills needed to form relationships and to respect other people's emotions and feelings. They will consider how to make simple choices and exercise some basic techniques for resisting pressures.

Sex and relationship education should focus on the development of skills and attitudes not just the acquisition of knowledge.

Materials used reflect the needs of the children at Baston House School, their ages, maturity and cultural backgrounds of the pupils in relation to any images used.

Organisation

SRE should not be delivered in isolation but firmly embedded in all curriculum areas, including Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and citizenship. At Baston House School the *main* content is delivered in PSHE lessons in the second half of the summer term to all years. This ensures a coherent curriculum.

SRE is normally delivered by class teachers in mixed gender groups other than when it is deemed more appropriate for topics to be covered in single sex groups. Active learning methods which involve children's full participation are used.

Occasionally, appropriate and suitably experienced and/or knowledgeable visitors from outside school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of SRE in school. Baston House School may use external visitors to support the delivery of PSHE:

Visitors are invited in to school because of their particular expertise or contribution they are able to make;

- All visitors are familiarised with the school's SRE policy and work within it;
- All input to PSHE lessons are part of a planned programme and negotiated and agreed with staff in advance;
- All visitors are supervised/supported by a member of staff at all times;
- The input of visitors is monitored and evaluated by staff and pupils. This evaluation informs future planning.

Elements of the sex education in the science curriculum are assessed formally using Assessing Pupil Progress criteria and judgements. Evaluation of the SRE programme outside the science order is conducted using a variety of informal activities which have been built into the programme. Teachers are required to keep their own personal evaluation of each lesson which is used to inform future planning.

Baston House School believes in the importance of training for staff delivering SRE. Staff are encouraged to identify and access appropriate CPD as part of their professional development.

Specific Issues within SRE

Withdrawal

Parents/Carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex and relationships education provided at school except for those parts included in statutory National Curriculum. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the Principal/Vice Principal, who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child development. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the SRE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

Curriculum materials can be made available to parents/carers who wish to supplement the school SRE programme or who wish to deliver SRE to their children at home.

Confidentiality

As a general rule a child's confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. If this person believes that the child is at risk or in danger, she/he talks to the named child protection officers who may confer with the Principal before any decision is made. The child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The child will be supported by the teacher throughout the process.

Child Protection

The school has a separate Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Effective SRE may bring about disclosures of child protection issues and staff should be aware of the procedures for reporting their concerns.

Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Staffs are aware that views around SRE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all SRE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have different opinions.

Dealing with Questions

Both formal and informal SRE arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly, and can be addressed individually later. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the Child Protection Officer if they are concerned.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

Baston House School believes that SRE should meet the needs of all pupils regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Homophobic bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively. The school liaises with parents on this issue to reassure them of the content and context.

Dissemination

All staff members receive a copy of the SRE policy. Copies are available from the school office on request.