



**Pent Valley**  
TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE

## **Policy: Sex & Relationships Education**

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## SEX & RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

Pent Valley Technology College is a large high school in Folkestone Kent. Shepway is an action zone to combat teenage pregnancy and the College recognises that it has a part to play in reaching the targets set for the area. Folkestone is a south coast town with a certain amount of poverty and some of the students at PVTC come from less affluent areas of the town. The Cheriton area in particular has housing estates which are recognised areas of need. The College has a small number of looked after children and a number of disadvantaged children. There are a number of refugee families in Shepway. There is now in Folkestone a large Nepali community, many of whom were formerly with the British Army in the Gurkha regiment. PVTC has specialist units for Physically Disabled, visually Impaired and Dyslexia. The college also has a number of students on the Autistic spectrum.

### HOW THIS POLICY WAS DEVELOPED.

This policy was updated from a previous policy, which had been agreed by the governors under a previous Head. Students were consulted through the school council and students have been consulted informally during various sessions. Governors receive regular updates on revised or new policies at all full governors meetings. Sex and relationships education is an integral part of the College curriculum for all students. In revising this policy recent legislation and reports and the element of cross-curricular teaching have all been taken into account. This policy takes full account of the school's legal obligations and the latest DfEE guidance 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' (DfEE 0116/2000).

Rates of teenage pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted infection in the UK are among the highest of all European countries. The Government has developed a comprehensive strategy to change this situation and SRE for pupils in both primary and secondary schools is seen, alongside other initiatives, as a key element. PVTC's approach to SRE is in line with the Government's strategy and guidance given to schools in DfES 'Sex and Relationship Guidance' 2000.

### SEX & RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION (SRE)

The term *sex and relationships education - SRE* - is used in this policy rather than *sex education*. This is to stress that our approach goes beyond provision of biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values, and developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships.

According to the latest DfES guidance, SRE is:

**'...lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health'**

DfES 'Sex and Relationship Guidance', 2000.

The guidance suggests that SRE should have three main elements as follows:

#### Knowledge and understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- Understanding human sexuality, sexual health, emotions and relationships.

### Attitudes and values

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.
- Learning the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children.
- Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.

### Personal and social skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice.
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

Sex and relationships education forms part of the College's PSHE programme and is also a part of the Science National Curriculum Processes of Life and Genetics and Evolution. It has moral, legal and ethical dimensions as well as a skills base, which involves assertiveness, self-esteem and communication. As well as the biological component, it is concerned with explaining feelings about love, sexuality, and responsibility towards oneself and others.

The college's approach to SRE consists of:

1. The taught National Curriculum Science Programme of Study. (See Appendix)
2. SRE modules within each Key Stage delivered within a planned PSHE programme.
3. Pastoral support for all pupils who experience difficulties.
4. Provision of appropriate information through leaflets and books in the library and display of posters
5. Individual support from the medical room assistant or from the school nurse for vulnerable students for whom further explanations are needed. Parents of these vulnerable youngsters will be kept informed and offered support in furthering conversations and discussions.

## REASONS FOR A SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

### Legal obligations

Maintained primary schools in England and Wales have a legal responsibility to provide an SRE programme. They also have a responsibility to keep an up to date written statement of the policy they choose to adopt and this must be available to parents. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from 'SRE' lessons, which fall outside those aspects covered in the National Curriculum Science.

The overall aims of the school and National Curriculum are:

1. To provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve.
2. To promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

The DfES 'Sex and Relationship Guidance' (2000) recommends that 'Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives'. The college has a key role, in partnership with parents/carers, in providing SRE. This Sex and Relationships Education Policy forms part of the PSHE policy (DfES Guidance 0116/2000).

Research has shown that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about sex and relationships, are more likely to be more discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and to have fulfilling relationships. **'Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive sex and relationship education does not make young people more likely to enter into sexual activity. Indeed it can help them learn the reasons for, and the benefits to be gained from, delaying such activity'. DfES 'Sex and Relationship Guidance', 2000.**

### THE COLLEGE VIEW

PVTC prides itself on being an inclusive school with a strong emphasis on the welfare of our students. The ethos and philosophy of the College place importance on the personal, social and moral development and welfare of its students. Within this framework we recognise the contribution of sex and relationships education to the education of the whole person and accept a responsibility, in partnership with parents/guardians, for the development of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes relating to sexuality.

### Morals and Values Framework

Our approach to SRE will be conducted within a clear morals and values framework based on the following principles:

- The value of stable and loving relationships.
- Respect, understanding and empathy towards others who may have different backgrounds, cultures, sexuality, feelings and views.
- The development of relationships, including sexual relationships, based on mutual consent, rather than coercion.
- The right not to be abused by other people or to be taken advantage of.
- The right of people to follow their own sexuality, within legal parameters.

We also believe that pupils have an entitlement to:

- Age and circumstance appropriate SRE.
- Access to help from trusted adults and helping services.

SRE involves consideration of a number of sensitive issues about which different people may hold strong and varying views. PVTC's approach to SRE will be balanced and take account of, and be sensitive to, different viewpoints but will not be based on personal bias. We shall endeavour to have an approach that is educational, rather than one based on propaganda.

#### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION.

1. To encourage young people to have due regard for moral considerations, and for the value of family life and a stable, faithful relationship.
2. To promote responsible behaviour and respect for oneself and others.
3. To combat ignorance and increase understanding by providing information about physical, emotional, and social aspects of human sexual development from conception to adulthood, including the nature of love, personal relationships and family life.
4. To promote an understanding of those aspects of the law which relate to sexuality.
5. To provide a suitable vocabulary for discussing sex and enable this to be used without embarrassment.
6. To counter unnecessary feelings of guilt and anxiety.
7. To develop an understanding of the range of human sexual attitudes and behaviour.
8. To raise awareness and understanding of sexually transmitted diseases.

#### INCLUSION

Mainstream schools and special schools have a duty to ensure that children with special educational needs and learning difficulties are properly included in sex and relationship education. Sex and relationship education should help all pupils understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives' DfEE SRE Guidance July 2000

PVTC recognises that all students have the same rights to sex education, contraceptive advice and support around making relationships as any other person of the same age. As this College has some physically challenged students, it is our intention to provide additional counselling and guidance from a member of the Community Health Authority. Furthermore, all such students have access to the school nurse's drop in sessions, thus providing the opportunity to discuss problems of adolescence. This college also has many emotionally fragile students and recognises that additional support may be required. Many outside agencies - Connexions, Healthy Schools' professionals, School Nurse Service, Relateen, KCA, the College Counsellors (Marchant house), offer support. School Nurses visit the College regularly and give advice and help as appropriate. A referral system is in place through the medial room, overseen by the AHT (ECM). The college now employs non-teaching Student Support Managers to offer further support to young people. Young people may have varying needs regarding SRE depending on their circumstances and background and PVTC strongly believes that all pupils should have access to SRE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this, the college's approach to SRE will take account of:

**The needs of boys as well as girls** Girls tend to have greater access to SRE than boys, both through the media (particularly magazines) and the home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.

**Ethnic and cultural diversity** Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to SRE. The school will consult pupils and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups.

**Varying home backgrounds** We recognise that our pupils may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances. Parenting classes on Teenage Topics have been offered in school to parents to help relationships and to further discussions in the home. It is hoped that these will be offered once again in the coming year.

**Sexuality** On average, about 5% of our pupils will go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian or bi-sexual (GLB). Students may also have GLB parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our pupils will meet and work with GLB people. Our approach to SRE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. We shall actively tackle homophobic bullying.

**Special educational needs** We shall take account of the fact that some pupils may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical disabilities that result in particular SRE needs.

**Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties** are not excluded from the programme. Using appropriate methods, they will experience most of the basic content; self-awareness, gender awareness, body recognition, privacy.

**Pupils with autism** will require individual teaching to meet their specific needs. Explicit teaching and use of pictures and visual aids is essential to avoid confusion. The college intends to purchase a "body board" as a life size visual aid.

**Contraceptive advice to older pupils** Pupils will be taught, in the context of sexual intimacy and safer sex, about protection for themselves and their partner. Questions about forms of contraception will be answered accurately and honestly within the student's ability to understand. Students will be encouraged to discuss these issues with a parent or carer at home but if pupils need further personal advice about contraceptive use, counselling and support will be sought from appropriate agencies and personnel. Posters for the Young Persons' Clinics are displayed and staff will advise young people how to visit them. The school nurses offer an emergency contraceptive service and pregnancy test service in school (agreed under the previous Head) **Concerns about younger students involved in inappropriate sexual activity will always be referred to the Deputy Head or Assistant Head (ECM) (Child Protection Officers)**

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF PSHE PROGRAMME**

This is achieved through:-

1. Students' evaluation at the end of modules of work, both written and verbal.
2. Teacher evaluation schemes (individual and on a group basis).
3. College's internal quality assurance via SLT and Year Learning Managers.

## A Whole College Approach

A whole college approach will be adopted to SRE that actively involves the whole college community. All groups who make up the college community have rights and responsibilities regarding SRE. In particular:

**The senior leadership team (SLT)** will endeavour to support the provision and development of SRE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.

**The designated SRE co-ordinator ( Assistant Head ECM - J Allcock)** will maintain an overview of SRE provision and have overall responsibility for its development. This will include keeping up to date with developments and good practice, developing the provision to meet students' needs, providing support and resources for staff, arranging staff training, liaison with outside agencies and monitoring and evaluation. Some sessions on gender specific problems will be delivered in single sex sessions but usually delivery will be to tutor groups, by tutors or PSHE volunteers. The College will liaise closely with the College Nurse Service and the Healthy Schools' Advisors.

**Teaching staff** Many teachers are involved in the college's SRE provision. Some SRE is taught through the PSHE programme and some through science and other curriculum areas. All teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to pupils. (Any teacher might be approached by a student who experiences a difficulty regarding sex or relationships issues). Teachers will be consulted about the college's approach to SRE and aided in their work by provision of resources, background information, support and advice from experienced members of staff and access to appropriate training.

**Non-teaching staff** may be involved in a supportive role in some SRE lessons and also play an important, informal pastoral support role with pupils. They will have access to information about the SRE programme and be supported in their pastoral role. Non-teaching Student Support Managers will play an increasingly important pastoral role, supplementing the role of teachers and replacing traditional Heads of House/Year. They will have access to further training and information.

**Governors** have responsibilities for college policies. They will be consulted about the SRE provision and policy and have regular reports at Governor's meetings.

**Parents/carers** have a legal right to view this policy and to have information about the college's SRE provision. They also have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated sex education lessons if they wish (see section 7.7). The school will seek and take account of parent/carer views and endeavour to adopt a partnership approach with parents/carers. This will periodically include information/education workshops for parents/carers. PVTC's approach to SRE will encourage dialogue between parents/carers and their children.

**The school nurse** team play a key role in supporting the teacher in SRE both in terms of advice, input into lessons, provision of pastoral support for pupils and resources. PVTC will work in ongoing consultation and close partnership with the school nurse team.

**Outside agencies and speakers** may be involved in inputting to SRE lessons. The school will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to pupil needs. We shall work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within the school.

**Pupils** have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate SRE and to pastoral support. They will be actively consulted, through the school council and informally in

lessons, about their SRE needs and their views will be central to developing the provision.

### **AIMS OF THE SRE PROGRAMME**

The overall aims of the SRE programme are:

1. To provide accurate information about, and understanding of, SRE issues.
2. To dispel myths.
3. To explore a range of attitudes towards SRE issues and to help pupils to reach their own informed views and choices for a healthier lifestyle.
4. To develop respect and care for others.
5. To increase pupils' self esteem.
6. To develop skills relevant to effective management of relationships and sexual situations. Examples include communication with and empathy towards others, risk assessment, assertiveness, conflict management, decision making, seeking help and helping others.
7. To contribute to a reduction in local and national pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and abortion rates.

Through its formulated and incidental learning programme, the Enrichment Scheme of work encourages:-

- Appreciation of stable family life.
- The value of sexual activity within the context of love and marriage.
- The responsibility of parenthood.
- The importance of self-restraint, dignity and respect of self and others in choice and decisions about sexual behaviour.
- Sensitivity towards the needs and views of others.
- Loyalty and Fidelity.
- A view of sex as an expression of deep and committed human love.

The College recognises that some students will be all too well aware that their backgrounds do not match those moral choices and attitudes to self and others. Hurt and the lowering of self esteem must be avoided but recognition, by all, of the value and benefit of such standards must remain fundamental aims.

### **Confidentiality and informing parents/carers**

We are aware that some parents find it hard to cope with their children's sexual development, and are happy for the school to take the initiative. We will take every opportunity to inform and involve parents and carers. Staff will support young people in discussing their needs with their parents.

College staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help. Staff must make this clear to pupils. Child protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures about abuse are made.

It is very rare for a pupil to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving child protection issues, staff must make a careful judgement about whether or not a third party needs to be informed, normally Student Support Manager, DHT or AHT (ECM). This judgement will be based upon:

- The seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the pupil may be experiencing.
- The pupil's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions.

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Where it is clear that a pupil would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek the consent of the student to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the pupil. Unless clearly inappropriate, pupils will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer with the support of a member of staff if required. If appropriate or desired by the student, staff might inform parents together with the young person or, if requested by the student, staff might inform parents of a situation in the absence of the young person but on his/her behalf.  
(See Confidentiality Policy)

### **Ground rules and distancing techniques**

Teachers should be careful to ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not influence the teaching of sex and relationships. To this end ground rules have been agreed to provide a common values framework within which to teach. There are clear parameters as to what will be taught in whole class setting and what will be dealt with on an individual basis.

- Pupils will be given preparation so that they will know how to minimise any embarrassment they feel.
- No one (teacher or pupil) should be expected to answer a personal question.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.
- Only the correct names for body parts will be used.
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

### **Dealing with questions**

- Teachers should establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting.
- Teachers should set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that pupils discuss issues in a way that does not encourage giggling and silliness.
- Pupils should be encouraged to write down questions anonymously and post them in a question box. Thus, the teacher will have time to prepare answers to all questions before the next session, and will choose not to respond to any questions which are inappropriate.
- If a verbal question is too personal the teacher should remind the pupils of the ground rules.
- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis.
- Teachers should not be drawn into providing more information than is appropriate to the age of the child.
- Pupils must not be given the impression that teenagers inevitably have sex. The view that sex should be between two people who are mature enough to make informed decisions should be emphasised.
- If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse the Deputy Headteacher/ Assistant Headteacher (ECM) , the Child Protection Officers, should be informed and the usual child protection procedures followed.

**Answering difficult questions**

Sometimes an individual child will ask an explicit or difficult question in the classroom. Questions do not have to be answered and can be addressed later. PVTTC believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in these situations and refer to the Student Support Manager/ DHT/AHT as necessary.

## **Appendix 1**

### **SRE and SCIENCE PROGRAMMES**

#### **THE SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

##### **KEY STAGE 3 (Related to N.C. PSHE)**

1. To recognise the importance of personal choice in managing relationships so that they do not present risks, e.g. to health, to personal safety.
2. Understand that organisms (including HIV) can be transmitted in many ways, in some cases sexually.
3. Discuss moral values and explore those held by different cultures and groups.
4. Be aware of the range of sexual attitudes and behaviours in present day society.
5. Understand that people have the right not to be sexually active, recognise that parenthood is a matter of choice, know in broad outline the biological and social factors which influence sexual behaviour and their consequences.

##### **KEY STAGE 3(Related to NC Science curriculum)**

#### **Humans as Organisms**

##### **REPRODUCTION**

1. Reproduction about the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence.
2. Reproduction about the human reproductive system, including the menstrual cycle and fertilisation.
3. How the foetus develops in the uterus, including the role of the placenta.

##### **KEY STAGE 4(Related to N.C. PSHE)**

1. Understand aspects of Britain's legislation relating to sexual behaviour.
2. Understand the biological aspects of reproduction.
3. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of various methods of family planning in terms of personal preference and social implications.
4. Recognise and be able to discuss sensitive and controversial issues such as conception, birth, HIV/AIDS, child rearing, abortion and technological developments which involve consideration of attitudes, values, beliefs and morality.
5. Be aware of the need for preventative health care and know what this involves.
6. Be aware of the availability of statutory and voluntary organisations which offer support in human relationships, e.g. Relate.
7. Be aware that feeling positive about sexuality and sexual activity is important in relationships. Understand the changing nature of sexuality over time and its impact on lifestyles, e.g. the menopause.
8. Be aware of partnerships, marriage and divorce and the impact of loss, separation and bereavement.

Be able to discuss issues such as sexual harassment in terms of the effects on individuals

##### **KEY STAGE 4 (Related to NC Science curriculum)**

#### **LIFE PROCESSES AND LIVING THINGS**

##### **REPRODUCTION**

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### **Cell activity and hormones**

1. How cells divide by mitosis, and by meiosis to produce gametes.
2. The way in which hormonal control occurs, including the effects of sex hormones.

### **Variation, inheritance and evolution**

1. Some medical uses of hormones, including the control and promotion of fertility.
2. How variation arises from genetic causes, environmental causes, and a combination of both.
3. That sexual reproduction is a source of genetic variation. That mutation is a source of genetic variation and has a number of causes
4. How gender is determined in humans
5. That some diseases are inherited

### **Living things and their environment**

1. How the impact of humans on the environment depends on social and economic factors, including population size.

### **KEY STAGE 5**

A large number of external speakers are invited to contribute to the programme. The following areas are discussed:-

- 'Well Woman'
- 'Well Man'
- Safe Sex
- Self protection
- Assertiveness
- Moral perspectives
- Health & Science
- Unsafe sexual practices
- Contagious diseases

### **SCIENCE PROVISION IN SEX EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS**

The 1993 Act requires sex education to be provided as part of the secondary curriculum. Parents have the right to withdraw their children, but this is limited since they cannot withdraw their children from those aspects of sex education which are part of the National Curriculum.

The new order for the delivery of National Curriculum Science now excludes the following:

- a) Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and Human Immune deficiency Virus (HIV).
- b) Any other sexually transmitted disease.
- c) Aspects of human sexual behaviour, other than biological aspects.