



Sex and Relationship Education Policy

Revised July 2016

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Introduction

This policy takes full account of the school's legal obligations and the latest DfEE guidance '*Sex and Relationship Education Guidance*' (2000) and was developed by the schools working party as outlined in the PHSCE policy before consultation with the rest of the schools teaching staff and the governing body. The school is aware that it is the statutory duty of the governing body to determine a policy for Sex and Relationship Education. The above is still referred to while the school awaits new government guidance.

What is 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 DfEE 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'
(DfEE '*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.
- Learning about contraception and a range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services.
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, the benefits to be gained from such delay.
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

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.

Our school will teach our pupils elements of the above taking into consideration the age of our children. The school is also aware that our children are growing up in an increasingly technological age. Our children face risks and may need to make decisions about areas that were not relevant when this advice was written. These include areas such as online relationships, the ready availability of pornography and dangers inherent in using social media. (Please also see our school's Online Safety policy.)

The needs of young people and the role of schools

The overall aims of the school and National curriculum are:

- To provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve.
- To promote pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

The DfEE '*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 school has a key role, in partnership with parents/carers, in providing SRE.

National and local support and guidance for schools to develop SRE

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. Our schools approach to SRE is in line with the Government's strategy and guidance given to schools in DfEE '*Sex and Relationship Guidance*' (2000).

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 be taken advantage of.

We also believe that students 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. The school'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.

Equal Opportunities

Young people may have varying needs regarding SRE depending on their circumstances and background. The school strongly believes that all students should have access to SRE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this, our school'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 teenage 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 students 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 students 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.

- Sexuality On average, about 5% of our students will go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual or may be gender non-conforming.
- Special educational needs. We shall take account of the fact that some students may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical disabilities that result in particular SRE needs.

A Whole School Approach

Non-teaching staff may be involved in a supportive role in some SRE lessons and also play an important, informal pastoral support role with students. They will have access to information about the SRE programme and supported in their pastoral role.

Governors have responsibilities for school 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 school's SRE provision. They also have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated sex education lessons if they wish. The school will seek and take account of parent/carer views and endeavour to adopt a partnership approach with parents/carers. The school's approach to SRE will encourage dialogue between parents/carers and their children.

Students have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate SRE and to pastoral support. They will be actively consulted about their SRE needs and their views will be central to developing the provision.

The Taught SRE Programme

The SRE programme will be delivered as a component of the school's wider PSHE and Citizenship programme using the local authority's scheme of work.

Aims of the programme

The overall aims of the SRE programme are:

1. To provide accurate information about, and understanding of, SRE issues.
2. To dispel myths/stigma.
3. To explore a range of attitudes towards SRE issues and to help students to reach their own informed views.
4. To develop respect and care for others.
5. To increase student's 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.

Answering student's questions

The school believes that students should have opportunities to have their genuine questions answered in a sensible and matter-of-fact manner. However, occasionally a student may ask a particularly explicit, difficult or embarrassing question in class. Teachers will use their skill and discretion to decide about whether to answer questions in class and, if so, how. They will establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in class by discussing ground rules with students and by taking an approach that encourages students to be mature and sensible.

If a question is too explicit or inappropriate to answer in class at that moment, teachers will acknowledge it and attend to it later with the student who asked it. If a question is too personal teachers will remind students about the ground rules and if necessary point out appropriate sources of support. If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of sexual abuse they will follow the school's child protection procedures.

Parental concerns and withdrawal of students

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated 'sex education' lessons. They do not have a right to withdraw their children from those aspects of SRE that are taught in National Curriculum Science or where SRE issues arise incidentally in other subject areas.

We will work in active partnership with parents/carers, value their views and keep them informed about our SRE provision. If a parent/carer has any concerns about the SRE provision we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have. If any parents/carers decide to withdraw their child we shall work with them and their child to explore possible alternative provision. Parents are informed in writing when sessions are run in Y5 and Y6 with our school nurse. Parents are also invited into school to view material that we deliver to our Y6 children. They also have the opportunity to discuss it with members of staff and our school nurse. The school's SRE policy is available to be viewed on the school's website. Information relating to SRE is also contained in our school's brochure.

PJ Mackay
PSHE Coordinator
July 2016