



Sex and Relationships Policy

Policy Statement:

Effective sex and relationship education (SRE) is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. The objective of SRE is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. The programme will help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood. It will help people develop the skills and understanding that they need to live confident, healthy and independent lives.

The Policy:

- Clarifies the legal requirement and responsibilities of the school.
- Clarifies the school's approach to sex and relationships education (SRE) for all staff, pupils, governors, parents/carers, external agencies and the wider community.
- Gives guidance on developing and implementing and monitoring the SRE education programme.
- Provides a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the school SRE programme
- Reinforces the role of the school in contributing to local and national strategies.

Aims:

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 students to reach their own informed views and choices for a healthier lifestyle.
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.
7. To contribute to a reduction in local and national teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and abortion rates.

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 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.

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.
- The right of people to follow their own sexuality, within legal parameters.

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.

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 relationships 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

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, the 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 bi-sexual (GLB). Students may also have GLB parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our students will meet and work with GLB people. Our approach to SRE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. Our pastoral support will take account of the needs of GLB students. We shall also actively tackle homophobic bullying.

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.

The teaching programme for Sex and Relationship Education. We intend that all pupils shall experience a programme of sex and relationships education at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development, with adaptations for those whose cognitive development is particularly slow.

Pupils who use alternative methods of communication. Some pupils have physical, visual or hearing impairments or are unable to use speech and may use signing, symbols and/or communication switches and aids. The staff will adapt their teaching of sex and relationship education to ensure that these pupils have equal access.

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.

Contraceptive advice to older pupils. Pupils will be taught, in the context of sexual intimacy and safer sex, that intercourse should always involve using a condom. Questions about forms of contraception will be answered accurately and honestly within the student's ability to understand. If pupils need further personal advice about contraceptive use, counselling and support will be sought from appropriate agencies and personnel.

A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

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

The Senior Leadership Team will endeavour to support the provision and development of SRE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.

The designated Lead Member of staff (currently Lisa Smith) 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 student's needs, providing support and resources for staff, arranging staff training, liaison with outside agencies and monitoring and evaluation.

Teaching staff All teachers are involved in the school's SRE provision. Some teach SRE through the PSHE programme and some through science and other curriculum areas. All teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to students. Any teacher can be approached by a student who experiences a difficulty regarding sex or relationships issues. Teachers will be consulted about the school'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 students. They will have access to information about the SRE programme and supported in their pastoral role.

Academy Council Members have responsibilities for school policies. They will be consulted about the SRE provision and policy and have regular reports at Academy Council 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 (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. The school's approach to SRE will encourage dialogue between parents/carers and their children.

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

Outside agencies and speakers may be involved in inputting to SRE lessons and as points of referral as support services for students. The school will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to student needs. We shall work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within the school. The school will also promote relevant helping agencies that students can access.

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 school's approach to SRE consists of:

1. The taught National Curriculum Science Programme of Study.
2. SRE modules within each Key Stage delivered within a planned PSHE programme.
3. Pastoral support for students who experience difficulties.
4. Provision of appropriate information through leaflets and books in the library and display of posters.

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 teacher does not know the answer to a question they will acknowledge this and suggest that they and students research the answer to the question later. 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.

Monitoring, evaluation and assessment

The programme is regularly evaluated by the SRE Lead Teacher. The views of students and teachers who deliver the programme are used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an ongoing basis.

Monitoring and evaluation can be informed by the Ofsted Framework for the Inspection of Schools. Whilst it is difficult and often inappropriate to assess attitudes and students' personal lifestyle choices, much of the SRE programme of study is capable of formal assessment, particularly the knowledgeable components.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WHO EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTIES

The nature of support available to students

The school takes its role in the promotion of student welfare seriously. Staff endeavour to make themselves approachable and to provide caring and sensitive pastoral support for students in a number of ways. Staff may be approached for help on an individual basis and through the tutorial/ pastoral system. They offer a listening ear and, where appropriate, information and advice. The school nurse offers a health and support service to students. Where appropriate, students are referred to the school nurse and/or outside helping agencies. The school will keep up to date about the development of local services and national help lines for young people promote their existence to students and endeavour to form working relationships with local agencies that are relevant to student needs.

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:

- by making our commitment clear in the school prospectus
- by placing sex education on the agenda at the relevant Academy Council meeting
- by inviting parents to discuss sex and relationships education when their child enters the school and when their child moves up from the primary to the secondary department
- by discussing and agreeing a consistent approach for pupils to be used at home and school
- by including sex and relationships education in the Home/School Partnership Agreement
- by inviting parents to a meeting where resources are available, and their use explained.

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a student for help. Staff must make this clear to students. Safeguarding procedures must be followed when any disclosures about abuse are made.

It is very rare for a student 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. This judgement will be based upon:

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

Where it is clear that a student 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 student. Unless clearly inappropriate, students will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer.

DEALING WITH BULLYING

Bullying commonly includes inappropriate and hurtful comments and behaviours concerning sexism, homophobia, appearance and other sex/relationship issues. The school takes the issue of bullying very seriously in line with Pupil [Support Circular 10/99](#) and DfES 'Safe to learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools' 2008. This is reflected in the school's anti-bullying policy. Staff will challenge and deal sensitively with any evidence of bullying. Students will be encouraged to report any incidents. Staff will endeavour to investigate any incidents of bullying as soon as possible and give feedback to students who complain of bullying. The SRE and PSHE programmes will consider bullying and aim to discourage bullying based on sexism, homophobia, appearance and other sex/relationship issues.

From 2004 all schools are required to report and log all known incidents of bullying on school premises and to provide an annual summative report to the local authority. It is important that any form of harassment or hurtful comments of a sexual nature are seen within the context of the schools anti-bullying policy.

National Sources of Help, Advice and Support

Web sites

- tth.org.uk – Terence Higgins Trust
- brook.org.uk – Brook Advisory Centres
- lovelife.uk.com - Health Promotion England
- worldaidsday.org – national and international fact and reports on aids.

- Stonewall.org.uk – for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people

Policy Review:

The working of this policy will be reviewed by the Governors Support Committee

As well as examining the specific review data, the policy statement will be checked for continuing relevance against any changed statutory requirements and LEA advice.

Date Policy Approved – November 2016

The designated person is: Assistant Principal – Safeguarding Team

The Policy is to be reviewed every 2 years and the next review is due in November 2018