

Highfield Littleport Academy

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

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Ratified on: 28TH June 2018

Review Date: June 2021

'Sex and relationship education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of loving and caring relationships. It is about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health. Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive sex and relationship education does not make young people more likely to become sexually active at a younger age'

- Every child is entitled to receive SRE regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, age, culture, disability or sexuality.
- It is our intention that all children have the opportunity to experience a programme of SRE at a level which is appropriate for their age, ability and physical development with differentiated provision if required.

Aims and Objectives for Sex and Relationship Education are:

- To provide children with age appropriate information
- To provide the knowledge and information to which all pupils are entitled
- To clarify/reinforce existing knowledge
- To help gain access to information and support
- To promote self-esteem and emotional health and wellbeing
- To assist young people to prepare for adult life by supporting them through their physical, emotional and moral development
- To help them to understand themselves
- To respect others
- To form and sustain healthy relationships.
- To respect and care for their bodies
- To be prepared for puberty and adulthood
- To develop skills for a healthier safer lifestyle
- To help pupils understand their sexual feelings and behaviour, so they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives
- To develop and use communication skills and assertiveness skills to cope with the influences of their peers and the media
- To empower them to make positive decisions about their health related behaviour

SRE is an integral part of the curriculum in that it involves consideration of different types of relationships at different levels. In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, the focus is on relationships in families and with friends. As children go through the school, they begin to consider other relationships. It is only during Year 6 and beyond that sexual relationships are considered.

Statutory requirements

Legal framework for SRE

The Education Act 1996 consolidated all previous legislation, and key points related to SRE are:

- The sex education elements of the National Curriculum Science Order are mandatory for all pupils of primary and secondary school age. These cover anatomy, puberty, biological aspects of sexual reproduction and use of hormones to control and promote fertility.
- Secondary schools are required to provide an SRE programme which includes (as a minimum) information about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV/AIDS.
- Other elements of personal, social and health education (PSHE), including SRE, are currently non-statutory.
- All schools must provide, and make available for inspection, an up-to-date policy describing the content and organisation of SRE outside of national curriculum science. This is the school governors' responsibility.

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 requires that:

- Young people learn about the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and bringing up children.
- Young people are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age, and the religious and cultural background of the pupils concerned.
- School governing bodies have regard for the guidance.
- Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of SRE provided outside national curriculum science.

Government guidance on personal, social and health education (PSHE)

The aspects of SRE that are not included in the science curriculum are delivered through personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. PSHE was extended to include economic education in 2008 when a new secondary school curriculum was introduced.

PSHE and citizenship are supported by the National Healthy Schools Programme (NHSP).

Both PSHE and citizenship are non-statutory at Key stages 1 and 2. At Key stages 3 and 4 citizenship becomes statutory, although PSHE remains non-statutory **until September 2019**.

The Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) publishes guidance on the whole curriculum, including PSHE programmes of study and end of key stage statements to help teachers assess progress.

Government guidance on SRE

In 2000, the Department for Education and Employment (now the Department for Education) published guidance on the delivery of SRE through the PSHE framework. The guidance aims to help schools to plan SRE policy and practice and includes teaching strategies, working with parents, and confidentiality.

- There should be an emphasis on developing knowledge, skills and attitudes and appropriate teaching methods.
- Primary schools should ensure that both boys and girls know about puberty before it begins.
- Teachers should develop activities that will involve boys and young men as well as girls and young women.
- Policies should be developed in consultation with parents, young people, teachers and governors.
- All schools have a duty to ensure that the needs of children with special needs and learning disabilities are properly met.
- Puberty, menstruation, contraception, abortion, safer sex, HIV/AIDS and STIs should be covered.
- The needs of all pupils should be met, regardless of sexual orientation or ethnicity.
- SRE should be planned and delivered as part of PSHE and citizenship.

Elements of the guidance are supported by the Learning and Skills Act 2000

The Governing Body

The Governing body, in co-operation with the Head Teacher, determines / agrees the school's general policy and approach to SRE provision for all pupils.

The organisation of Sex and Relationship Education

Sex and relationship education is delivered through a broad and balance curriculum. Sex and relationship education is taught by classroom teachers, teaching assistants and if appropriate, outside visitors such as the school nurse.

Cross-curricular links include Science, RE, PSHE, and Citizenship

A range of teaching methods which involve children's full participation are used to teach sex and relationship education. These include use of video, discussion, visiting agencies, drama and role play presentations.

Sex and relationship education is usually delivered in mixed gender groups however, there may be occasions where single gender groups are more appropriate and relevant.

Resources to teach sex and relationship education include DVDs and accompanying lesson plans, reference books, Social Stories, leaflets and extracts from videos, contraception display kit and SRE (anatomically correct) dolls. Resources are located in either the upper school or resources room. Teaching and resources will be differentiated as appropriate, to address the needs of our students in order for them to have full access to the content of SRE

Teaching children about SRE is a whole school, on-going process and all teachers are sensitive to each individual pupil's needs. Teachers promote positive, healthy choices and relationships on a daily basis e.g. in assemblies and through implementing our behaviour policy.

It is the responsibility of all staff to teach SRE in line with the principles and statements set out in this policy, and in particular, to:

- establish with pupils a set of ground rules which set the parameters for discussion
- promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school.
- prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- discuss all types of relationships with sensitivity and respect
- approach the teaching of SRE with an awareness of the pupil's needs in this area e.g. through informal assessment of their knowledge and understanding from other Science topics; through dialogue with the Headteacher about vulnerable pupils
- not be drawn into providing more information than is appropriate to the age of the child
- acknowledge questions that are too explicit which may need to be answered, at a parent's discretion, by the parent or carer.

Answering Difficult Questions

If a child asks an explicit or difficult question, the staff will use their professional judgement in deciding the best way to answer it. This may be through individual work or discussion with the child. If the staff member is concerned, they can refer to the Headteacher/child protection team who can discuss the matter with the parent, or follow other appropriate procedures.

Parental Involvement

Parents will be informed of the dates and times of the SRE sessions and asked for permission for their child to attend these

Withdrawal

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from this specific element of the curriculum, except the NC science order. If they decide to do so, the Headteacher must receive prior notification in writing. Any student withdrawn will be accommodated in another class for that session.

Child Protection

Teachers conduct SRE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, or indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse, this will be dealt with in line with our Child Protection Policy.

Additional Needs

For all pupils, there is a need for clear, explicit and repeated teaching about sex and relationships to avoid confusion. Pupils with additional needs may need to specifically learn things, which others learn incidentally e.g. what being 'private' actually means. They may be more open to exploitation in the wider community and may need additional teaching to help them understand acceptable parameters and behaviours. Above all, they need the knowledge, skills and understanding to make informed, positive decisions about their own relationships and lives, and about their own safety.

SRE lends itself to study by students with a range of different abilities. Students can work on the same content at different rates and levels; some may be supported by a teaching assistant.

Gender Issues and Sexual Stereotyping

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. Teachers are careful not to reinforce stereotypes or traditional expectations of gender roles.

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 as and if necessary

Sexuality

In accordance with DfES guidance, our approach to SRE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. We shall actively tackle homophobic bullying. This would include the use of 'gay' or 'lesbian' in a derogatory term. Anti-bullying Week will address the issue of homophobic bullying specifically, otherwise, it will be dealt with as and when it arises.

Child Protection / Confidentiality

Teachers need to be aware that effective SRE, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, may lead to disclosure of a child protection issue.

The staff member will inform the Head Teacher and Designated Child Protection person in line with the LEA procedures for child protection.

A member of staff cannot promise confidentiality if concerns exist.

Monitoring and Evaluating

The SRE programme will be evaluated by teaching staff. The views of students and teachers are used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an on-going basis. The policy will be formally reviewed for the following purposes:

To review and plan the content and delivery of the programme of study for SRE.

To review resources and renew as appropriate.

To update training in line with **Government** guidelines.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is the responsibility of the head teacher and PSHE coordinator as part of PSHE in the school's development plan. As a result of this process changes will be made to the sex and relationship education programmes as appropriate. PSHE and SRE will become statutory from September 2019

'The government is proposing the introduction of the new subject of 'relationships education' in primary school and renaming the secondary school subject 'relationships and sex education', to emphasise the central importance of healthy relationships. The focus in primary school will be on building healthy relationships and staying safe. As children get older, it is important that they start to develop their understanding of healthy adult relationships in more depth, with sex education delivered in that context.'

'Currently only pupils attending local-authority run secondary schools - which represent around a third of secondary schools - are guaranteed to be offered current sex and relationships education, and PSHE is only mandatory at independent schools. Neither are currently required to be taught in academies.'

'We expect to see children and young people being taught the new curriculum in schools as soon as September 2019.'

(DfE enquiries - Central newsdesk)

Written by Yvonne Bowen

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