

# Sex and Relationship Education Policy (SRE)



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<b>Signed – Chair of Governors</b>	
<b>Signed - Headteacher</b>	

## Mission Statement

Life is an adventure, embrace it  
Life is a challenge, meet it  
Life is an opportunity, capture it

## Aim

As a church school we highlight the following six Christian values:

Respect Responsibility Humility Forgiveness Perseverance Honesty

**As a school rooted in the teachings, values and spiritual life of the Church of England, we aim to:**

- Foster self-worth and awareness, together with a sense of moral responsibility
- Contribute to children's emotional and social development
- Help children to develop their own sense of identity
- Provide an environment where children explore and develop personal values and moral issues
- Share and respect attitudes and beliefs and consider the many different kinds of personal relationships
- Provide children with age appropriate information around relationships and sex
- Help lay the foundations for future work on sexual and reproductive health in secondary schools
- Support and build on the learning already established at home
- Give clear and appropriate information and knowledge by answering children's questions openly, honestly and appropriately
- Promote the necessary skills for effective communication, long and happy relationships and positive behaviour and development, allowing children to take their place in society with pride.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Our school's policy on sex and relationship education is based on the DCFS document *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance* (DCFS 0116/2000). We recognise Sex and Relationship Education as the policy's full title, but for brevity's sake we will refer in the rest of this policy simply to 'SRE'.
- 1.2. In the DCFS document recommends that effective SRE is essential if young people are to make responsible, informed decisions about their lives. As a school and in partnership with parents/carers, we have a key role in providing SRE.

## 2. What is sex and relationship education?

- 2.1. It 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. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching.

**SRE has three main elements:**

### 2.2. 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; and
- developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.

### 2.3. 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; and
- learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

### 2.4. Knowledge and Understanding

- learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages;
- understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships;
- learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services;
- learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay; and
- the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

### 3. Curriculum

- 3.1. The DfE recommends that all primary schools should have a sex and relationship education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the children. It should ensure that both boys and girls know about puberty and how a baby is born – as set out in Key Stages 1 and 2 of the National Science Curriculum.
- 3.2. All children, including those who develop earlier than the average, need to know about puberty before they experience the onset of physical changes. In the early primary school years, education about relationships needs to focus on friendship, bullying and the building of self-esteem.
- 3.3. It is important that the transition year before moving to secondary schools supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The school will consult with parents before the transition year about the detailed content of what will be taught. This process should include offering parents support in talking to their children about sex and relationship education and how to link this with what is being taught in school.
- 3.4. The content of what children will be taught in the transition year before moving to secondary school. This should include:
  - changes in the body related to puberty, such as periods and voice breaking;
  - when these changes are likely to happen and what issues may cause anxiety and how these can be managed; and
  - how a baby is conceived and born.
- 3.5. Traditionally the focus has been on girls. Boys may have felt that sex education is not relevant to them and are unable or too embarrassed to ask questions about relationships or sex. Boys are also less likely to talk to their parents about sex and relationships. For these reasons, the programme at Tackley focuses on boys as much as girls.
- 3.6. Teachers will plan a variety of activities which help to engage boys as well as girls, matching their different learning styles. Single sex groups may be particularly important for pupils who come from cultures where it is only acceptable to speak about the body in single gender groups.
- 3.7. Parents and pupils may need to be reassured that the personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence the teaching of sex and relationship education within the PSHE framework. Teachers and all those contributing to sex and relationship education are expected to work in line with current legislation.
- 3.8. Difficult or explicit questions do not have to be answered directly. Teachers will use their discretion in these situations.

- 3.9. SRE in our school supports learning about our bodies and growing up, puberty, menstruation and reproduction within the wider context of relationships, feelings, emotions and respect for difference.
- 3.10. We are aware that areas of SRE are deemed to be sensitive within our school community. These areas include reproduction; same sex family groups; change to family groupings; potential conflict with teachings of some faith communities.
- 3.11. We teach about SRE through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main SRE in our personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, we also teach some SRE through other subject areas (for example, science and PE) which we believe contribute significantly to children's knowledge and understanding of their own bodies, and how they are changing and developing.
- 3.12. The biological elements of SRE will be taught within science lessons, as set out in the National Curriculum.

#### 4. Teaching Strategies

- 4.1. It is essential that school helps children develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about sex and relationships. Teachers and other staff may need to overcome their own anxieties and embarrassment to do this effectively. Partnership between school and parents is the key to success.
  - There are a number of teaching strategies that can help this, including:
  - establishing ground rules with their pupils;
  - using 'distancing' techniques;
  - knowing how to deal with unexpected questions or comments from pupils;
  - using discussion and project learning methods and appropriate materials; and
  - encouraging reflection.

##### **Ground rules**

- 4.2. A set of ground rules will help teachers create a safe environment in which they do not feel embarrassed or anxious about unintended or unexpected questions or comments from pupils. Ground rules might be developed as part of the school's sex and relationship education policy or individually with each class or year group. For example, one class worked out this set of ground rules together:
  - no one (teacher or pupil) will have 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; and
  - meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

### **Distancing techniques**

- 4.3. Teachers can avoid embarrassment and protect pupils' privacy by always depersonalising discussions. For example, role play can be used to help pupils 'act out' situations. Case studies with invented characters, appropriate videos, and visits to theatre in education groups can all help pupils discuss sensitive issues and develop their decision-making skills in a safe environment. Some of these methods are listed below under discussion and project learning.

### **Dealing with questions**

- 4.4. Teachers should establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. Having a set of ground rules should reduce the chance of inappropriate questions happening.
- 4.5. If a question is too personal, the teacher should remind the pupil of the ground rules. If the pupil needs further support, the teacher can refer her or him to the appropriate person, such as a school nurse.
- 4.6. If a teacher doesn't know the answer to a question, it is important to acknowledge this, and to suggest that the pupil or teacher or both together research the question later.
- 4.7. 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. In this way, the pupil will feel they have been treated with respect, but the rest of the class will not have to listen to personal experience or inappropriate information. To maintain trust and respect the teacher must remember to talk with the pupil later.
- 4.8. If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse, they should follow the school's child protection procedures.

### **Discussion and project learning**

- 4.9. Research into what makes sex and relationship education effective shows that discussion and project learning encourages learning and is enjoyed by pupils. Pupils take part in a structured activity in which they can:
  - draw on previous knowledge to develop more understanding;
  - practise their social and personal skills
  - consider their beliefs and attitudes about different topics;
  - reflect on their new learning; and
  - plan and shape future action.
- 4.10. Active learning is most effective when pupils are working in groups. Methods include discussion techniques such as the use of circle time and project work.

- 4.11. Teachers should also assess the usefulness of providing factual information in written form for young people to keep for future reference.

### **Reflection**

- 4.12. Reflecting is crucial for learning as it encourages pupils to consolidate what they have learned and to form new understanding, skills and attitudes. Teachers can help pupils reflect on their learning by asking questions like these:

- What was it like taking part in this discussion today?
- What did you learn from the others, especially those who had a different experience or belief from your own?
- What do you think you will be able to do as a result of this discussion?
- What else do you think you need to think or learn about?

## **5. Working with the Wider Community**

- 5.1. We encourage other valued members of the community such as health visitors and the school nurse, to work with us to provide advice and support to the children with regard to SRE and health education.
- 5.2. Class teachers lead lessons and visitors are invited to contribute as appropriate, and compliment but never substitute or replace planned provision.
- 5.3. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the school nurse and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our SRE programme.

## **6. Partnership with Parents**

- 6.1. The school is well aware that the primary role in children's SRE lies with parents and carers. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation.
- 6.2. To promote this objective we:
- inform parents about the school's SRE policy and practice
  - answer any questions that parents may have about the SRE of their child
  - take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy, or about the arrangements for SRE in the school
  - inform parents about the best practice known with regard to SRE, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home.



- 6.3. We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing bodies and their increasing responsibilities.
- 6.4. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from sex education lessons which are outside the compulsory elements contained in the science curriculum. Parents wishing to withdraw their child from a sex and relationships education programme will be asked to do so in writing to the Headteacher. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in sex education until the request for withdrawal has been removed. As a school we will respect the beliefs of parents who wish to withdraw their child from a sex education programme.

## **7. Confidentiality and Child Protection**

- 7.1. Teachers conduct SRE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence.
- 7.2. Teachers are aware that effective sex and relationship education, which brings about an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a children protection issue.
- 7.3. Teachers will not try to investigate but will immediately inform the Designated Person for child protection issues about their concerns. The Headteacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals (see also our policy on Safeguarding Pupils).

## **8. Role of the Governors**

- 8.1. Governors monitor and check that the school policy is upheld and can also offer guidance where a member of the body has particular expertise in this area.
- 8.2. The governing body have statutory responsibility for SRE delivered in school.
- 8.3. The governing body will review the policy and monitor effectiveness.

## **9. Role of the Healthy Schools Co-ordinator**

- 9.1. The Healthy Schools Co-ordinator, in liaison with the Headteacher, will be responsible for:
  - the development, monitoring and review of SRE
  - reviewing and updating resources, including opportunities provided by educational visitors, visits, literature, etc
  - organising opportunities to inform and discuss with parents /carers the importance of SRE
  - organising staff training and INSET where a need arises.

- 9.2. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach about SRE effectively, and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

## **10. Monitoring and Review**

- 10.1. This policy is a working document. Therefore, it is open to change and restructure as and when appropriate to improve the quality, relevance and effectiveness of learning, teaching and curriculum provision.
- 10.2. Evaluation seeks to find out the effectiveness of the teaching activities and materials and the extent to which these meet pupils' needs.
- 10.3. The co-ordinator should ensure that evaluation results in changes to the planning and teaching of the programme where necessary.

## **11. Relevant policies and documentation**

- 11.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with these documents:
- Learning and Teaching Policy
  - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy
  - Equalities Policy
  - Safeguarding Pupils Policy
  - Health and Safety Policy.