

Sydenham School Sex & Relationship Policy

Updated March 2016

To be reviewed March 2017



Whole School Policy - Sex and Relationship Education

Introduction

This policy covers our school's approach to sex and relationship education (SRE). It outlines the practice of sex and relationship education (SRE) at Sydenham School. It has been written to take account of the updated National Curriculum, SRE guidance 2000, the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) framework and the Social Exclusion Unit report on teenage pregnancy. It will be reviewed annually.

“Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives”.

SRE at Sydenham School is firmly rooted in the framework for PSHE. Parents have the right to withdraw their daughters from PSE lessons covering sex education.

Staff responsible

This document has been prepared by the Humanities faculty leader and the Subject Leader of PSE and Citizenship in consultation with the Head and Deputy Head teacher and governors.

Consultation with Students

Students have been involved in redrafting policy and practice through evaluations of units of work from year 7-11. A wide range of students' views can be heard this way and ideas are taken into account when reviewing the content and delivery of SRE units of work.

The Definition of SRE

The objective of sex and relationship education at Sydenham School is to educate, help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. This programme, firmly embedded within PSHE, will help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Sex Education is a lifelong process of developing ideas and knowledge about human sexuality. It involves the exploration of attitudes, beliefs and values about sexual identity and relationships as well as teaching about sex and sexual health. SRE is about much more than the teaching of reproduction. It gives students the opportunity to develop an understanding of their own emergent sexuality and the sexuality of others. SRE is about empowering students, enabling them to make decisions

based on knowledge and understanding about the risks and consequences of sexual behaviours.

PSE at Sydenham School enables children to become healthy, independent and responsible members of society. As such the sex and relationships element of the PSE curriculum is a key area in helping the school to meet the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda. The ECM agenda has 5 key principles:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic wellbeing

Central to the SRE curriculum we provide, is that students learn how to stay safe and be healthy, physically and emotionally. We encourage students to make a positive contribution by sharing their ideas and opinions and feed their responses into planning and reviewing the SRE units of work. In so doing we develop their sense of self worth. Student work is regularly assessed and marked with feedback. Participation and progress is recognised using the school rewards system. Subject content is differentiated to create personalised learning.

Student learning in SRE includes:

- sexual development
- physical development
- sexuality
- sexual health, including sexually transmitted infections , HIV and AIDS
- interpersonal relationships
- rights, respect and responsibilities in relationships
- family life
- marriage, civil partnership and stable relationships
- child rearing
- equality, tolerance, sensitivity and respect
- love, affection, pleasure and intimacy
- sexual response
- body image
- reproduction
- values and attitudes
- morality
- safety online, staying safe
- The influence of pornography on students' understanding of healthysexual relationships,
- The issue of consent

SRE has three key strands:

➤ **Attitudes and values**

- To understand how values are formed and affect decisions and lifestyles
- Explore moral issues around sex and relationships
- The value of family, marriage and stable relationships
- Consideration of children's needs and how they can be met
- The value of respect, love and care in relationships. To understand the term 'consent'
- Develop critical thinking skills to empower students to make considered decisions

➤ **Personal and social skills**

- Learn to manage feelings and relationships sensitively, confidently and assertively.
- Empathy, self-confidence and respect for self and others.
- Recognise discrimination and challenge prejudice. Make decisions based on knowledge and understanding.
- Understand of the possible consequences of choices.
- Understand ways to manage difficult situations and conflict.
- Learn to recognise and avoid abuse and exploitation and to develop strategies to challenge this.

➤ **Knowledge & Understanding**

- Learn and understand physical development at appropriate stages of development.
- Learn and understand issues of sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, feelings and relationships.
- Learn about contraception, ways to avoid unplanned pregnancy and STI's. Knowledge of the local and national services providing advice and support with sexual health and contraception.
- Learn and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity and unplanned pregnancy
- To understand the issue of consent

The role of SRE

Sex education at Sydenham School is seen as a valuable and positive entitlement for all students. At the centre of a commitment to the provision of a coherent and balanced programme of SRE is an acknowledgement that school is about the development of the whole person - the moral, spiritual, cultural and social being.

SRE should give students the opportunity to consider issues of ethics, morality, values, self esteem and beliefs. It is also to provide young people with information about different methods of contraception, safe sex and how to access local sources of further advice and treatment. This should give them the chance to consider and review their own values, and to consider the value systems of others. It is our responsibility to help students develop a sense of respect for others and a sense of their own rights and responsibilities.

Aims and Objectives:

SRE at Sydenham focuses on meeting the needs of our students; it aims to support the personal and social development of all students. SRE should give students the opportunity to develop a positive understanding of their own and others' sexuality and the skills and knowledge necessary to develop relationships based on respect and responsibility and free from abuse.

All aspects of sex education are informed by the following aims:

Sex and Relationship Education should:

- be for all students.
- be accessible, culturally appropriate and inclusive. Taking into account religious and social perspectives
- identify students' needs.
- enable students to learn about relationships, love and care and the responsibility of parenthood as well as sex
- support student awareness of sexual identity.
- challenge prejudice and promote equality of opportunity.
- be integral to the learning process.
- challenge and explore myths and false assumptions about sexuality and sexual development and homophobic attitudes
- encourage exploration and understanding of the variety of values, belief systems and moral stances that exist both within the classroom and society.
- foster caring, responsible and assertive attitudes to sexual and personal relationships.

- challenge preconceptions about male sexuality
- Allow young women to develop the confidence, self esteem, self-awareness and skills to make informed and responsible parenting and sexual/health decisions.

The sex education policy is firmly linked to all school policies, the whole school aims and is rooted within the schools PSHE programme. It is important that students and staff are clear about the implications of the schools equal opportunities policy for SRE and special needs. Particular attention is made to ensure that SEN students are included and supported to make positive decisions in their lives.

There may also be relevant learning in other subjects such as Science, Citizenship or Religious Education in relation to the law and the views of religious and secular groups on matters such as abortion and same-sex relationships. Links are made with the ICT/Computing curriculum. As part of SRE it is important that pupils recognise ways they could put themselves at risk through the use of technology. These can include risks to their emotional and physical wellbeing and safety and their personal reputation. It is important to explore the risks, the law as it pertains to the sharing and downloading of images and information and safe ways of sharing personal information and social networking.

The importance of sex education in secondary schools is reflected in the nature and quantity of documentation from the DFEE, NCC, Ofsted, the Department of Health and the Children Act. It is also supported by the results of research, which show that over 90% of parents want schools to provide sex education. Research also indicates that students themselves consider sex education provision in schools to be vital. (Policy Studies Institute 1987).

- **Sex and Relationship Education Guidance: Ref: DFEE 0116/2000**

This guidance document sets out the statutory position on sex education in schools and gives advice on appropriate content and purpose. This is very supportive of sex education at school.

- **Social Inclusion Unit report on teenage pregnancy:**

SRE plays a very significant role in providing accurate information about contraception and in reducing unplanned pregnancies.

- **2008 Review of SRE and the *Children, Schools and Families Act 2010***
- **National Curriculum Review 2013**

- **Ofsted report on PSHE and the teaching of SRE 2013**

This document identified that Sex and relationships education required improvement in over a third of schools. In primary schools this was because too much emphasis was placed on friendships and relationships, leaving pupils ill-prepared for physical and emotional changes during puberty, which many begin to experience before they reach secondary school. In secondary schools it was because too much emphasis was placed on 'the mechanics' of reproduction and too little on relationships.

The Provision of SRE at Sydenham (Who, Where, What, How):

Who/Where:

SRE at Sydenham School forms part of the spiral Personal, Social, Health and Economic Wellbeing (PSHE) curriculum from Year 7 to Year 11. The subject leader PSE/Citizenship is responsible for the development of the programme and it is delivered by a small team of specialist teachers. It is recognised that very few teachers receive initial training related to sex education, therefore appropriate INSET is essential.

SRE is delivered as part of the PSE departments work with students, which encompasses health education, relationship education, financial well-being, citizenship, careers and community. In this way SRE is not delivered in isolation but within the context of physical, personal, emotional, social, moral and cultural development.

The subject leader PSE/Citizenship is willing to discuss all aspects of the programme at the request of parents/guardians and staff.

What:

The content of SRE within the PSE programme is informed by DFEE guidelines on SRE and the PSHE and Citizenship frameworks. It is designed to meet the aims stated above and the needs of our students and therefore we consult with students frequently by asking them to evaluate units of work. The programme is also taught within the context of the whole school aims and its policy on equal opportunities. Certain aspects of the SRE programme will give students the opportunity to explore issues of equality and prejudice and discrimination.

Sexual and reproductive health nurses deliver sessions to years 9 and 11.

KS3 and 4 schemes of work are available to look at on request.

How:

The school has a developmental approach to SRE within the PSE programme which allows us to ensure appropriateness in terms of students age, stage of development and

needs at all stages. The PSE programme has been developed as a spiral curriculum. The delivery and appropriateness of all aspects of the course is monitored through meetings and by thoroughly resourced programmes of study. These are regularly reviewed and updated in response to student and staff evaluation and curriculum changes.

SRE at all levels calls for sensitive treatment, we therefore use a variety of teaching and learning methods in order to allow all students access to the curriculum. These include: group work, individual work, discussion, role play, presentation, written work and open ended tasks that allow for differentiation. We have a commitment to active and independent learning, encouraging students to take a responsible, reflective and active part in their own learning. Teaching methods should also be flexible, allowing for a variety of responses. Teachers endeavour to create a safe learning environment in which to learn and teach about sensitive issues enabling students to participate. Ground rules are an essential aspect of this and are drawn up with each class at the beginning of all SRE. Once these have been negotiated with the group students are able to explore issues around SRE in a safe and appropriate climate.

SRE is taught in groups that aim to reflect the diverse make up of the school. We believe that this gives students the best opportunity to explore sexual issues together and helps to break down division based on academic ability, class, race, sexuality or other.

Materials/Resources:

Resources and learning materials allow students the opportunity to work at a level which reflects their abilities and encourages them to make progress. All materials should be carefully selected and prepared to consider issues of representation and should attempt to present positive images and challenge stereotypes.

Monitoring and Evaluating

The delivery of the SRE programme is closely monitored by the faculty Leader, Humanities and subject leader PSE/Citizenship in consultation with PSE teachers. The Senior Leadership Team and Governors have an overview of the implementation of this policy.

Programmes of Study are reviewed regularly and often by both students and staff. Students evaluate work at the end of each unit through oral and written feedback. This has the dual purpose of encouraging student self-assessment but also provides the opportunity for students to evaluate the unit itself and to suggest areas for improvement. This process aims to assess and review how meaningful the SRE programme has been for our students and how successful it has been in achieving outcomes.

The evaluation of the SRE programme should be seen as a partnership between students and teachers with the aim of updating and improving the provision of SRE and meeting students needs. PSE teachers review units of work through meetings and units of work are updated regularly as a result of this whole process.

Examples of assessment of SRE include:

- Production of a puberty storybook giving advice to younger students (Year 7)
- Production of a booklet for young people on the dangers of risky behaviour and how to avoid it. (Year 8)
- An essay based on attitudes towards sexuality. (year 9)

Specific Issues

Confidentiality:

It is important for all staff to be clear about the issue of confidentiality. If approached by a student in confidence teachers should never promise to keep secrets but explain that they will always act in their best interests. As teachers, we should always make it clear to students that we may have to talk to someone else but that we will never do so without letting the student know first. This may deter a student from disclosing something of great importance to a teacher and it is therefore important to talk through the reasons why we may need to involve someone else. Teachers will always encourage students to talk to their parents or carers where appropriate. All staff should be aware of who they should pass particular information on to. If there is suspected sexual health concern (e.g. pregnancy, STI, underage and non consensual sex) they should follow the child protection procedure which is clearly described in the Child Protection Policy. (DCFS September 2007. Working together to safeguard Children 2014. Keeping children safe in education April 2014) Students should be made aware of sources of confidential help such as their GP, Childline and other approved agencies.

Contraception and Advice:

Teachers will give full information about contraception (including emergency contraception) within the context of the SRE programme. Teachers will also give students (individuals or groups) guidance on where they can obtain confidential advice, counselling and/or treatment. Opportunities will be provided for professional advice by suitable professionals e.g. Lewisham Optimum Health and appropriate web sites.

Working with parents/carers:

Sydenham School aims to work in partnership with parents and carers and we believe that where this is achieved SRE is enhanced. Parents and carers and governors will be consulted about the content of this policy.

Parents and carers should always be informed about the SRE policy and practice via prospective parents' visits and parents who wish to discuss any aspect of SRE in more detail are invited to make an appointment with the subject leader PSE/Citizenship.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from any or all parts of the SRE programme, other than those elements required by the National Curriculum. This includes teaching the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction. When a parent wishes to exercise this right they may be invited to discuss their reasons for withdrawal so that any misunderstandings about the nature and content of the programme can be clarified. Arrangements will be made for any withdrawn student to do other PSE work in an appropriate place.

Working with the wider community:

It may be appropriate at certain times to involve adults other than teachers in either lessons or assemblies. This may include health care professionals and others who may not be aware of legislation in relation to schools. It is very important that any outside speaker supports the aims of the school. To ensure this, a speaker should be given copies of the SRE policy and the schools' equal opportunities policy (and any other appropriate information) in advance of their visit. A speaker should also be asked to provide details of their talk/workshop; this will ensure the school policy is followed. When Health professionals are in their professional role, such as school nurse, they should follow their own professional codes of conduct.

Dissemination of the policy

The SRE policy is an important school document and it is vital that it is accessible to the whole school community. The policy is posted on the school website and a hard copy of the policy will also be available on request.