

February 2015

John Flamsteed Community School

Sex and Relationship Education Policy

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Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) Policy

Name of school: John Flamsteed Community School

Date policy reviewed: February 2015

Member of staff responsible: Helen Redhead

Review date: February 2018

1. How this Policy was Developed

This policy has been informed by the DfE guidance on sex and relationships education. It adheres closely to the aims of the school and complements other policies such as those relating to Teaching and Learning, Inclusion, Confidentiality and Safeguarding.

In compiling this policy, we have considered the diversity of the make-up of our school community in terms of gender, race, SEN and socio-economic background

2. 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 DfE guidance SRE should still refer to the 2000 guidance and 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.

The schools 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. The taught KS4 Religious Studies Programme of Study
4. Pastoral support for students who experience difficulties.
5. Provision of appropriate information through leaflets and books in the foyer and display of posters throughout the school and specifically in the PSHE curriculum area
6. Visiting theatre groups.

3. Why SRE?

3.1 Legal obligations

Maintained secondary schools in England and Wales have a legal responsibility to provide a 'sex education' programme. They also have a responsibility to keep an up to date written statement of the policy they choose to adopt and this must be available to parents. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from 'sex education' lessons which fall outside those aspects covered in the National Curriculum Science. (For further details see Section 2.2.1). This can be found in our prospectus.

3.2 The needs of young people and the role of schools

The overall aims of the school and National curriculum are:

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

The DfE '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.

Research has shown that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about sex and relationships, are more likely to be more discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and to have fulfilling relationships.

‘Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive sex and relationship education does not make young people more likely to enter into sexual activity. Indeed it can help them learn the reasons for, and the benefits to be gained from, delaying such activity’.

DfE ‘Sex and Relationship Guidance’, 2000.

3.3 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 DfE ‘Sex and Relationship Guidance’ 2000.

‘We must give teenagers the confidence and the information so they don’t feel compelled to have sex. No one should become pregnant or contract a sexually transmitted infection because of ignorance’. Tony Blair in ‘Teenage Pregnancy’, Social Exclusion Unit Report, June 1999.

At a local level support and guidance for schools to develop SRE includes:

- SRE training for teachers funded through the LEA .
- Advice and support for schools from expert LEA and Derbyshire Primary Care Trust personnel.
- Support from the PSHE Association.

4. 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.

5. 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 students understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives’.

DfE 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: A percentage 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 students 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.

Students who use alternative methods of communication:

Some students 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 students have equal access.

Students 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.

Students with autism: will require individual teaching to meet their specific needs. Explicit teaching and use of pictures and visual aids is essential to avoid confusion.

Contraceptive advice to older students: Students 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 students need further personal advice about contraceptive use, counselling and support will be sought from appropriate agencies and personnel.

6. 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 (SLT) will endeavour to support the provision and development of SRE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.

The designated SLT lead 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 Some teachers (see Appendix 1) 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.

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 (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. The School nurse currently offers a drop in session.

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.

7. The Taught SRE Programme

The SRE programme will be delivered as part of the school's approach to PSHE and Citizenship.

7.1 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.
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.

7.2 Place in the curriculum

The main SRE programme will be delivered through PSHE lessons the teacher i/c PSHE. In addition certain biological aspects are delivered through Science lessons and other aspects of SRE arise in Religious Studies at KS4.

7.3 Content and learning objectives

The SRE programme is delivered in a developmental manner so that issues are explored in greater depth as students mature (see Appendix 1)

7.4 Methodology and resources

A wide range of teaching methods are used, that enable student's to actively participate in their own learning. This includes use of quizzes, case studies, research, role-play, video, small group discussion and use of appropriate guest speakers. Where it is regarded as particularly beneficial students are divided into single gender groups for a part of lessons or whole lessons. Occasional use of drama productions also forms part of the programme.

Teaching is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that students are not put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. Teaching resources are selected on the basis of their appropriateness to students.

7.4 Answering students 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.

7.5 Monitoring, evaluation and assessment

The programme is regularly evaluated by the SLT lead. 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.

7.5 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.

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

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.

8. Pastoral Support for Students who Experience Difficulties

8.1 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.

8.2 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 governors' 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 students 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. Child protection 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.

8.3 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 DfE 'Don't Suffer in Silence' 2002. 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. The reporting process and form is contained in the LEA 'An exemplar anti-bullying policy' (2004) with additional guidance contained in 'Anti-bullying guidance: background and support for schools, young people and parents' (2004). It is important that any form of harassment or hurtful comments of a sexual nature are seen within the context of the school's anti-bullying policy.

9. Dissemination of the Policy

The policy will be distributed to all teaching staff. An opportunity to discuss and clarify the policy will be available at a staff meeting.

The policy is also available to parents of registered students on request.

The sex education teaching programme will include evaluation by students as well as teaching staff.

The policy will be reviewed regularly.

10. Policy Review

The policy will be reviewed by the SLT lead, the teacher responsible for PSHE, Assistant Head Behaviour and Safety and the Inclusion Manager

11. Sources of Further Information

This policy has drawn on:

- DfE '*Sex and Relationship Education Guidance*' (2000).
- Derbyshire Health Promoting Schools '*Sex and Relationships Education – Guidance for Derbyshire Primary, Secondary and Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units*' (2002).
- Further copies of this policy and other information about SRE can be obtained from (name the person), SRE co-ordinator.
- *Diverse Communities: Identity and Teenage Pregnancy*, a resource for practitioners (Department of Health – September 2002)
- SRE Resource Centre/Library available to teachers at Derby Youth House, Mill Street, Derby, Tel (01332) 345538.
- NHSS (2001) *Sex and Relationships Education*. National Healthy Schools Standard, London.
- Ofsted (2002) *Sex and Relationships*. Office for Standards in Education, London.
- Social Exclusion Unit (1999) *Teenage Pregnancy Strategy*. Social Exclusion Unit, London.

- *Sexual Health Improvement Framework* (2013), DfH

- DfE paper *The Importance of Teaching* (2010)

- Sex and Relationship Education in Schools
DfE October 2014 Robert Long

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