

Sex and Relationship Education Policy (SRE)



Contents:

1. Rationale
2. Principle and Values
3. Aims
4. Organisation and Content of Sex and Relationship Education
5. Inclusion
6. Right of withdrawal of Students from Sex and Relationship Education
7. Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues
8. SRE within the Science Faculty

This policy was developed in response to the Education Act 1996, Sex and Relationship Education Guidance DfEE July 2000, The Learning and Skills Act 2000, the National Teenage Pregnancy Strategy, National Healthy Schools Programme and in light of the Review of Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) in Schools 2008.

1. Rationale

SRE is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care, for family life. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. SRE will prepare our students to take part in the adult world in a manner which fulfils the expectations of society. Work within SRE will be within a clear and explicit values framework of mutual respect, rights and responsibilities, gender equality and acceptance of diversity.

2. Principles and Values

SRE should:

- ▲ Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life;
- ▲ Be an entitlement for all young people;
- ▲ Encourage every student to contribute to make a positive contribution to our community and aims to support each individual as they grow and learn;
- ▲ Be set within this wider college context and supports family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just one model, e.g. nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches;
- ▲ Encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views. We are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any

particular family structure. The important values are love, respect and care for each other;

- ▲ Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment;
- ▲ Recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents and students, consulting them about the content of programmes;
- ▲ Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.

Sex and Relationship Education in this school has three main elements:

Attitudes and Values

- ▲ Learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices;
- ▲ Learning the value of family life, stable and loving relationships, civil partnerships and marriage;
- ▲ Learning about 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;
- ▲ Challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour.

Personal and Social Skills

- ▲ Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- ▲ Developing self-respect and empathy for others;
- ▲ Learning to make choices with an absence of prejudice;
- ▲ Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made;
- ▲ Managing conflict;
- ▲ Empowering students with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter).

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;
- ▲ Avoiding unplanned pregnancy.

3. Aims

The aim of SRE is to provide balanced factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of sexual health. Our SRE programme aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

- ▲ Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour; have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want;
- ▲ Know and understand what a good relationship looks like and understand the concept of consent;
- ▲ Equip young people with the knowledge, skills and resilience they need to keep themselves safe from abuse;
- ▲ Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships;
- ▲ Avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex;
- ▲ Communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues;
- ▲ Develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity;
- ▲ Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity;
- ▲ Understand the reasons for having protected sex;
- ▲ Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections including HIV;
- ▲ Be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary;
- ▲ Know how the law applies to sexual relationships.

4. Organisation and Content of Sex and Relationship Education

At The Spires College we deliver Sex and Relationship Education through our PSHE Programme, in our Fortnightly Focus Tutorial Programme and in Science lessons at Key Stages 3 and 4.

Much of the Sex and Relationship Education takes place within PSHE lessons. Physical Education teachers generally deliver the PSHE Curriculum with support from other professionals where appropriate. SRE lessons are set within the wider context of the PSHE curriculum and focus more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction are also included. SRE will not be taught in isolation and links will be made with other parts of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum, in particular in respect of alcohol education, given the strong links between binge drinking and risky sexual behaviour. The Science National Curriculum is delivered by staff in the Science Department. These lessons are more concerned with the physical aspects of development and reproduction, although the importance of relationships is not forgotten.

The PSHE Programme and Science National Curriculum is taught in each of Key Stages 3 and 4.

Any SRE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When students ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the students, the question may be dealt with individually at another time. The college will also work in partnership with external professionals working in health and wider children's services, both to bring expertise into SRE delivery and to ensure that young people have access to advice and support on sex and relationships outside of the classroom.

5. Inclusion

Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people, it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns.

Students with Special Educational Needs

We will ensure that all young people receive sex and relationship education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them.

6. Right of Withdrawal of Students from Sex and Relationship Education

Some parents and carers prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of this element of education. They have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex and relationship education except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (i.e. in Science lessons). We would make alternative arrangements in such cases. Parents are encouraged to discuss their decisions with staff at the earliest opportunity. Parents are welcome to review any SRE resources the college uses.

7. Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Students wishing to raise contentious or sensitive issues can discuss these on an individual basis. Those seeking specific advice will be referred to appropriately qualified and approved agencies. Staff delivering SRE can share with students' information regarding counselling services available to them.

8. SRE within the Science Faculty

Sex and Relationships Education is in part delivered through the compulsory National Curriculum Science curriculum. These sessions are part of the statutory requirements for all students and are therefore not optional.

The Spires College will at all times comply with the latest statutory requirements on the delivery of SRE.

In Science, at Key Stage 3 and 4 students will learn the following:

At Key Stage Three (ages 11- 14)

- ▲ That fertilisation in humans is the fusion of a male and a female cell;
- ▲ About the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence;
- ▲ About the human reproductive system, including the menstrual cycle and fertilization;
- ▲ How the fetus develops in the uterus;
- ▲ How growth and introduction of bacteria and the reproduction of viruses can affect health.

At Key Stage Four (ages 14-16)

- ▲ The way in which hormonal control occurs, including the effects of sex hormones;
- ▲ Some medical use of hormones, including the control and promotion of fertility;
- ▲ The defence mechanism of the body;
- ▲ How gender is determined in humans.

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