



Sex and Relationships Education Policy

Philosophy

Under the 1996 Education Act, schools have a duty to ensure that Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) provides appropriate information and encourages students to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life. The Act states "the aim of education is to prepare children and young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life". It also requires all maintained secondary schools to provide a Sex Education curriculum that includes teaching about HIV/AIDS and STIs.

We believe SRE is an important element in the work of Ashcroft in preparing students for adult life. We believe that sex education should be given in such a manner as to encourage students to have due regard to moral consideration and value of family life. We believe that sex education calls for careful and sensitive treatment and with due consideration for any particular religious or cultural factors.

Aims

We aim to:

- a. enable young people to understand the biological facts related to human growth and development including reproduction and contraception
- b. enable young people to understand the nature of feelings and emotions experienced by themselves and others and the importance of healthy personal relationships.
- c. assist young people in making informed decisions about their sexual behaviour and consequences of behaviour which carry risks.
- d. develop an understanding of a range of values and moral issues including the value of family life in its many different contexts.
- e. foster a range of personal skills which will enable students to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.
- f. generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment.
- g. counteract misleading myths and folklore and false assumptions.
- h. be aware of sources of help and to acquire the skills and confidence to use them.

To achieve our aims we will:

Use various learning styles, many of which involve active learning techniques –this creative process works by developing skills and we need skills to put knowledge into action. A lot of activities carried out involve working in groups, although we also create time for quiet work and personal reflection.

As sex educators we cannot avoid tackling controversial sexual matters. Pupils ask questions and as teachers we offer balanced and factual responses/ information. At times it may be appropriate to respond individually to a pupil's question and this is a matter of professional judgement.

We teach sex education in mixed-gender groups. Resources are chosen very carefully and are evaluated before and after use to assess appropriateness and to eliminate elements of discrimination and prejudice such as sexism, racism and homophobia.

We enhance our programme by the use of visitors and links with services and agencies where available. Visitors are part of our planned programme and are met and fully briefed prior to the visit. Adequate preparation and follow up is essential, as is the presence of a teacher during the session – such team-teaching is very effective.

The school believes that a team approach is best suited to sex education. Teachers, parents, governors and outside agencies all work to promote an effective programme. Parents are informed of the content of the sex education programme through the curriculum booklets issued each year.

There is also a two week programme of SRE, PSHCE, CEIAG and parenting in year 11.

SRE is an equal opportunities issue –all pupils have a right to information about how their bodies grow and change and about relationships and sexuality whatever their gender, race, religion, social class, sexual orientation and whether or not they have a disability or special educational need.

It is our aim at Ashcroft to ensure that staff delivering any elements of SRE feel confident in what they are carrying out. All staff involved have relevant and appropriate training and INSET –this may be provided in-house or by using outside agencies and training providers.

Staffing

SRE will be delivered primarily through the PSHCE programme for years 7-11. This will be supplemented by use of outside speakers, tutor time and collapsed timetable or year based events.

Overall responsibility for the SRE programme will be with the PSHCE coordinator.

PSHCE Coordinator
SRE Lead
Science subject leader
RE lead teacher
Link Governor
PSHCE working party
Child Protection Lead

The Taught SRE Programme

The SRE programme will be delivered as part of the science, RS and PSHCE programme.

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.

Content

The SRE programme is delivered in a developmental manner so that issues are explored in greater depth as students mature. The following areas of content are addressed in the following years.

Year 7 – **Puberty and Adolescence** – Changes in puberty; managing feelings; getting help and support

Year 8 – **Sexual Health** – Talking about sex and relationships; conception; contraception

Year 9 – **Sexual Responsibility** – Recognising and managing risk; contraceptives and STI's; Condoms and STI's

Year 10 – **Relationship Skills** – Relationships, body image and self esteem; negotiation skills; accessing sexual health services

Year 11 – **Safer Choices** – Safer sex; choices and decisions; personal safety; parenting

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. Where appropriate, Outside agencies will be invited in to lead on specific aspects of the programme such as Teenage Pregnancy; Contraception and STI's.

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.

In year 11 there is also a two week programme of PSHCE, SRE, parenting and CEIAG.

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.

Monitoring, evaluation and assessment

Monitoring and evaluation is 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.

Parental concerns and withdrawal of students

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated SRE 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.

We will work in active partnership with parents/carers, value their views and keep them informed about out 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.

Pastoral Support for Students

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.

The school will also work with the local authority PSHCE co-ordinator.

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 pupils 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.

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. 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 PSHCE programmes will consider bullying and aim to discourage bullying based on sexism, homophobia, age appearance and other sex/relationship issues.

It is important that any form of harassment or hurtful comments of a sexual nature are seen within the context of the schools anti-bullying policy.

Success Criteria

Students are not removed from sex education lessons.

Students have a clear understanding of sexual health.

Incidents of teenage pregnancies is reduced.

We meet the legal requirements of the 1996 Education Act and the requirements of the DfEE 'Sex and Relationship Guidance', 2000

The SRE programme will be reviewed annually by the PSHCE Coordinator and the subject leader for science, RS and PSHCE working party, in conjunction with the named Governor, according to current statutes and guidance of the National Curriculum and national and local Health Education documents

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SLT staff responsible	Mrs J Clarke
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