



Wright Robinson College

Sex and Relationships Education Policy

Updated: 2016
Reviewed: 2019

Rationale

At Wright Robinson College, we believe that effective Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is essential if our students, as they grow, are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. It contributes to promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, emotional, mental and physical development of our students, preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

We believe SRE should not be delivered in isolation, but be firmly rooted in our Personal, Social, Health and Religious Education and Citizenship programme, supplemented by Science and other subjects of our taught curriculum.

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the safeguarding policy.

Definition of Sex and Relationship Education

Sex and Relationship Education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about respect, love and care and the benefits of making and maintaining a stable marriage or relationship. We recognise that to be human is to experience sexual feelings, seek connections with other people and develop relationships, which may be physical or non-physical. Our teaching of sex and relationship education is applicable to all sexual orientations and will include teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health.

SRE seeks to enable young people to feel positive about themselves, manage relationships and access the infrastructure of support available.

Aims and Objectives

We aim to provide our students with an age appropriate SRE programme that is tailored to their physical and emotional maturity. In doing this, we acknowledge the value of contributing to a spiral curriculum. It should enable them to make positive choices about their sexual and emotional health, both now and in the future. We seek to achieve this aim by having three main elements to our programme as outlined in '*Sex and Relationship Guidance*', DfEE, Ref 0116/2000, p.5:

- ***attitudes and values***

Learning to care about other people and being sensitive towards their needs and views;

Learning the importance of values, and individual conscience and moral considerations;

Accepting the differences between people and learning not to exploit them;

Learning the value of family life, marriage, and the importance of stable, loving and caring relationships for the nurture of children;

Learning the importance and responsibilities of the family unit for all its members;

Learning to respect oneself and others and being honest, loyal and trustworthy in relationships;

Learning to take responsibility for one's actions in all situations;

Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas; and 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;

Learning how to make well informed and responsible decisions about their lives and developing an appreciation of the consequences of the choices made;

Managing conflict;

Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

- ***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;

A knowledge of sexually transmitted diseases (STIs) and the importance of protecting against STIs.

Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay;

The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

We believe that SRE will be achieved by providing an environment and atmosphere where students feel safe, relaxed, not intimidated, but focussed; and where they have confidence and trust in the knowledge, ability and skills of their teachers.

Moral Framework

Students will be taught SRE within a framework which models and encourages the following values:

- Being honest with themselves and others
- Developing a critical awareness of themselves and others
- Learning to show tolerance, understanding, respect and care for others
- Acknowledging the rights, duties and responsibilities involved in sexual relationships
- Developing an awareness and belief in one's own identity
- Having a positive attitude towards the value of stable relationships for the upbringing of children
- Acknowledging and understanding diversity with regard to religion, culture and sexual orientation
- Importance of consent in any relationship

Working with Parents

The school is committed to working in close partnership with parents and carers who are the key people in teaching their children about sex and relationships. Parents/Carers are welcome to discuss the school's SRE programme and to view the teaching materials and resources that will be used.

A parent or carer, who is concerned about any element of this policy, or is unhappy about their child's participation, should discuss their feelings with the Senior Leadership Team.

Right of withdrawal

Sex and relationships education is part of all students' education and it is hoped that all will participate. However, the college acknowledges that, under the Education Act 1993, parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex and relationships education programme except for that part which occurs in the National Science Curriculum.

Parents need to be aware, however, that sex and relationships education can occur at any time if it arises naturally from class discussion. Parents should also consider whether they want their child withdrawn from all sex and relationships education or just that part which deals explicitly with sexual intercourse and related issues.

Discussions on feelings, values and relationships may well not be of concern. Parents wishing to exercise that right are asked to make an appointment to meet the Head to discuss their concerns.

Content and Organisation

SRE is not an isolated subject: it permeates the whole college curriculum, the ethos of the school, the pastoral system and is informed by the role models given by teachers. Opportunities should be used as they occur for answering pupils' questions and exploring issues as they arise. All subjects, but particularly Science and Religious education provide

a focus for exploring some elements of SRE. SRE is also covered in PSHRE sessions as well as assemblies and topical discussions in tutor time.

The Head of PSHRE/Citizenship alongside the Pastoral Deputy, Pastoral Team and Head of faculty jointly co-ordinate Sex Education and are jointly responsible for the overall planning, implementation and review of the programme.

The organisation of SRE is no different from other curriculum areas. It is delivered through planned programmes which could involve specialist collapsed days and a range of subjects in the curriculum.

Normally, male and female students will be taught together. However, when deemed appropriate, there may be occasions when students are taught in separate gender groups.

Personal Beliefs

The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence their teaching of SRE.

Language and Ground Rules in Lessons

All staff teaching SRE will set ground rules in their classes. For example:

- *No one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question.*
- *No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.*
- *The only language used will be easily understood and acceptable to everyone in the class.*
- *Only the correct names for body parts will be use.*
- *Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.*

Students will be involved in the negotiation/setting of these rules. Distancing techniques will also help to avoid the inappropriate disclosure of information. These may include case studies, providing for anonymity by using a question box (this also gives the teacher time to consult with colleagues on how to answer unexpected questions from pupils), role play and speaking in the third person.

Dealing with difficult questions

We have a variety of strategies for dealing with difficult questions. For example:

- if a question is too explicit or is inappropriate, the teacher will attend to it later, on an individual basis and a decision will be taken whether or not to inform the child's parents/carers;
- if a child makes a disclosure that causes the teacher concern then they should follow the established child protection procedures.

Confidentiality in lessons

Staff teaching SRE have a duty of care and may wish to make a ground rule that opinions and ideas expressed in discussion should not be repeated outside the lesson. Again it must be stressed that no absolute confidentiality can be promised. Clearly a lesson situation is also a significantly different context to a conversation with an individual. Students should be reminded of this difference. Through distancing techniques and ground rules students should understand that lessons are not an appropriate place to disclose personal information.

The college also draws on a range of teaching methods in order to encourage exploration of attitudes, values and beliefs, using active learning methods which involve pupils and help them to personalise information.

This also increases the likelihood of the learning being relevant and effective. The college includes activities where pupils' can practise and develop confidence in using communication, negotiation and decision making skills. Pupils are consulted about issues they wish to explore, how they wish to work together, how well lessons are going and what changes need to be made.

The college recognises that some aspects of SRE are a whole school concern and that some aspects can be covered by subject teachers across the curriculum. However, there are aspects which need to be taught separately in PSHE, including those specifically relating to sexual matters such as contraception and STIs.

Therefore some SRE topics may be delivered by a panel of teachers who are particularly trained and confident in teaching these areas. In addition the school draws on the expertise of the College Nurse, faith communities and a representative spectrum of national specialist agencies. Pupils are given a choice about their participation in learning activities related to sexual matters such as contraception and STIs. Resources are chosen from agencies which represent diverse beliefs, which are appropriate to pupils' age, maturity and religious and cultural background.

Where visitors are invited to deliver aspects of the SRE programme they will be used to support not supplant, the role of the teacher and they will always be accompanied in the lesson by a teacher. Visitors will always be fully briefed on their contribution to the programme and will be given a copy of the current policy beforehand.

Aspects of SRE are encompassed within the ethos of the school and may also be delivered through:

- Assembly time
- Guidance time (in tutor groups)
- Theatre in Education visits
- Project/theme lessons
- Health Clinic

All teachers are given training on handling controversial topics and clarity is provided about confidentiality boundaries. Staff are aware of where/who to refer pupils to for confidential advice and support.

The Senior Leadership Team will support staff and ensure that they have the appropriate skills, qualities and knowledge to teach the more sensitive and contentious aspects of SRE. Continuous professional development and training will be provided, when required, to ensure a high level of expertise for teachers involved in delivering the SRE programme in the college.

Equal Opportunities

The college's policy for equal opportunities also underpins the teaching of SRE.

Sex and relationship education can act as a basis for promoting equality between individuals and groups. It necessarily involves an exploration of human and social diversity, and a fostering of self-esteem and self-worth in a learning environment that recognises and respects difference.

We work to ensure that our sex and relationship education is relevant and accessible to all our pupils and that it is appropriate for all levels of understanding and maturity.

It caters for all pupils and is respectful of how pupils choose to identify themselves, their sexual orientation and gender identity (emerging). This means that sex and relationships education is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils and may evolve and adapt over time.

SRE is inclusive of all students; they have an equal entitlement to good quality SRE. The whole college community will support an approach which ensures that no individual will be discriminated against on grounds of gender, race, disability, religion or sexual orientation.

Resources selected to support the programme will be free from cultural bias wherever possible and will avoid gender, race, disability or sexual orientation stereotyping. The programme will be sensitive to the needs of all students in the school.

Information about local advice and support is available to students in the Year Team office and the Health Clinic.

Different codes of conduct apply to different professionals working in our school. Through the dissemination of our Confidentiality Policy students, parents, staff and health professionals working with us are aware of the different roles people have within the college, the confidential support available and how confidentiality works in practice.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The SRE policy is monitored and evaluated through a review process involving students, parents, teachers, the Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body. The policy and teaching programme will be reviewed every 12 months, based on the outcome of monitoring and evaluation. Governors and senior staff will take a key role in monitoring the progress of the policy. Evaluation could include:

- Assessments of knowledge and understanding of information and issues addressed in SRE
- A review of pupils' responses to teaching content and methods
- A review of teachers' responses to teaching content and methods
- Reviewing evidence to illustrate pupils' increased self-responsibility and respectful attitudes towards members of the opposite sex.
- Reviewing evidence to illustrate a decrease in recorded instances of expressions of homophobia, bullying, sexist graffiti, casual use of derogatory language, particularly with sexual or gender meanings, monitored by senior pastoral staff.