



Sex and Relationship Education

"Children need high-quality sex and relationship education so they can make wise and informed choices. We will work with teachers, parents, faith groups and campaign groups, such as Stonewall, to make sure sex and relationship education encompasses an understanding of the ways in which humans love each other and stresses the importance of respecting individual autonomy." (The importance of teaching: the schools white paper 2010 Pg.46)

1. Introduction

The delivery of sex education is aimed at preparing students for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Issues will be dealt with in a clear, objective and open manner to tackle common misconceptions and myths, giving students the necessary information they need to act responsibly. This will allow them to make clear and informed choices and to recognise the moral implications and risks of certain types of behaviour, including their emotional and physical development, the nature of sexuality and the process of reproduction.

Sex and relationship education (SRE) is compulsory from age 11 onwards and involves teaching children about reproduction, sexuality and sexual health. It does not promote early sexual activity or any particular sexual orientation or gender bias. Some parts of sex and relationship education are compulsory, such as the National Curriculum for science, however parents can withdraw their children from all other parts of sex and relationship education if they have objection to the material.

We aim to:

- Enable students to make informed, reasoned and responsible decisions about their behaviour in the context of personal relationships. To develop communication and decision-making skills alongside the qualities of dignity, loyalty and respect for themselves and others;
- To involve staff, parents and students in the creation of SRE policy and materials in order to develop a robust SRE education for our students;
- To help develop self-esteem and self-confidence in young people, as the foundation for responsible and caring sexual relationships;
- To help young people be positive and confident about the physical, emotional and moral aspects of their own sexual identity;
- To promote an awareness of the pressures on a young person's sexual behaviour and self-image and to help improve assertiveness and the confidence to cope with such pressure;
- To understand areas of sexual health and the related mental and physical issues including puberty, relationships, reproduction, menstruation, contraception, parenthood, sexually transmitted infections (including AIDS) and the risks involved in sexual activity;
- To encourage the values of stable family life, marriage, the responsibilities of parenthood and recognise there are alternative and equal lifestyles;
- To explore and challenge stereotypes and prejudices and encourage respect for differences in relation to gender and sexuality. To support equality throughout all



protected characteristics, including disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation;

- To understand the spiritual, moral, social and cultural implications of sexual activity, an awareness of current laws relating to this and the right of people to hold their own views without imposing them on others;
- To inform students about sources of confidential, professional advice and support in relation to sexual matters.

2. Why teach sex and relationship education?

Sex and relationship education has shown to have positive effects on students' wellbeing, on their choices of sexual relations, on overall academic attainment. Recent parliamentary and Ofsted reviews into SRE have shown that:

- Students with access to SRE are more likely to start having sex at a later age and 'SRE rarely, if ever, leads to early sexual initiation' (1);
- SRE adds to students' knowledge, helping them achieve at school by supporting and extending other subjects in the school curriculum (2);
- Good SRE 'forms a bridge between education and public health by building resilience and wellbeing', including students' emotional, behavioural, social and school lives (3);
- Students have a right to access good quality SRE provision as part of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 17, 29 and 34). Encouraging respect, access to information and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse;
- Good, comprehensive SRE allows for students to understand and recognise consent, predatory behaviour and will underpin high quality safeguarding (4). For some vulnerable students the school may be the only provider of SRE, therefore we have close links to both Child Exploitation & Online Protection Agency (CEOP) and Stonewall, protecting the rights of all students including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) and Looked After students;
- Good quality SRE is an excellent way to tackle bullying - especially 'cyberbullying' and awareness of 'sexting', especially when harmful or linked to exploitation or exploitative relationships. Good SRE will encourage children and young people not to engage in potentially harmful behaviour such as sexting and enable them to recognise what is abusive behaviour and how to get help (5).

3. Equal opportunities statement

Our school ensures that effective SRE is available to all students. Our SRE programme responds to the needs of individuals, taking gender, preference, cultures, faiths and family backgrounds into consideration. Students with special educational needs may be given extra SRE support by SEN staff, as appropriate.



4. Content/learning objectives of the SRE programme

The content is developmental with topics and skills being revisited and built upon as students progress through Years 7 to 13.

The content was decided in consultation with staff, students and SRE guidelines and consideration of the students' social, physical and emotional maturity is also part of the development of the programme.

5. Organisation of the SRE programme

The head of citizenship and senior line manager are responsible for the organisation, monitoring and evaluation of the SRE programme, which is delivered predominantly in citizenship lessons to ensure a comprehensive coverage. Lessons are strictly monitored to ensure coverage and quality, taking into account both staff and students from UHS and staff work to the guidelines set out in UHS policy and Government legislation. Teachers are given support and training to ensure that programmes are delivered sensitively and effectively.

Ground rules will be developed during SRE lessons based on respect. The only additional considerations specific to SRE ground rules (as opposed to basic class rules) will be a need to reflect safeguarding issues including suspected risk to a student's welfare, risk of harm or other safeguarding issues. Teachers will follow school safeguarding procedures in such an event as covered in the UHS child protection / safeguarding policy).

Active learning techniques such as role-play, paired and group discussion, interviews and presentations are used as much as possible, to teach SRE. Students are also given the opportunity to reflect on what they have learnt in SRE lessons.

Most of SRE is delivered in mixed sex tutor groups, however sometimes students will also be given the opportunity to discuss what has been covered in single sex groups where they might feel more comfortable. Consolidation and extension of SRE is found in science, RE, PE and during assemblies.

An up to date list of SRE topics taught in each year is available on our website: Teaching & Learning / Curriculum / Citizenship.

As per the national curriculum in science, students will additionally receive lessons on human and plant reproductive organs, fertilisation and stages of reproduction. Students will additionally debate IVF at KS4. For more information, please see the national curriculum in science.

6. Using visitors to deliver SRE

All visitors are made aware of the SRE policy and staff evaluate and observe all lessons. All external visitors are subject to safeguarding checks following school procedures and at least one member of staff will also supervise the visitor at all times.



7. Confidentiality

Students' confidentiality is respected in all SRE lessons and they are made aware of the fact that what they say in lessons will not be repeated to anyone else unless a member of staff suspects that the child is at risk. Please see the child protection / safeguarding policy for further information.

8. Approach to potentially controversial and sensitive issues

All staff are aware that everyone has views on SRE related issues. However, while it is respected that everyone has the right to their own viewpoint, all SRE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented with all viewpoints so that students are able to form their own opinions, but are also encouraged to respect the fact that others may have quite different viewpoints.

9. Withdrawal

Section 405 of the Education Act 1996 enables parents to withdraw their children from sex education, other than that covered by the national curriculum. Please see our parents' information booklet for more information.

Footnotes:

1: Select Committee on Education: Why teach PSHE and SRE in schools?

2: Department for Education (SRE 364) para 2.

3: Department of Health, Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer 2012: Our Children Deserve Better: Prevention Pays (24 October 2013), p 7.

4: Department for Education, the Impact of Pupil Behaviour and Wellbeing on Educational Outcomes (November 2012) Research Report DFE-RR253.

5: House of Commons Education Committee: Life lessons: PSHE and SRE in schools, 2015