

## **POLICY: SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION (SRE)**

### **Introduction**

1. Effective SRE is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives.
2. The Objectives of an effective SRE at the College:
  - 2.1. Is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development.
  - 2.2. Successful SRE help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.
  - 2.3. The SRE at the College helps students develop the skills and understanding they need to live confident, healthy and independent lives. It plays an important role in helping students deal with difficult moral and social questions.
  - 2.4. Students are given accurate information and helped to develop skills to enable them to understand difference and respect themselves and others and to prevent and remove prejudice.
  - 2.5. Students learn to understand human sexuality, learn the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay, and learn about obtaining appropriate advice on sexual health.
  - 2.6. The SRE contributes to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at school and of society and preparing students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
  - 2.7. Effective SRE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It teaches young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, to build up their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. It builds up knowledge and skills that are particularly important today because of the many different and conflicting pressures on young people.
  - 2.8. Technology is evolving at a tremendous pace. The need to protect children and young people from inappropriate online content, cyber-bullying and exploitation is a growing concern. The SRE includes attention to these issues.

### **What is SRE?**

3. Sex and relationships education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health.
4. A comprehensive programme of SRE provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline.
5. Aspects are taught in various forms in the different subjects offered at the school.

### **Why is SRE important?**

6. High quality SRE helps create safe school communities in which students can grow, learn, and develop positive, healthy behaviours for life. It is essential for the following reasons:
  - 6.1. Children and young people have a right to good quality education, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

- 6.2. Children and young people want to be prepared for the physical and emotional changes they undergo at puberty, and young people want to learn about relationships. Older students frequently say that sex and relationships education was 'too little, too late and too biological'.
  - 6.3. SRE plays a vital part in meeting the College's safeguarding obligations. A preventative programme enables students to learn about safety and risks in relationships.
7. Through the SRE, we:
- 7.1. teach about relationships, love and care and the responsibilities of parenthood as well as sex;
  - 7.2. focus on boys as much as girls;
  - 7.3. build self-esteem;
  - 7.4. teach the taking on of responsibility and the consequences of one's actions in relation to sexual activity and parenthood;
  - 7.5. provide young people with information about different types of contraception, safe sex and how they can access local sources of further advice and treatment;
  - 7.6. give young people a clear understanding of the arguments for delaying sexual activity and resisting pressure;
  - 7.7. link SRE with issues of peer pressure and other risk-taking behaviour, such as drugs, smoking and alcohol; and
  - 7.8. ensure young people understand how the law applies to sexual relationships.

### **What is high quality sex and relationships education?**

8. The principles of high quality SRE
- 8.1. Is a partnership between home and school.
  - 8.2. Ensures children and young people's views are actively sought to influence lesson planning and teaching.
  - 8.3. Starts early and is relevant to students at each stage in their development and maturity.
  - 8.4. Is taught by people who are trained and confident in talking about issues such as healthy and unhealthy relationships, equality, pleasure, respect, abuse, sexuality, gender identity, sex and consent.
  - 8.5. Includes the acquisition of knowledge, the development of life skills and respectful attitudes and values.
  - 8.6. Has sufficient time to cover a wide range of topics, with a strong emphasis on relationships, consent, rights, responsibilities to others, negotiation and communication skills, and accessing services.
  - 8.7. Helps students understand on and offline safety, consent, violence and exploitation.
  - 8.8. Is both medically and factually correct and treats sex as a normal and pleasurable fact of life.
  - 8.9. Is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief, or other life experience.
  - 8.10. Uses active learning methods, and is rigorously planned, assessed and evaluated.
  - 8.11. Helps students understand a range of views and beliefs about relationships and sex in society including some of the mixed messages about gender, sex and sexuality from different sources including the media.
  - 8.12. Teaches students about the law and their rights to confidentiality even if they are under 16, and is linked to school-based and community health services and organisations.
  - 8.13. Promotes equality in relationships, recognises and challenges gender inequality and reflects girls' and boys' different experiences and needs.
9. SRE contributes to:
- 9.1. A positive ethos and environment for learning.
  - 9.2. Safeguarding students, promoting their emotional wellbeing, and improving their ability to achieve in school.
  - 9.3. A better understanding of diversity and inclusion, a reduction in gender-based and

homophobic prejudice, bullying and violence and an understanding of the difference between consenting and exploitative relationships.

- 9.4. Helping students keep themselves safe from harm, both on and offline, enjoy their relationships and build confidence in accessing services if they need help and advice.
- 9.5. Reducing early sexual activity, teenage conceptions, sexually transmitted infections, sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence and bullying.

### **Acknowledgements**

This guidance material is sourced and adapted from:

- The Sex Education Forum (2000) *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance*
- The Sex Education Forum (2013) *Sex and relationships education (SRE) for the 21st century. Supplementary advice to the Sex and Relationship Education Guidance DfEE (0116/2000)*

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