

HIGHDOWN SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE



SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION [SRE] POLICY

Title:	Sex and Relationships Education [SRE] Policy
Version:	2
Author:	Mr M A Grantham, Deputy Head
Committee responsible:	Teaching & Learning Committee
Governor link:	Mr. A. Rajantie
Date approved:	
Review date:	September 2019

HIGHDOWN SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM CENTRE

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION [SRE] POLICY

Introduction

Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre believes that sex and relationships education [SRE] makes an essential contribution to every student's health, wellbeing and preparation for adult life in society. SRE is lifelong learning for all young people, irrespective of gender, ethnicity or ability, about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health. It does not promote sexual activity or any particular sexual orientation or gender identity. It involves acquiring knowledge and information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. It is essential that young people develop the skills to enable them to take control over their own sexual health and identity and become responsible citizens who make well-informed decisions about their lives.

Statutory guidance from the DfE requires a SRE policy addresses the following elements¹:

- Attitudes and values:
 - learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations;
 - learning the value of family life, marriage, and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children;
 - learning the value of respect, love and care;
 - 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;
 - developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made;
 - managing conflict; and
 - 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;
 - learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay; and
 - the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

Policy aims

The aim of SRE is to provide balanced factual information about human reproduction and growth, together with consideration of broader emotional, ethical, moral and religious dimensions of relationships and sexual health. Our SRE programme aims to:

¹ Sex and Relationships Education guidance (DfE, 2000).

- provide a curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students, and which prepares students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- ensure that Sex and Relationship Education is inclusive in nature and respectful of the Equal Opportunities agenda, including raising awareness and understanding of sexuality and gender identity, such as LGBT and non-binary identity
- ensure that Sex and Relationships Education is provided for all students, including those with physical, learning or emotional difficulties
- support each student academically and pastorally at a level appropriate to their needs
- enable students to develop the necessary skills to take control over their own sexual health and identity, and become responsible and informed citizens
- encourage the exploration of values and moral issues about sexuality, sexual health, growing up, stable relationships and family life
- develop self-esteem, self-awareness, a sense of moral responsibility and the skills to avoid and resist unwanted sexual experiences
- enable each student to form a set of moral values and to develop self-discipline in order to become responsible and considerate adults
- develop an awareness of, respect for and a sensitivity to other people's beliefs, ideas and opinions, and be resilient and robust in acknowledging challenges.

Delivering SRE

SRE is not an isolated subject. It permeates the whole school curriculum, particularly PSHCE, RE, ICT/Computing and Science and the pastoral support system. Lessons are specifically planned to deliver the content set out above.

Much of SRE takes place within our PSHCE programme, including daily sessions, weekly assemblies and Big Learning Days. PSHCE is taught by mentors and makes use of external agencies, where appropriate and possible. SRE lessons are set within the broader context of the PSHCE curriculum and focus on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction are also included.

The Science curriculum is more concerned with the physical aspects of development and reproduction.

The Religious Education curriculum includes focus on the social aspects of SRE, for example role and function of marriage within different religious groups, and explores questions of morality and individual responsibility. Matters such as child-rearing and sexuality are considered as well.

The ICT/Computing curriculum includes a focus on online and e-safety in addition to raising awareness of how the law affects users of digital media.

The librarian will continue to ensure that there are materials available through the library service to support promoting and developing an awareness of SRE issues.

Sensitive issues, confidentiality and advice to students

(a) Sensitive issues may include: Puberty, menstruation, sexual intercourse, contraception, abortion, safer sex, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), abuse, awareness of sexuality or gender

identity. Teachers should understand the difference between stating facts and stating opinions. If work in sensitive areas of the curriculum causes teachers any concerns, they should discuss them with their line manager or a senior leader. The DfEE document 'Sex and relationship Education Guidance', issued in July 2000, contains further information on sensitive issues and staff should be familiar with these. Teachers should establish clear parameters of what is and is not appropriate in a whole class setting to ensure a safe environment in which stakeholders do not feel embarrassed or anxious is established. Furthermore, discussions should always remain depersonalised. If a student requires further information, the class teacher can direct them to discuss further with an appropriate person, for example, Head of Achievement, Designated Safeguarding Officer [DSO] or member of the STAR Centre, as appropriate. If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of sexual abuse, they must inform the DSO following Highdown School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. If a teacher is concerned about a student who is struggling with their sexuality or gender identity and that this is impacting on their physical and/or mental wellbeing, staff should pass this information to the relevant Head of Achievement. Questions which have some relevance to sexual matters may arise during discussion. In order to avoid any question of parental withdrawal from such lessons, the law requires that 'such discussion is relatively limited and set within the context of the subject concerned'.

(b) Confidentiality: If a student makes a personal disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff cannot offer or guarantee unconditional confidentiality. The member of staff must refer to the DSO as outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

(c) Advice to students: Through the pastoral support system and STAR centre, students will be given full information related to SRE elements. Students may also access the Community School Nurse through their Head of Achievement or the STAR Centre.

Parental partnership

Parents/Carers are the key people in: teaching their children about sex and relationships; maintaining the culture and ethos of their family; helping children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up; and preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings. Parents are encouraged to:

- create an open home environment where young people can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that been raised through PSHCE activities.
- be vigilant and responsive to concerns relating to inappropriate material available or viewed online.
- seek additional support from Highdown School where they feel it is needed.

It is intended that Highdown School's SRE programme will complement and support the role of parents/carers.

Section 405 of the Education Act (1996) enables parents/carers to withdraw their children from all or part of SRE other than that which is in the National Curriculum, for example biological aspects of human growth and reproduction. Parents/carers wishing to do so should apply in writing to the Headteacher, who will refer the matter for discussion with the Head of Achievement in the first instance.

Managing the policy

Senior leaders will continue to seek and provide training opportunities for staff to develop an understanding, and support the delivery, of SRE. Staff should be familiar with, and have an

understanding of, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in combination with the SRE policy.

It is the responsibility of the PSHCE coordinator to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluate of PSHCE and to liaise with curriculum leaders to ensure that the required aspects of SRE are being covered.

Big Learning Days are evaluated following each event by staff and students and coordinated by a designated senior leader.

The Governing Body and Leadership Team are responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the implementation of SRE.