



# **Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) Policy**

Approved by Governing Body: Autumn 2016

Review Date: Autumn 2017

## One Vision

'Enjoying our learning together'

## One Mission

We all aim to enjoy our learning to create positive attitudes towards learning for life. The sense of 'our' creates a personal stake in a commitment and motivation for each individual involved. Learning is the key to our school's success. Success that is built on togetherness, with each individual playing their role in the team. A role that is in pursuit of excellence, in which we all look to give the very best we can.

## Six Aims, Six Key Values

'To achieve our vision we aim to:

.....encourage the **achievement** of all pupils in every aspect of their education by providing opportunities for children to be confident, independent and capable which is recognised, encouraged and rewarded.

..... create and maintain a **caring community** by encouraging a supportive, safe, understanding and considerate environment that fosters mutual respect, kindness, trust and teamwork, along with the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

..... to provide **challenge** that encourages children of all abilities to achieve their full potential through a broad, balanced, progressive and creative curriculum.

..... give our children understanding of, and respect for **Christian values**, particularly 'Love', 'Friendship', 'Peace' and 'Creativity', and an appreciation of all creeds, cultures and races.

.....to provide **equal opportunities** for all to develop cognitive, physical, emotional, spiritual and moral development, regardless of gender, race, ability, disability and age, faith or religion or socio-economic background so that an inclusive culture exists in the school.

..... to provide **stimulating experiences** by developing a rich and varied learning environment which meets the children's needs, teaching styles match a variety of learning styles and multiple intelligences, while quality resources motivate children to take their learning to the next level.'

# 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The best people to answer children's questions on such personal subjects are parents; many parents find this a difficult task and the information children receive from their parents varies widely. Sexual ignorance may cause a lot of unhappiness as a child grows older. Openly and frankly taught before puberty, sex and relationship education can prevent confusion and distress that may arise if the source of information is half-truths and gleaned from peers and the views they may obtain from the media.

SRE should also be viewed as an important part of the school's safeguarding procedures, so that children know what is right and what is wrong in terms of appropriate physical contact between them and other people.

The Governing Body believe that sex and relationship education is an essential and integral part of our balanced and broadly based curriculum and should be taught as an ongoing theme throughout our school, particularly at the onset of puberty, which is typically from Year 5. Sex and relationship education (SRE) is part of the overall provision of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) in the school and forms part of the statutory requirements of the Science curriculum. The Governors recognise that SRE is no longer a statutory requirement under the new National Curriculum from 2014. However we do believe that effective SRE is essential if pupils are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. It should not be taught in isolation, but should be firmly rooted within the School's curriculum particularly in Science and PSHE. The objective of SRE is to help and support pupils through their physical, emotional and moral development.

## 2 POLICY STATEMENT - Aims of our SRE policy

- 2.1 An essential part of our policy is that parents and staff should work together to:
- ensure that children gain an understanding appropriate to the physical and emotional maturity of their bodies, of human reproduction and sexuality.
  - raise children's awareness of potential sexism and the value of equal opportunities for males and females.

Whilst we acknowledge parents and staff may have different opinions we would ensure particular sensitivity will be shown to the views of those parents whose ethnic backgrounds, religions or other beliefs may cause them to hold reservations about sex and relationships education.

In our school we focus on teaching SRE in the context of relationships using a variety of formal and informal opportunities and strategies. This helps children to develop their self-esteem and emotional well-being and to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, which are based on respect for themselves and for others.

**2.2** Teaching sex and relationships education can be difficult for some teachers. Children's questions must be answered frankly and without obvious embarrassment.

In order to be able to deal with this, teachers will need to have explored their own values, attitudes and taboos. At all times it is important to enhance the self-esteem of the individual child. The staff of St Mary's are prepared to offer balanced and factual information and to acknowledge the major ethical issues. It is not anticipated that staff would find themselves having to give direct advice on sexual activity to children of primary school age. Staff must **immediately** refer any concerns to the Headteacher as the Designated Teacher or their designated deputy who will refer to the school policy on Child Protection.

We hope all staff will take responsibility and address issues for their year class/group as and when necessary. We are aware that staff training will be needed to enable staff to properly plan and implement the sex education policy. We will support staff in planning their use of resources so that adequate in-service training is made available and taken up. Staff gain in confidence to teach pupils when they:

- have sound subject knowledge and clear understanding
- have received training appropriate to their expressed needs
- can carefully manage situations where sensitive issues are raised
- have been involved in the planning process and feel some ownership of the work
- are familiar with the materials and resources and are sure about their appropriateness, quality and relevance and that they are up to date
- feel supported by colleagues and external trainers such as school nurses.

We propose that sex and relationship education is organised by a leader who will have responsibility to implement the policy. The leader will support any teacher who does not feel confident enough to teach this area of the curriculum alone. If a teacher does not wish to teach certain aspects, the leader will make alternative arrangements and will arrange appropriate training for the future.

We will endeavour to provide male and female role models whenever possible.

- 2.3** Sex and relationship education is an integral part of Health Education and as far as is practicable, aspects of it are introduced at appropriate places in the general curriculum. We recognise, however, that SRE in the human context requires particular sensitivity, especially when helping children to come to terms with the physical and emotional changes that accompany "growing up" and therefore require specific time that can be devoted to personal aspects of the subject.

SRE education will be taught in the context of a loving and caring relationship and the responsibilities of parenthood and the feelings of partners will be stressed. The laws concerning sexual relationships will also be introduced in to teaching as appropriate. Children will be helped to understand they have rights and have control over who touches their bodies. High levels of self esteem must be promoted by teachers and parents and children should always feel secure in school.

Child abuse is understandably frightening to all children. Great sensitivity is required to allay fear while at the same time warning, informing and helping them to acquire the communication skills they need should they be subjected to attempted or real abuse of any kind.

- 2.4** The issues of HIV/AIDS and contraception are included with the Education Acts definition of Sex Education. We recognise that most of us would prefer children of primary age to remain unaware of many aspects of sexual behaviour eg - sexually transmitted diseases, child abuse, homosexuality, abortion. It is likely, however, that questions on these subjects will be raised by children themselves, some of whom will have heard about them from the media, or older brothers and sisters. We believe that it is important that parents and teachers should answer such questions in a way that informs children without causing unnecessary alarm.

Homosexual relationships can be a difficult concept for children of primary age. Section 28 of the Local Government Act (1988) states that homosexuality should not be promoted or encouraged. We need to avoid situations where the prejudices of adults are passed on, unchallenged, to the next generation.

Questions on the above subjects will be answered in class by the teacher. If a question is sensitive or inappropriate for the age group, the teacher should inform the child he/she will come back to that issue at a later time and then consult the leading teacher. The teacher may decide to refer such questions to the parents on an individual basis.

Appropriate differentiation is required so that children with SEN are able to access this curriculum area.

The teaching of this policy will be modified to be inclusive for all pupils and to give all pupils relevant and appropriately challenging work. The principles for a more inclusive curriculum are

- setting suitable learning challenges
- responding to pupil's diverse learning needs
- overcoming potential barriers in learning and assessment

### **3 SEX & RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

The SRE aspects of our Science and PSHE programme include:

All Year Groups - Promoting self esteem, responsibility, tolerance, decision making, confidence and love in relationships (PSHE).

Year 3 - explore the part that flowers play in the life cycle of flowering plants, including pollination, seed formation and seed dispersal (Science).

Year 5 - describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals (Science).  
- describe the changes as humans develop to old age (Science).

Years 6 - name the main sexual and reproductive parts of the human body using correct terminology, and describe the functions of some of them (SRE).  
- describe the main physical and emotional changes in puberty for both boys and girls, and the differences between them  
- identify basic facts about menstruation (SRE).  
- explain that there are different rates of change during puberty for different people and give some reasons for this (SRE).  
- deal positively with concerns or questions they have about puberty and know where to go for further help and information if they need it (SRE).  
- Say how babies are made and how they are born. Say what needs a baby has and how to look after a baby (SRE).

The vocabulary used in the SRE programme is very important and we need to ensure that all staff are using the correct vocabulary. Scientific vocabulary is the basis for the words learnt by the children.

The school nurse comes into to lead lessons with Years 6, focusing on puberty, hygiene and body changes. Opportunities are provided for boys and girls to have single—sex discussions about issues relevant to the changes that occur during puberty.

Another adult who is known to the children is to be present when the school nurse is talking to the children. Ideally this would be the class teacher or if not, the link Teaching Assistant.

#### **4 THE RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL**

Although SRE is no longer a statutory requirement, but the choice of the school to offer it as part of its curriculum we still will respect the previous arrangement that Parents/Carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex and relationships education provided at school except for those parts included in the statutory Science National Curriculum. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the Headteacher who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the SRE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

#### **5 WORKING WITH PARENTS**

Parents will be given an opportunity to see and discuss the resources that teachers use as an aid to their teaching and will be given due notice when sex education is given special emphasis in the programme of PSHE. In acknowledging the importance of working in partnership with parents/carers we will:

- consult parents/carers about the content of SRE
- offer support to the parent/carer role as sex educators
- make explicit to parents/carers the circumstances under which they have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of sex education.

## **6 DISSEMINATION OF THE POLICY**

The Sex and Relationship Education policy will be kept on the staff network drive for staff to use. Parents may request a copy from the school office. A copy is also available for parents to read from the school office or available on the school's website: <http://www.stmarys306.herts.sch.uk/curriculum.html>

## **7 EVALUATION**

This policy will be under constant review and modified in the light of the experience gained through its implementation.

We will invite comments from parents. The subject leader will monitor the teaching plans and learning outcomes and report this to the headteacher and the SRE link governor each year. Evaluation of the policy and its teaching will be on the agenda annually at a staff meeting.

## **8 REVIEW**

The Governing body should ensure that the policy is reviewed annually with support from the headteacher and subject leader.