



Sex and Relationships Education

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Introduction

Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) is one element of the school's work in Science and in Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship (PSHCE). This policy has been written in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Like other areas of PSHCE, SRE is concerned not only with academic learning but also social development. At Ashchurch Primary School, SRE is lifelong learning about emotions, relationships and reproduction. It involves acquiring accurate information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. SRE is an integral part of the curriculum in that it involves consideration of different types of relationships at different levels.

In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, the focus is on relationships in families and with friends. As children go through the school, they begin to consider other relationships. It is only during years 5/6 that sexual relationships are considered.

Rationale and Statutory Requirements

SRE at Ashchurch Primary School has a number of broad outcomes and specific aims. SRE helps children to make sense of the world around them and supports their emotional development. In addition, SRE can help to support academic achievement. As such, SRE is an integral part of the Healthy Schools Standard initiative. However, there is also a legal requirement. As well as non-statutory guidelines for PSHE, including SRE, the National Curriculum for Science specifies aspects of SRE that must be taught; it requires that pupils should be taught about reproduction and the human life cycle.

The 1993 Education Act requires governors of all county and maintained schools to consider the provision of sex education and to ensure that the school has a sex and relationship education policy.

The Act gives parents/carers the right to withdraw their children from all, or part, of sex and relationship education, which is not part of the National Curriculum. As recommended by the DCFS SRE will be delivered as part of the PSHCE framework. Parents/carers will be offered the opportunity to view materials used during the delivery of the lessons in addition to time to discuss any issues with the PSHCE Co-ordinator and School Nurse.

The 1988 Education Act requires schools to:

- Promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and physical development of pupils
- Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Knowledge, Understanding and Skills

All children should be able to develop the following skills

- Knowledge and understanding of growing up in terms of both the physical and emotional changes involved
 - Knowledge which is clear, reliable, appropriate and authoritative
 - Examine opinions and concepts, dispel misunderstanding and encourage discussion and exploration of facts
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- Ability to name body parts and explain how bodies work
- Begin to acquire appropriate knowledge and understanding of sexual development and relationships (from Years 5/6)

Our values underpin all teaching, in all subjects including SRE; we encourage:

- Awareness, understanding and respect for self, including self-confidence and self-esteem
- Awareness and respect for others and their views
- Consideration and responsibility for choices and actions
- An appropriate set of values to guide their own behaviour and their relationships with others
- Responsibility and care for family, friends, school and wider community
- Appropriate communication and social skills.

The DCFS recommends that all primary schools should have a SRE programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the children, ensuring that both boys and girls know about puberty and how a baby is born - as set out in KS1 & KS2 of the National Science Curriculum.

All children, including those who develop earlier than average, need to know about puberty before they experience the onset of physical changes. In the early primary school years, education about relationships needs to focus on friendship, bullying and the building of self-esteem. Schools should have clear parameters on what children will be taught in the transition year before moving to KS3. This should include:

- Changes in the body related to puberty, such as periods and voice breaking;
- When these changes are likely to happen and what issues may cause young people anxiety and how they can deal with these;
- How a baby is conceived and born.

Confidentiality

It is only in the most exceptional circumstances that schools should be in the position of having to handle information without parental knowledge. Please refer to the school's Confidentiality and Child Protection Policies.

Child Protection

Teachers need to be aware that effective SRE, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. If a member of the school's staff suspects that a child is a victim of abuse or has reason to believe that he/she is at risk of abuse, they should immediately (before the end of the school day), refer to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Roles and Responsibilities

The PSHCE Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator for PSHCE is responsible for all aspects of the subject including SRE. In respect of SRE, responsibilities are to:



- Ensure that all staff are confident in the skills to teach and discuss SRE issues, identify any needs for additional training and supply / arrange for this training
- Monitor and advise on organisation, planning and resource issues across the school
- Review / update the policy on a three year cycle or sooner if necessary
- Keep the governing body fully informed of issues and progress in SRE
- Act upon any concerns, which may arise from pupil disclosure during SRE sessions.

The Governing Body

The Governing body, in co-operation with the Head Teacher, determines / agrees the school's general policy and approach to SRE provision for all pupils.

The Teacher

Teaching children about SRE is a whole school, on-going process and all teachers are sensitive to each individual pupil's needs. Teachers promote positive, healthy choices and relationships on a daily basis e.g. in assemblies and through implementing our behaviour policy. It is the responsibility of all staff to teach SRE in line with the principles and statements set out in this policy, and in particular, to:

- To establish with pupils a set of ground rules which set the parameters for discussion
- To recognise when there is a concern about sexual abuse and to follow concerns under Child Protection procedures (see Child Protection and Confidentiality section, below)
- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school
- Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- Discuss all types of relationships with sensitivity and respect
- Approach the teaching of SRE with an awareness of the children's needs in this area e.g. through informal assessment of their knowledge and understanding from other Science topics; through dialogue with the Designated Safeguarding Lead about vulnerable pupils
- Be developmental and appropriate to the age and stage of the child – common starting points are not assumed
- Inform children about changes and growing up as part of the Science and PSHE curriculum.

When teaching any work in SRE, sensitive questions may arise. Such questions are answered as appropriate. This is in accordance with DCFS guidance (2000). However, teachers should:

- Deflect questions that are of a personal nature
- Delay answers to some questions to allow clarification
- Not be drawn into providing more information than is appropriate to the age of the child
- Acknowledge questions that are too explicit which may need to be answered, at a parent's discretion, by the parent or carer.

The Teaching Assistant

Teaching Assistants may support teachers in the preparation and organisation of resources and with particular children to facilitate access to materials (e.g. as a reader or scribe) and in discussion.



External Agencies

Throughout the years, visitors may be invited to help the teaching and learning process, e.g. a parent and baby might help to illustrate work on relationships, growth and changes. In Y5/6, parents are informed of the 'growing up talk' that is given during this final year and if they have any questions or concerns, they may consult with the head teacher or school nurse and / or withdraw their child from the particular lesson.

The Parents

Ashchurch Primary School is committed to working with parents/carers. They have a legal right to view this policy and to have information about the school's SRE provision. The school will seek and take account of parent/carer views and endeavour to adopt a partnership approach with parents/carers e.g. through information workshops for parents/carers.

Under section 405 of the Education Act 1996, parents/carers may opt to withdraw their children from SRE lessons: *"if any parent of any pupil...requests that s/he may be wholly or partly excused from receiving sex education at the school, the pupils shall, except in so far as the education is comprised in The National Curriculum, be so excused accordingly until the request is withdrawn."* Parents/carers wanting to exercise this right are invited to see the Head teacher to discuss their concerns.

Child Protection and Confidentiality

It is the responsibility of Ashchurch Primary School to support its pupils but no individual should guarantee a child absolute confidentiality. If there are any disclosures made which raise concerns, the teacher must refer to Child Protection protocol by consulting with the Head teacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will advise or act upon the concern. Under the Children Act 1989, adults *"may do what is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare"*.

Organisation, Planning and Resources

SRE is delivered in line with the National Curriculum for Science and the national framework for PSHCE. Much of SRE is developed indirectly in day-to-day teaching and learning. However, to ensure full coverage, SRE is addressed in two ways:

- Through designated curriculum time, either each week over a period of time or a special 'blocked topic' of work (e.g. under a heading such as 'My body' or 'Growing up').
- Through other curriculum areas (Science, English and RE provide a particularly useful platform); these cross-curricular links are always made to make learning more meaningful and useful.

The resources used to support SRE are "Living and Growing".

Because SRE covers many aspects of relationships and feelings, teaching is generally planned in such a way as to encourage full participation by all children, irrespective of gender or ability. For the 'growing up' talk in Years 5 and 6 the boys and girls are spoken



to separately as this is considered more appropriate in view of the subject matter and avoids undue embarrassment.

Equality of Opportunity

All staff strive to ensure equality of opportunity in the learning and teaching process, and also for equality of opportunity for the children's futures. Young people may have varying needs regarding SRE, depending on their circumstances and background. SRE includes the study of physical and emotional differences and differences in life experience. Through such study children can acquire understanding of and respect for other people and their values.

Varying Home Backgrounds

All teaching aims to meet the needs of all children. SRE reflects the realities of children's different lives. This will include, for example, children whose parents have married, divorced or split up and children in public care. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

Special Educational Needs

For all pupils, there is a need for clear, explicit and repeated teaching about sex and relationships to avoid confusion. Pupils with learning difficulties may need to specifically learn things, which other pupils learn incidentally e.g. what being 'private' actually means. They may be more open to exploitation than other pupils and may need additional teaching to help them understand acceptable parameters and behaviours. Above all, they need the knowledge, skills and understanding to make informed, positive decisions about their own relationships and lives, and about their own safety. SRE lends itself to study by children with a range of different abilities. Children can work on the same content at different rates and levels; some may be supported by a teaching assistant (e.g. to read).

Gender Issues and Sexual Stereotyping

Girls tend to have greater access to SRE than boys, both through the media (particularly magazines) and the home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying. Teachers are careful not to reinforce stereotypes or traditional expectations of gender roles.

Ethnic and cultural diversity

Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to SRE. The school will consult pupils and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups as and if necessary.

Sexuality

In accordance with DCFS guidance, our approach to SRE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. We shall actively tackle homophobic bullying. This would include the use of 'gay' or 'lesbian' in a derogatory term.



Monitoring and Evaluating

The SRE programme will be regularly evaluated by teaching staff. The views of students and teachers will be used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an ongoing basis. The policy will be formally reviewed every three years for the following purposes:

- To review and plan the content and delivery of the programme of study for sex and relationships education
- To review resources and renew as appropriate
- To update training in line with current LA guidelines.

Learning Outcomes

The following statements are offered as illustration of learning outcomes for SRE for each key stage. They give a basis for planning / assessing work in SRE. They draw on DCFS and other guidance on SRE and they reflect elements of the non-statutory framework for PSHCE. Those statements in italics are part of the National Curriculum Science requirements.

By the end of Key Stage 2 Pupils will be able to:

- Express opinions, for example, about relationships and bullying
- Listen to, and support others
- Respect other people's viewpoints and beliefs
- Recognise their changing emotions with friends and family and be able to
- Express their feelings positively
- Identify adults they can trust and who they can ask for help
- Be self-confident in a wide range of new situations, such as seeking new friends
- Form opinions that they can articulate to a variety of audiences
- Recognise their own worth and identify positive things about themselves
- Balance the stresses of life in order to promote both their own mental health and well-being and that of others
- See things from other people's viewpoints, for example their parents and their carers
- Discuss moral questions
- Listen to, support their friends and manage friendship problems
- Recognise and challenge stereotypes, for example in relation to gender
- Recognise the pressure of unwanted physical contact, and know ways of resisting it.

Pupils will know and understand:

- That the life processes common to humans and other animals include growth and reproduction
 - About the main stages of the human life cycle
 - That safe routines can stop the spread of viruses including HIV
 - The physical changes that take place at puberty, why they happen and how to manage them
 - The many relationships in which they are all involved
 - Where individual families and groups can find help
 - How the media impact on forming attitudes
 - About keeping themselves safe when involved with risky activities
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- That their actions have consequences and be able to anticipate the results of them
- About different forms of bullying people and the feelings of both bullies and victims
- Why being different can provoke bullying and know why this is unacceptable
- About, and accept, a wide range of different family arrangements e.g. second marriages, fostering, extended families and three or more generations living together.

Pupils will have considered:

- The diversity of lifestyles
 - Others' points of view, including their parents' or carers'
 - Why being different can provoke bullying and why this is unacceptable
 - When it is appropriate to take a risk and when to say no and seek help
 - The diversity of values and customs in the school and in the community
 - The need for trust and love in established relationships.
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