



PLYMSTOCK SCHOOL

Sex and Relationships Education Policy Statutory

Governors' Committee: Curriculum Committee

Lead Officer: L Dover

Review Date: Autumn 2019

Introduction

Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is the right and responsibility of the parent. The school provides sex and relationships education to support parents in fulfilling their responsibility. Parents have the right to withdraw their child/children from those aspects of the sex and relationships curriculum not covered by the National Curriculum Science order. (Section 403 & 405 of the Education Act 1996)

What is Sex and Relationships Education (SRE)?

Sex and Relationships Education is part of our wider Pastoral Curriculum – The objective of our Pastoral Curriculum is to:

Equip our students with the knowledge, skills and attributes to make the most of the opportunities available to them, make informed choices and effectively deal with the challenges they face in the future.

Sex and Relationships Education is lifelong learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. Some aspects are taught in Science, others are taught as part of the Life Education curriculum which incorporates Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE.) SRE is about the understanding of stable, loving and caring relationships. SRE gives our students the essential skills for building positive, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe on and offline. SRE is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity.

Ethos

Sex and Relationships education is more than just biology, and the fundamentals of reproduction. Young people want reassurance about their body image, behaviour, feelings and relationships. They also need to develop knowledge and skills appropriate to their level of maturity.

Students should have the opportunity to express themselves within a trusted and safe environment. They need to express their thoughts, doubts and anxieties in order that they can build the skills needed to make responsible and informed decisions, communicate effectively and develop respectful, healthy and appropriate attitudes, values and relationships.

If our students feel positive and good about themselves they are more likely to take care of themselves and therefore, develop non-exploitative, caring relationships – they are also less likely to be exploited by others.

Plymstock School believes that SRE should:

- Be an entitlement for all young people
- Ensure that our students views are actively sought to influence lesson planning and teaching
- Be a partnership between home and school. We recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up
- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life.
- Encourage every student to contribute to make our community and aims to support each individual as they grow and learn.
- Be set within this wider school context and supports family, commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness.
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.
- Have a strong emphasis on consent, rights and responsibilities to others, negotiation and communication skills and accessing services.
- Help build understanding of on and offline safety, consent, violence and exploitation.
- Is medically and factually accurate and treats sex as a normal and pleasurable fact of life.
- Is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief or of other life experience.
- 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.
- Teaches pupils about the laws regarding consent and confidentiality.
- Promotes equality in relationships, recognises and challenges gender inequality and reflects girls' and boys' different experiences and needs

Sex and Relationships education contributes to:

- a positive ethos and environment for learning
- safeguarding students (Children Act 2004), promoting their emotional wellbeing, and improving their ability to achieve in school
- a better understanding of diversity and inclusion, a reduction of gender-based and homophobic prejudice, bullying violence and understanding of the difference between consenting and exploitative relationships
- 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
- reducing early sexual activity, teenage conceptions, sexually transmitted infections, sexual exploitation, abuse and bullying.

The school recognises that it is a moral body in its own right. As part of the whole curriculum the school seeks to explore issues of right and wrong. The school understands that SRE is fraught with certain difficulties and whilst it acknowledges different lifestyle choices, it promotes the view that stable, loving relationships are the best context for sexual relationships and the bringing up of children.

Sex and Relationships Education within the Curriculum

Plymstock School specifically delivers Sex and Relationship Education through its Life Education Curriculum (which includes PSHE), RE and Science lessons at KS3 and KS4.

The SRE focus in Life Education is more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction are also included.

The Science National Curriculum is delivered by staff in the science department. These lessons are more concerned with the physical aspects of development and reproduction, although the importance of relationships is not forgotten. Life Education and Science are taught in each year group.

Parents wishing to see the SRE elements of the Life Education curriculum, the programme of study and materials used may do so by contacting the Life Education Coordinator.

The SRE Curriculum is designed to develop the positive values and a moral framework that will guide decision making, judgements and behaviour:

We aim for our students to:

- Understand human sexuality and be aware of their sexuality
- Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity
- Understand the reasons for having protected sex
- Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within personal and sexual relationships

- Have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want
- Have sufficient information and information acquisition skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from unintended conception and sexually transmitted infections including HIV
- Avoid being exploited or exploiting others on or offline
- Avoid being pressured into unwanted sexual activity on or offline
- Access confidential sexual health advice, support and necessary treatment
- Know how the law applies to sexual relationships
- Understand the issue of consent
- Learn the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices
- Explore, consider and understand moral dilemmas
- Develop critical thinking and decision making
- Challenge myths and misconceptions
- Learn to manage emotions and relationships
- Develop self-respect and empathy for others
- Learn how to make informed choices without prejudice
- Manage conflict

Complementary to this curriculum are our policies and procedures relating to E-Safety which includes issues that may well be covered as part of the SRE curriculum, for example: “sexting” and online sexual exploitation and pornography. All staff are responsible for promoting and modelling positive relationships and in this regard, SRE is supported by School’s Behaviour Policy.

In the delivery of SRE, teachers use a range of resources and variety of teaching and learning methods including discussion, roleplay, research and presentations. Assessment involves teacher, student and peer assessment of knowledge and understanding, interpersonal skills and attitudes. Students record their own progress throughout their Life Education lessons.

Personal beliefs and attitudes of staffs will not influence the teaching of SRE. Teachers are expected to approach their lesson planning and delivery according to the ethos as outlined.

SRE is monitored by the Life Education Coordinator who:

- Ensures that SRE is delivered in accordance with the Life Education Curriculum
- Monitors the use of teaching and learning styles
- Monitors the use of teaching materials
- Evaluates the effectiveness of the SRE programme.

Dealing with sensitive issues:

Any SRE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. The following protocols are for dealing with sensitive issues and discussion-based lessons:

- No one (Student or teacher) will have to answer a personal question
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion
- Only the correct anatomical terms will be used
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way
- Teachers may use their discretion in responding to questions and may say that the appropriate person to answer a particular question is the parent.
- Where a member of staff is concerned that a child protection matter is arising it is his/her responsibility to follow the School's Child Protection policy accordingly.

Inclusion

Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns.

Students with Special Needs

We will ensure that all young people receive sex and relationship education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them.

Visitors contributing to SRE

Occasionally the school will invite appropriate health and professional visitors to support/complement the delivery of SRE. All visitors will be asked to conform to the following:

- Visitors will contribute to SRE at the invitation of the school and will be qualified to make an appropriate contribution
- Visitors must adhere to the ethos of the school in delivering SRE
- Visitors will be supervised by a teacher who will be present at all times
- Visitors will follow the Child Protection Policy
- Visitors will understand the context of their contribution to the SRE and Life Education Curriculum.

Services to Young People provided by the School

Healthcare and professional practitioners provide a range of services to our students:

Drop-In Clinic is provided by the School Nurse
Counselling support is arranged through The Hub
Parents can contact these services should they wish to do so.
When not in a classroom context, these professionals are governed by their own professional codes of conduct.

Health Professionals

Outside the teaching situation, health care professionals such as school nurses can:

Give one-to-one advice or information on a health matter

and

Exercise their own professional judgement as to whether a young person has the maturity to consent to medical treatment including contraceptive treatment. (In accordance with the Fraser Guidelines cited in guidance issued jointly by the Health Education Authority, the British Medical Association the Brook Advisory Centres et al.)

A teacher approached by an individual student for specific advice on contraception or other aspects of sexual behaviour should, wherever possible, encourage the student to seek advice from his or her parents, and, if appropriate, from the relevant health service professional.

Procedures for Student Withdrawal from SRE

As stated, parents have the right to withdraw their child/children from SRE that falls outside the National Curriculum Science order. They can do so in writing to the Headteacher. When the teacher receives such a letter he/she will invite the parents to a meeting at which the Headteacher will explain the SRE policy and seek to address the concerns and accommodate the wishes of the parents.

Children whose parents/carers exercise their right to withdraw them from SRE will be temporarily transferred to an alternative class where suitable work and supervision will be provided.

The SRE policy including the right to withdraw will be made clear in the school prospectus and a copy of this policy will be made available to all parents on request.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.