

St Mary's Bryanston Square Church of England Primary School Sex Education Policy

The Governors are required by the Education (No.2) Act 1986, 18(2) to “consider whether sex education should form part of the curriculum for the school, and make a written statement of their policy.”

What is sex and relationship education (SRE)?

We agree with the definition given in SRE Guidance, July 2000 which states that it is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about teaching knowledge of sexual reproduction. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching.

It has three main elements:

1. 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
- developing critical thinking as part of decision-making

2. 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
- learning to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse

3. knowledge and understanding

- learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages
- understanding human reproduction, emotions and relationships

In framing our policy the staff and Governors followed these principles of action:

- Laying the foundations for the next generation of relationships based first and foremost on provision for the needs and best interests of the child
- An upholding of the virtually universal and timeless cultural ideal of children being brought up within the framework of a committed partnership
- An active awareness of the existence of other lifestyles and backgrounds among the children committed to our care

The staff and Governors consider that sex education should form part of the curriculum.

We are a Christian school and we wish to present our sex education within a moral, family-oriented and Christian framework, whilst being aware of the different lifestyles and backgrounds of the children committed to our care.

Children today are made aware of sexual situations and words at a very early age through the media, peers, etc. They need to be given correct information at the primary school level with particular care and sensitivity, matching teaching to the maturity of the pupils involved and promoting healthy growth through to adulthood.

Pupils need help to cope with the physical and emotional challenges of growing up and to give them an elementary understanding of human reproduction in the context of a loving and stable relationship, and to help them make informed choices.

Cooperation between school, home and church, and with other faith communities should be encouraged. Opportunities will be given to view and discuss materials such as books and videos used in teaching this subject.

How is SRE provided?

It is provided through the PSHE scheme of work, as one of the twelve PSHE strands (see Appendix 1.) Each strand is taught at an age-appropriate level and is revisited in subsequent academic years. A summary of the sex education strand is given at Appendix 2. At key stages 1 and 2 PSHE lessons last for approximately 45 minutes. SRE is further reflected in our school ethos of valuing positive relationships, demonstrated for example in assemblies, 1:1 support work and circle times.

Who is responsible for providing SRE?

Class teachers take the lead in providing it, with appropriate support. Staff are encouraged to use outside support, eg parents, local health professionals, the learning mentor, church.

Monitoring and evaluation

SRE comes under PSHE. Monitoring and evaluation occur through marking of recorded work, observation and discussion with children. At the end of the academic year a summative assessment of achievement in SRE/PSHE is completed. Summative assessment is completed based upon children's attitudes and values, personal and social skills and their knowledge and understanding.

At Key Stage 1 PSHE is recorded in a general studies book. At Key Stage 2 written recording is completed in Religious Education books, but in a separate section (eg working from the back towards the middle.)

The PSHE coordinator will monitor SRE in different ways as appropriate, eg conversation with teachers, lesson observation and looking at children's books.

Sensitive issues

When dealing with questions, teachers will establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting, using **ground rules** such as no-one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question. It is important that children feel able to ask questions; they will be invited to see the teacher or another named member of staff with whom they feel comfortable if they have further questions or feel concerned about an issue.

Teachers will bear in mind the lesson objectives as a guide for making appropriate answers. They will aim to respond to questions in a **concise** and **relevant** way, using the **correct terminology** and giving **factual information** appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. No teacher's personal values will be given.

Teachers will make professional judgements as to the appropriate forum in which to answer children's questions, eg referring children to their parents. A question box may be used by pupils to 'post' questions, to which the teacher may choose to respond later in class.

Teaching methods

For teaching about puberty, the whole class will stay together for a general introduction. Girls and boys will subsequently be taught separately, for the sake of comfort in discussion, though the content of the lessons will be the same. The groups will be taught by the teacher plus any other appropriate teacher. The children will be brought back together for later sessions. Children will be told about ways in which they can receive practical help and advice. Girls will be taught about managing menstruation, including about facilities in school (sanitary bins are located in the girls' toilets upstairs.)

Special educational needs

In line with our policy on inclusion, and with particular reference to children with special needs, teachers will be ready to plan work in different ways in order to meet the individual needs of their children. It is important that SRE not be marginalized and that children with special educational needs are not withdrawn from health education so that they can catch up on National Curriculum subjects.

Confidentiality

Teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality: children should be made aware of this. However, children will be reassured that the school will provide a safe and secure environment and that any fears or worries they bring into the classroom will be listened to. Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents or carers. Effective SRE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. There may be rare occasions when a teacher is directly approached by a primary age child who is sexually active or is contemplating sexual activity. The teacher

should seek advice from the headteacher, who is the designated member of staff to deal with child protection issues.

Withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the SRE provided at the school except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (see Appendix 3.) We are concerned for the children whose parents exercise their right to withdraw their children from this part of the curriculum, and we will encourage those parents to provide the appropriate teaching in the home.

Parents will be informed at the beginning of the relevant half term that SRE is about to take place. This will include specific content details *with (when there is specific sex education content) the written option for any parent who is concerned to talk to the teacher about it and to view resources*. This information will form part of the general letter to parents covering all subjects. If they are still concerned, their right to withdraw will be explained to them.

Resources

Teachers use the available resources at their own discretion, bearing in mind their own level of confidence and the need to fit in with the SRE policy and SOW. Not all books and resources should be freely accessible to children: teachers should take care to familiarise themselves thoroughly with the resources they intend to use. A central bank of teachers' books, videos, cassette tapes, posters and children's books is kept in the PSHE resources. Although particular topics have been categorised, much of the material presented in specific books 'overlaps' a variety of topics within SRE. A complete list of resources is available for teachers to consult.

Further help and resources are available from Westminster schools' library service and KCW Health Authority library, as well as from the PSHE coordinator.

This policy will be reviewed in January 2005.

Appendix

Summary of SRE strand of PSHE scheme of work

KEY STAGE ONE

Reception

Know that

- humans change and develop at different rates
- human babies have special needs
- there are different types of family

Describe the roles of individuals within the family.

Name body parts (non sexual.)

Year one

Know that

- babies grow inside the mother's body, need loving care and attention and have special needs
- families need to prepare for new babies and adapt to change afterwards (families/relationships)

Understand the concept of male and female in the context of babies.

Name body parts (basic sexual.)

(Be prepared to answer questions but don't teach about conception.)

Year two

Appreciate ways in which people learn to live and work together; listening, discussing, sharing. How to develop good relationships.

Know that individuals have rights over their own bodies and that there are differences between good and bad touches.

Begin to develop skills and practices which will help maintain personal safety.

Appendix (continued)

KEY STAGE TWO

Year three

Develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships.

Develop self-esteem, good relationships and respect for others, including those who are different from us.

Know that there are different intensities of relationship and friendship, the closest of which may lead to marriage.

Understand the importance of marriage and the family in providing a stable environment for bringing up children and for mutual support.

Year four

Know some facts about birth. In relation to this, name parts of the body in general, but specifically including sexual organs, and describe simply how our bodies work.

Develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships.

Year five

Understand the importance of good parenting and know some of the skills and responsibilities of being a parent (eg commitment, stability, handling conflict, being prepared for difficult times, change.)

Understand some of the physical and emotional changes to expect at puberty, and be able to discuss them.

Year six

Know the basic biology of human reproduction in the context of a loving, stable and committed relationship/within a family-oriented and Christian framework. (How a baby is conceived.)