



**St Margaret's C of E VA
Primary School**

SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

**Ratified by Governing Body:
Review Date:**

**June 2017
June 2020**

St. Margaret's Church of England V.A. Primary School

Sex and Relationship Education Policy

Introduction

This policy is a 'stand alone' policy that comes under the umbrella of Personal, Social, Health Education and Citizenship (PSHEC) in the school. The policy has been drafted by the School Governors following consultations with parents and staff.

Rationale

At St Margaret's Primary School, we believe that effective Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is essential if our pupils, as they grow, are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. It contributes to promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, emotional, mental and physical development of our pupils, preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We understand that there is a statutory requirement for us to have in place such a policy compiled by the School Governors.

We believe SRE should not be delivered in isolation, but be firmly rooted in our Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship programme, supplemented by Science and other subjects of our taught curriculum.

Definition of Sex and Relationship Education

Sex and Relationship Education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about respect, love and care and the benefits of making and maintaining a stable marriage or relationship. We recognise that to be human is to experience sexual feelings, seek connections with other people and develop relationships which may be physical or non-physical. Our teaching of sex and relationship education is applicable to all sexual orientations and will include teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health.

SRE seeks to enable young people to feel positive about themselves, manage relationships and access the infrastructure of support available.

Aims and Objectives

At St Margaret's Primary school we aim to provide our pupils with an age appropriate SRE programme that is tailored to their physical and emotional maturity. In doing this, we acknowledge the value of contributing to a spiral curriculum. It should enable them to make positive choices about their sexual and emotional health, both now and in the future. We seek to achieve this aim by having three main elements to our programme.

- *attitudes and values*
 - learning to care about other people and being sensitive towards their needs and views;
 - learning the importance of values, and individual conscience and moral considerations;

- accepting the differences between people and learning not to exploit them;
 - learning the value of family life, marriage, and the importance of stable, loving and caring relationships for the nurture of children;
 - learning the importance and responsibilities of the family unit for all its members;
 - learning to respect oneself and others and being honest, loyal and trustworthy in relationships;
 - learning to take responsibility for one's actions in all situations;
 - 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;
 - learning how to make well informed and responsible decisions about their lives and developing an appreciation of the consequences of the choices made;
 - managing conflict;
 - 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;
 - the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

We believe that SRE will be achieved by providing an environment and atmosphere where pupils feel safe, relaxed, not intimidated, but focussed; and where they have confidence and trust in the knowledge, ability and skills of their teachers.

Moral Framework

Pupils will be taught SRE within a framework which models and encourages the following values:

- Being honest with themselves and others
- Developing a critical awareness of themselves and others

- Learning to show tolerance, understanding, respect and care for others
- Acknowledging the rights, duties and responsibilities involved in sexual relationships
- Developing an awareness and belief in one's own identity
- Having a positive attitude towards the value of stable relationships for the upbringing of children
- Acknowledging and understanding diversity with regard to religion, culture and sexual orientation
- Having self-discipline regarding their sexuality.

Working With Parents

The school is committed to working in close partnership with parents and carers who are the key people in teaching their children about sex and relationships. Parents/carers are invited to attend consultation evenings to discuss the school's SRE programme and to view the teaching materials and resources that will be used.

A parent or carer who is concerned about any element of this policy, or is unhappy about their child's participation, should discuss their feelings with the Headteacher. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of those aspects of the SRE programme which are NOT part of the statutory National Curriculum Science. If requested, alternative arrangements will be made for individual pupils, but it is hoped that this will not be necessary. If so, parents should consult with the Headteacher to discuss appropriate arrangements.

Content and Organisation

The organisation of SRE is no different from other curriculum areas. It is delivered through planned programmes within Science, RE and PSHEC. Occasionally, issues about SRE may arise spontaneously in other lessons (eg while studying English Literature) where it is not the main focus of the lesson. This is not considered to be part of the planned SRE programme and parents or carers cannot withdraw pupils in these circumstances.

Normally, male and female pupils will be taught together. However, when deemed appropriate, there may be occasions when pupils are taught in separate gender groups.

Where visitors are invited to deliver aspects of the SRE programme they will be used to support not supplant, the role of the teacher and they will always be accompanied in the lesson by a teacher. Visitors will always be fully briefed on their contribution to the programme and will be given a copy of the current policy beforehand.

Aspects of SRE are encompassed within the ethos of the school and may be delivered through:

- PSHE lessons
- Core and foundation subjects
- Assembly time
- Circle time
- Literacy/numeracy lessons
- Health weeks

- Focus days e.g. World AIDS Day
- Theatre in Education visits
- Project/theme lessons

The SRE programme will be delivered by

- Class teachers and/or
- The School Nurse (or other specified visitor/s or agency).

A range of teaching approaches will be used which include didactic and participatory methods eg small group work for discussion, etc.

The overview and co-ordination of the taught curriculum is the responsibility of the Headteacher. The Headteacher will always identify staff who have the appropriate skills, qualities and knowledge to teach the more sensitive and contentious aspects of SRE. Continuous professional development and training will always be provided to ensure a high level of expertise for teachers involved in delivering the SRE programme in the school.

The Headteacher is the link to the full Governing Body with regard to SRE provision in the school. That person will attend specific training to equip them for this responsibility.

SRE is inclusive of all students; they have an equal entitlement to good quality SRE. The programme will be delivered in line with the school's Equal Opportunities policy within an atmosphere of mutual respect. The whole school community will support an approach which ensures that no individual will be discriminated against on grounds of gender, race, disability, religion or sexual orientation.

If a pupil is absent from school (eg through illness, school refuser) and does not participate in the SRE programme, the school will ensure that teaching materials are made available.

The school will not discriminate against any member of the school community who is infected or affected by HIV.

The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000

Teachers have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of their pupils. They are in a particular position of trust. Sexual relationships involving children under 16 are a criminal offence. A sexual relationship between a teacher and any pupil at the same school is a breach of that trust. The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000, states that it is *'an offence for a person aged 18 or over to engage in sexual activity with, or directed towards, a person under that age if he is in a position of trust in relation to that person'*.

Personal Beliefs

The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence their teaching of SRE.

Language and Ground Rules in Lessons

All staff teaching SRE will set ground rules in their classes. For example:

- * *no one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question*
- * *no one will be forced to take part in a discussion*
- * *the only language used will be easily understood and acceptable to everyone in the class*
- * *only the correct names for body parts will be used*
- * *meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.*

Distancing techniques will also help to avoid the inappropriate disclosure of information. These may include case studies, role play and speaking in the third person.

Dealing with difficult questions

We have a variety of strategies for dealing with difficult questions. For example:

- if a question is too explicit or is inappropriate, the teacher will attend to it later, on an individual basis and a decision will be taken whether or not to inform the child's parents/carers;
- if a child makes a disclosure that causes the teacher concern then they should follow child protection procedures established within the county (See '*Child Protection Handbook*', 2000 Somerset Area Child Protection Committee).

Puberty

Boys and girls need to be prepared for puberty before they reach this developmental stage. At St Margaret's Primary School we teach about puberty and the need for extra care with personal hygiene mainly in whole class groups but opportunities are provided for single gender lessons.

Menstruation

Our programme will include preparation for menstruation. Basic information about the process of menstruation will be given to both boys and girls.

We will make appropriate and sensitive arrangements for the changing and disposal of sanitary wear for our pupils

Contraception

Pupils will be given basic, appropriate information about condoms and the contraceptive pill.

Safer Sex, HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

STIs are major causes of ill health which can have long-term physical and psychological health consequences.

Teaching about safer sex remains one of the Government's key strategies in reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDS and STIs. In recent years there has been a significant

increase in the number of individuals diagnosed with genital infections, including chlamydia, genital warts and gonorrhoea.

Young people may become complacent. Therefore, teaching includes: where appropriate

- Helping students to clarify their knowledge of HIV/AIDS and STIs.
- Teaching them assertiveness skills for negotiating relationships.
- Enabling them to become effective users of services that offer advice on prevention and treatment of STIs.

The school seeks to take account of different sexual orientations throughout SRE and avoids teaching in negative or prejudiced contexts. For example, there may be a number of occasions where, it is appropriate to use inclusive language such as 'partner' rather than 'boyfriend/girlfriend'.

Homophobic bullying (ie based on perceived gay or lesbian sexuality) is totally unacceptable. The school has a specific Behaviour/Anti bullying Policy. All teachers are aware of this policy and a copy is available on request.

Confidentiality

'Schools must be absolutely clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities. A clear and explicit confidentiality policy should ensure good practice throughout the school which both pupils and parents understand. Teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality.'

The School's Confidentiality Policy as referred to in the Child Protection Policy will be available to parents/carers on request. Parents/carers will be informed of the school's confidentiality policy. The school will be acting in loco parentis. Whenever a pupil makes a disclosure, they will be persuaded to talk to their parents or carers. Child Protection issues will be addressed if necessary; but if not necessary, the wishes of the pupil will be taken into account.

Staff **must** follow child protection guidelines. Members of staff who are not health care professionals must not give individual contraceptive advice. It is also appropriate to remind students of information about access to support that is available in the school or has been outlined in lessons. These actions (suggesting that students see specific members of staff or reminding them of information) do not involve a requirement to inform parents/carers. Similarly, as students under 16 are able to access doctors or clinics for contraceptive advice, where a member of staff advises students to seek medical advice at a GP's surgery or clinic there is not a requirement to inform parents/carers. However students will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer and will be supported in so doing. In each circumstance the best interests of the young person will be seen as paramount.

Staff teaching SRE have a duty of care and may wish to make a ground rule that opinions and ideas expressed in discussion should not be repeated outside the lesson.

Again it must be stressed that no absolute confidentiality can be promised. Clearly a lesson situation is also a significantly different context to a conversation with an individual. Students should be reminded of this difference. Through distancing techniques and ground rules students should understand that lessons are not an appropriate place to disclose personal information.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The SRE policy is monitored and evaluated through a review process involving parents, teachers, Key Stage Co-ordinators, PSHE Co-ordinator, Headteacher and the Governing Body.