



## **Sex and Relationships Education Policy**

Reviewed February 2020

### **Introduction**

We have based our school's Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) policy on the DfEE guidance document Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (ref DfEE 0116/2000). In this document, sex education is defined as 'learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health'. Sex and relationships education is part of the personal, social and health education curriculum in our school. While we use sex and relationships education to inform children about sexual issues, we do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. We do not use sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

### **Aims and objectives**

We teach children about:

- the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults;
- the way humans reproduce;
- moral questions;
- relationship issues;
- respect for the views of other people.

Through implicit and explicit learning experiences, we aim to

- Ensure that SRE is fully integrated into the PSHE and Science Curriculum and not isolated, taken out of context, or over-emphasised in any way;
- Foster self-esteem and respect for others;
- Nurture a partnership between caring adults – governors, teachers, other staff and parents - to ensure sensitive support for children as they grow and mature.;
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussions on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment;
- Avoid sexual stereotyping and sexual discrimination;
- Encourage children to enjoy relationships based upon mutual trust and respect, free from any abuse;
- Adopt a whole school approach to SRE.

### **Context**

This policy is designed to be complementary to, and supportive of, the role of parents in educating their children about sexuality and relationships. It recognises that the prime responsibility for bringing up children rests with parents/carers.

We teach sex education in the context of the school's aims and values framework (See Curriculum Policy values statement on the school website, Appendix 1) While SRE in our school means that we give children information about sexual behaviour, we do this with an awareness of the moral code and values which underpin all our work in school. In particular, we teach SRE in the belief that:

- sex education should be taught in the context of marriage and family life;
- sex education is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process;
- children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies;
- children should learn about their responsibilities to others;
- children should learn about their rights, in accordance with British law, covering such areas as FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), peer on peer abuse and adult/child abuse;
- it is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect;
- children need to learn the importance of self-control

## **Organisation**

At The Hendreds, SRE will respect individual differences – inspired by cultural, religious, ethnic and family backgrounds – and it will endeavour to promote those values of respect and dignity for human life which are common to all faiths and societies.

We teach SRE through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main sex education teaching in our personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, we also teach some sex education through other subject areas (for example, science and PE), where we feel that they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body, and how it is changing and developing.

In PSHE we teach children about relationships, love and care, and we encourage children to discuss issues. We teach about the parts of the body and how these work, and we explain to them what will happen to their bodies during puberty. For example, we tell the boys that their voices will change during puberty and we explain to the girls about menstruation. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it.

In science lessons in both key stages, teachers inform children about puberty and how a baby is born. For this aspect of the school's teaching, we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for science. In Key Stage 1 we teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other. In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

In Year 6 we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age, and the responsibilities of parenthood as well as reproduction, sexuality and sexual health. We liaise with the school nurse about suitable teaching materials to use with our children in these lessons. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. It may be necessary to link SRE with issues of peer pressure and other risk-taking behaviour, such as drugs, smoking and alcohol, and ensure that young people understand how the law applies to sexual relationships. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are born, how their bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children (as stated earlier in this policy).

The onset of menstruation can be alarming for girls. Research shows that about a third of girls are not told about periods by their parents, and 10% receive no preparation at all before their first period. Our school has organised sensitive arrangements to help girls cope with menstruation and with requests for sanitary protection,

Teachers have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils. Their personal beliefs and attitudes will not influence the teaching of SRE within the PSHE framework. SRE will not be isolated, taken out of context or over-emphasised in any way.

## **The role of parents**

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's sex education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we:

- inform parents about the school's sex education policy and practice;
- answer any questions that parents may have about the sex education of their child;
- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for sex education in the school.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the SRE programme that we teach in our school, but not from teaching the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under the Science National Curriculum. We fully recognise that the views of parents need to be borne in mind, and parents are welcome to comment on the extent to which this policy reflects their wishes and the culture of the community served by an ODST school.

If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from SRE lessons, they should discuss this with the Headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard.

### **The role of other members of the community**

We encourage other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support to the children with regard to health education. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the school nurse. Health professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct, and in a classroom situation they are expected to follow ODST's confidentiality policy.

### **The role of the Headteacher**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our sex and relationships education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

Along with the governing body, the Headteacher will support the design of a programme of study which ensures that the central aims of this policy are covered and which meets the needs of our pupils. In doing this, the governing body and Headteacher will have regard to guidance on teaching styles, appropriate curriculum content and the age and maturity of the pupils.

The Headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school sex education programme, and ensures that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy, and that they work within this framework.

### **Confidentiality**

Teachers conduct SRE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that s/he may have been a victim of abuse. In these circumstances the teacher will draw their concerns to the attention of our school's Designated Lead for Safeguarding (DSL). The DSL will then deal with the matter in accordance with the school's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy.

Pupils will be reassured that their best interests will be maintained. However, teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. If confidentiality has to be broken, the pupil will be informed and supported as appropriate.

It is only in the most exceptional circumstances that the school should be in the position of having to handle information without parental knowledge. Where younger children are involved this will be grounds for serious concern, and child protection issues will need to be addressed.

Pupils would be encouraged to talk to their parents and given support to do so. If there is evidence of abuse, the ODST child protection procedure will be adhered to.

## **Online and social media**

Children and young people are growing up in a culture where technology and social media are important, and have created more opportunity for sharing personal information. Our teaching in SRE/PSHE encourages pupils to think about what they want others to know and see about the – whether on or off-line, and the core issues of safety, privacy, peer influence and personal responsibility.

'Sexting' and other self-made images and messages of a sexual nature raise particular issues of safety, privacy, peer influence and personal responsibility. 'Sexting' is a term used by adults, referring to sexual content and images sent by mobile phones. This issue is addressed in RSE as soon as it is identified as a potential issue.

## **Relevant legislation**

- Education Reform Act 1988
- Equality Act 2010
- Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (DfE 2000)

## Appendix 1

### Curriculum

2019/20

At the Hendreds children experience a broad, stimulating curriculum which is designed to fire their curiosity, support their social, emotional, spiritual and academic development and to prepare them for entering the wider world of secondary school and beyond.

Subjects studied include all of the statutory curriculum and more; we add French and Latin, and Judo forms part of our PE curriculum. All children learn either the violin or cello, for free, for a year, as part of our commitment to music.

The curriculum for us is not simply academic subjects, but everything that makes up the daily life of the school: decisions, focus, effort, responsibility, contributing. All these are based on Christian values that shape how we grow and develop.

“Distinctive Christian values are deeply embedded in the daily life of the school, clearly contributing to pupils’ personal values and achievements”. *Inspection of Anglican School Report*

We have talented teachers who regard the daily interactions both in class and in the playground as learning in its broadest sense. Our tight-knit, small, supportive community allows us to overcome a range of barriers to learning.

We know that the development of the person, through lessons, participation in managing the life of the school (for example, older ones looking after the younger ones), being part of a wonderful drama production or an exciting sports tournament all help the children to learn about themselves and others, and build the confidence and resilience needed to make the most of their potential.

## Appendix 2

By the end of primary school pupils should know:

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability</li> <li>▪ The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives</li> <li>▪ That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care</li> <li>▪ That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up</li> <li>▪ That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong</li> <li>▪ How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed</li> </ul>
Caring friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends</li> <li>▪ The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties</li> <li>▪ That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded</li> <li>▪ That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right</li> <li>▪ How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed</li> </ul>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs</li> <li>▪ Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</li> <li>▪ The conventions of courtesy and manners</li> <li>▪ The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness</li> <li>▪ That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority</li> <li>▪ About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help</li> <li>▪ What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive</li> <li>▪ The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults</li> </ul>
Online relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not</li> <li>▪ That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous</li> <li>▪ The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them</li> <li>▪ How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met</li> <li>▪ How information and data is shared and used online</li> </ul>
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)</li> <li>▪ About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe</li> <li>▪ That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact</li> <li>▪ How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know</li> <li>▪ How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult</li> <li>▪ How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard</li> <li>▪ How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so</li> <li>▪ Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources</li> </ul>