



Appendix

Sex and Relationships Education policy for use in Church of England primary schools

This sample policy is based on SRE policy documents approved by Bristol and Salisbury diocesan boards of education for use in their church schools. It should be used as a template for the governing bodies of Church of England schools to discuss, amend and adopt, in the light of their unique school context. Following agreement on a school policy, it should be signed by the Chair of Governors. Notes to the policy are in italic text.

Sample Sex and Relationships Education policy

Please note that government policy may be subject to change and therefore schools need to check current guidance when reviewing their SRE policy and practice.

1 Introduction

1.1 This school's SRE policy is based on the DfE's *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance* (2000).

Sex education is part of the personal, social and health education curriculum in our school. We will teach within a framework of Christian values and the Christian understanding that sex is a gift of God as part of creation. Whilst we use sex 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 have taken account of the guidance provided in teaching materials supplied by the Diocese.) Sensitivity and respect should be shown to all children when teaching about personal relationships and sex education and SRE should be taught in a way to ensure that there is no stigmatization of children based on their home/personal circumstances.

1.2 Context

All SRE in a Church of England school should be set in a context that is consistent with the school's Christian ethos and values.

- SRE should be based on inclusive Christian principles and values, emphasising respect, compassion, loving care and forgiveness.
- SRE should be taught in the light of the belief in the absolute worth of all people and the unconditional infinite love of God.
- SRE should reflect that sex is a gift from God as part of creation: a human longing for an intimate union.
- SRE should be sensitive to the circumstances of all children and be mindful of the variety of expressions of family life in our culture, yet it should also uphold the Christian values regarding relationships and marriage.

- Issues regarding human sexuality should be addressed sensitively.
- The exploration of reproduction and sexual behaviour within the science curriculum should stand alongside the exploration of relationships, values and morals and Christian belief.

Whilst pupils are given the opportunity to explore their own attitudes, values and beliefs and to develop an individual moral code that will guide their actions, this is exercised within an understanding of the right of people to hold their own views within a framework of respect for others.

2 Aims and objectives

2.1 We teach children about:

- The physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults;
- The way humans reproduce;
- Respect for their own bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term and loving relationship;
- The importance of marriage and family life;
- Moral questions;
- Relationship issues;
- Respect for the views of other people;
- What they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters.

3 Principles

SRE should be based on the following principles:

- The sanctity of marriage is an important belief in Christian teaching and practice.
- Children should learn the significance of marriage and families as key building blocks of community and society.
- Sex education includes learning about physical and emotional development.
- Children will be taught the cultural and religious differences about matters of sexuality.
- Sex education is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process.
- Children should be made aware of the way in which advertising and the media influences their views about sexuality.
- Children should be made more aware of the spiritual dimensions and joys of intimacy.
- Children should be taught to have respect for their own and other people's bodies.
- Children should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity.
- Children should learn that some people choose not to engage in sexual activity and that this should be respected and valued as a response to the gift of faith.
- Children should be taught to understand the power of sexual desire.
- Children should be made aware that sex can be used compulsively, competitively, and destructively.
- Children need to learn the importance of protecting themselves, and of self-control.
- Children should be made aware of God's forgiveness and that there is always a way back.
- Children should learn that it is important to build positive relationships that involve trust and respect.
- Children need to learn how to keep themselves safe when using the Internet and other forms of technology.
- Children need to be aware of responsible use of all forms of technology in order to respect the well-being and integrity of others.

4 The National Healthy School Standard

We now participate in the National Healthy School Standard scheme, which promotes health education. As participants in this scheme we:

- consult with parents on all matters of health education policy;
- train all our teachers to teach sex education;
- listen to the views of the children in our school regarding sex education;
- look positively at any local initiatives that support us in providing the best sex education teaching programme that we can devise.

5 Organisation

5.1 We teach sex education through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main sex education teaching in our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum, we also teach some sex education through other subject areas (for example, in science, PE and RE), 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.

5.2 In PSHE education we teach children about relationships, 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.

5.3 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.

5.4 In Key Stage 1 children PHSE/SRE children begin to reflect upon the importance of relationships and learn about the institution of marriage. In Key Stage 2 Religious Education children will learn about the commitment of people of faith to each other in marriage and how this is expressed in marriage ceremonies. They will learn about the beliefs and values that underpin this commitment and support the nurtures and care of children in the family.

5.5 In years 5 and 6 we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience the onset of puberty at this age. We liaise with the local health authority about suitable teaching materials to use with our children in these lessons. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. 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).

5.6 We arrange a meeting for all parents and carers of children in Year 6 to discuss this particular programme of lessons, to explain what the issues are and how they are taught, and to see the materials the school uses in its teaching.

6 The role of parents

6.1 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 supportive 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;
- Inform parents about the teaching of sex education in school so that the parents and school can work together to support the child with regard to sex education. We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing bodies and their increasing responsibilities.

6.2 Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education programme that we teach in our school. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from sex education lessons, they should discuss this with the headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not want their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard.

7 The role of other members of the community

7.1 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 and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our sex education programme. Other people that we call on include local clergy, social workers and youth workers.

8 Confidentiality and safeguarding children procedures

8.1 Teachers conduct sex education 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 he/she may have been a victim of abuse. If the teachers have concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the headteacher and/or the designated teacher for child protection and safeguarding. The headteacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals. (See also Child Protection Policy.)

Advice for teachers on particularly sensitive issues such as female circumcision can be found at: <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/familyandcommunity/childprotection>

9 The role of the headteacher

9.1 It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our sex 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.

9.2 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.

9.3 The headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

10 Monitoring and review

10.1 The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors our sex education policy on an annual basis. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification. The Curriculum Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the sex education programme, and makes a record of all such comments. Governors require the headteacher to keep a written record, giving details of the content and delivery of the sex education programme that we teach in our school. Governors should scrutinise materials to check they are in accordance with the school's ethos.

10.2 The SRE policy has clear links with other school policies aimed at promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including the:

Anti-Bullying Policy

Behaviour Policy

Confidentiality Policy

Drugs Education Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Health and Safety Policy

ICT Policy and Safe Internet Use Policy

Inclusion Policy

PSHE and Citizenship Policy

RE Policy

Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy

SMSC Policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

Signed:

Date:

SRE Sex and Relationships Education Policy: points to consider for staff and governors

Sex and Relationships Education in C of E Primary Schools

The DfE Sex and Relationship Education guidance¹ states that Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) should be firmly rooted within the framework for Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education and Citizenship. However, questions have been raised about how sex education should be taught within a Church School setting - reflecting both the distinctive ethos and values that underpin a Church School. In response to these issues, the following guidance is offered to facilitate discussion when developing a policy.

Context

- SRE should be based on inclusive Christian principles and values, emphasising respect, compassion, loving care and forgiveness.
- SRE should be taught in the light of the belief in the absolute worth of all persons and the unconditional infinite love of God.
- SRE should reflect that sex is a gift from God as part of creation: a human longing for an intimate union.
- SRE should be sensitive to the circumstances of all children and be mindful of the variety of expressions of family life in our culture, yet it should also uphold the Christian values regarding relationships and marriage.

Guiding principles

In a Church of England school Christian beliefs and values should underpin SRE such that SRE is taught in the belief that:

- The sanctity of marriage is an important belief in Christian teaching and practice.
- Children should learn the significance of marriage and families as key building blocks of community and society.
- Sex education includes learning about physical and emotional development.
- Sex education is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process.
- Children should be made aware of the way in which advertising and the media influences their views about sexuality.
- Children should be taught to have respect for their own and other people's bodies.
- Children should be taught to understand the power of sexual desire.
- Children should be made more aware of the spiritual dimensions and joys of intimacy.
- Children learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity.
- Children should be guided to understand the importance of building positive relationships that involve trust and respect.
- Children should be made aware that sex can be used compulsively, competitively and destructively.
- Children should be made aware of God's forgiveness and that there is always and way back.
- Children need to learn the importance of protecting themselves and of self control.
- Children will be taught the cultural and religious differences about matters of sexuality.

- Children should learn that some people choose not to engage in sexual activity and that this should be respected and valued as a response to the gift of faith.
- Children need to learn how to keep themselves safe when using the Internet and other forms of technology.
- Children need to be aware of responsible use of all forms of technology in order to respect the wellbeing and integrity of others.

Role of parents

The primary role in children's sex education lies with parents and carers. It is therefore important to build positive and supportive relationships with the parents and carers through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation.

Role of the local church and community

Members of the local health authority, such as the school nurse and other health professionals, are available to give support. In addition, the local church community can be a valuable resource in teaching about Christian marriage.

Role of the headteacher and governors

In a VA school the responsibility for the SRE policy lies with the governors. The headteacher has to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about the school's sex education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. The governing body should carefully scrutinise teaching material to ensure it is appropriate for the school's distinctive ethos and foundation and that it is age appropriate.

Confidentiality and safeguarding children procedures

Due regard should be given to Child Protection Policy in the development and delivery of SRE.

Questions to facilitate discussion

- How do we respect a wide range of individual beliefs and practices whilst upholding the Christian ideal of the sanctity of marriage?
- How can we equip children to deal with the challenges of peer pressure?
- How can we enable children to recognise that substances, such as alcohol or drugs, impede self-control and lead to actions which may later be regretted? How do we help children to explore the importance of self-control in their lives?
- In order to develop a healthy sexual relationship in later life, children need to develop positive relationships, involving trust and respect. How do we help children to develop the skills necessary to achieve this?
- How do we help our children to protect themselves against sexual exploitation?
- How can the local church community be used as a resource for teaching about Christian marriage?
- What procedures are in place to monitor the governing body and headteacher's responsibilities for SRE?
- What provision do we make to encourage safe and responsible use of the Internet?

1. Department for Education and Employment, *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance*, Ref DfEE 0116/2000 (2000). Available free to download or as a hard copy, visit www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DfES%200116%202000.