



Appendix

Sex and Relationships Education policy for use in Church of England secondary 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 young people about sexual issues, we do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows students 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 young people when teaching about personal relationships and sex education and SRE should be taught in a way that ensures that there is no stigmatization of young people based on their home/personal circumstances.

1.2 Context

All SRE in a Church of England school should be set in a context which 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 students 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 young people 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.
- Young people 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.
- Young people 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.
- Young people should be made aware of the way in which advertising and the media influences their views about sexuality.
- Young people should be made more aware of the spiritual dimensions and joys of intimacy.
- Young people should be taught to have respect for their own and other people's bodies.
- Young people should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity.
- Young people should learn that some people choose not to engage in sexual activity and that this choice should be respected and valued as a response to the gift of faith.
- Young people should be taught to understand the power of sexual desire.
- Young people should be made aware that sex can be used compulsively, competitively and destructively.
- Young people need to learn the importance of protecting themselves and of self control.
- Young people should be made aware of God's forgiveness and that there is always a way back.
- Young people should learn that it is important to build positive relationships that involve trust and respect.

- Young people need to learn how to keep themselves safe when using the Internet and other forms of technology.
- Young people need to be aware of responsible use of all forms of technology in order to respect the wellbeing 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 young people 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) education curriculum, we also teach some sex education through other subject areas (for example, science and PE, RE), where we feel that they contribute significantly to a young person's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body, and how it is changing and developing.

5.2 In PSHE we teach young people about relationships, and we encourage young people to discuss issues. We teach about puberty, what sex is, who it is for and the best contexts for intimacy, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, HIV and how to avoid life-limiting sexual choices. In PSHE we also teach about marriage and long-term stable relationships, reflecting on the variety of religious and cultural views held by people about these issues.

5.3 In science lessons, teachers inform young people about the human reproductive cycle, conception, pregnancy, foetal development and how these can be affected by diet, drugs and disease. For this aspect of the school's teaching, we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for science.

6 The role of parents

6.1 The school is well aware that the primary role in young people'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 son/daughter;
- 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 about sex education in school so that the parents and school can work together to support the young person with regard to sex education. We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, young people will benefit from being given consistent messages about their increasing responsibilities.

6.2 Parents have the right to withdraw their daughter or son from all or part of the sex education programme that we teach in our school. If parents wish 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 wish 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 young people 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 young person 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. (This may be a matter for careful discernment if the disclosure reveals peer sexual activity.) Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that he/she may have been a victim of abuse.

If the teacher has concerns, he/she will draw the concerns to the attention of 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:

Equal Opportunities Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Inclusion Policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

Drugs Education Policy

PSHE & Citizenship Policy

Behaviour Policy

Anti-bullying Policy

Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy

ICT Policy and Safe Internet Use Policy

Confidentiality Policy

Signed:

Date:

SRE Policy: points to consider for staff and governors

Sex and Relationships Education in C of E secondary 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.
- Young people 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.
- Young people should be made aware of the way in which advertising and the media influence their views about sexuality.
- Young people should be taught to have respect for their own and other people's bodies.
- Young people should be taught to understand the power of sexual desire.
- Young people should be made more aware of the spiritual dimensions and joys of intimacy.
- Young people should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity.
- Young people should be guided to understand the importance of building positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect.
- Young people should be made aware that sex can be used compulsively, competitively and destructively.
- Young people should be made aware of God's forgiveness and that there is always a way back.
- Young people need to learn the importance of protecting themselves and of self-control.

- Young people will be taught the cultural and religious differences about matters of sexuality.
- Young people should learn that some people choose not to engage in sexual activity and that this choice should be respected and valued as a response to the gift of faith.
- Young people need to learn how to keep themselves safe when using the Internet and other forms of technology.
- Young people 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 Sex and Relationships Education 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 young people to deal with the challenges of peer pressure?
- How can we enable young people to recognize that alcohol or drugs, for example, impede self-control and lead to actions which are later regretted? How do we help young people to explore the importance of self-control in their lives?
- In order to develop a healthy sexual relationship in later life, young people need to develop positive relationships, involving trust and respect. How do we help young people develop the skills necessary to achieve this?
- How can we help our young people 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 can we make to encourage safe and responsible use of the Internet by our young people?

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 <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DfES%200116%202000>