

# SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION (SRE) POLICY

REF: PC8

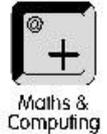
<b>Date of Issue</b>	<b>March 2010</b>
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>September 2015</b>
<b>Ratified by Committee</b>	<b>April 2010</b>
<b>Ratified by Full Governors</b>	<b>May 2010</b>
<b>Produced by School</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>County Reference</b>	
<b>Notes:</b> <b>SLT responsible: Assistant Headteacher</b>	
<b>Signatures:</b>  <b>Chair of Governors:</b>    <b>Headteacher:</b>	



FEARNHILL SCHOOL



# Fearnhill School's Sex and Relationships



## Education (SRE) policy

Reviewed April 2010

### Introduction:

The policy was put together in consultation with Staff, Governors, Parents, Students and with the school's Health Advisor. It is based on the DfES Guidelines issued to school by the CSF. SRE is a major component of the School's PSHE and Citizenship programme.

- Links with other areas of the curriculum, e.g. Drugs/Alcohol Education (binge drinking and risky behaviour)
- Links with other policies, e.g. Inclusion, C.P, etc
- Student Involvement in designing SRE programme
- Links with other programmes, e.g. Healthy Schools, Extended Schools
- Resources (websites helplines, other professionals etc)

In all areas of human experience a good base of knowledge and understanding is deemed necessary for informed opinions and decisions to be made - human sexuality is no exception. It is vital that pupils receive effective sex education before they become sexually active or put themselves at risk in other ways. It is also vital to correct prejudice and misinformation which may affect relationships with others both now and in the future. Sex and Relationships Education begins in the early years and is delivered consciously and unconsciously by parents, teachers, other significant adults, the peer group and the media within a moral and values framework.

The importance of sexual relationships in all our lives is such that sex education has a crucial role to play in preparing children for their lives now and in the future as adults and parents. In sex education, learning information about the physical aspects of sex, must be complemented by learning about family life and the exercise of personal responsibility towards other individuals and the broader community. In drawing up the School's policy due regard has been given to:

- consultation with parents, governors, teachers, health advisor and others in the local community;
- the issues of content, organisation, methodology, resources, outside speakers, the explicitness and presentation of their material (including the presence or intervention of teachers as appropriate);
- encouraging pupils to have regard to moral considerations and to appreciate the value of a stable family life, self-restraint, dignity, respect and to behave responsibly in sexual matters.
- The legal requirements that the school curriculum should: 'promote the spiritual, cultural, moral, mental and physical development of pupils; and prepare such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.'

### **AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

#### **To gain knowledge and understanding, develop positive attitudes and values, extend personal and social skills**

The School's aim is to educate, develop and prepare all of our students for life in a rapidly changing society and to have regard for moral considerations and the value of family life and to show respect for others. Within this context we aim to provide a broad and balanced sex education programme within PSHE framework which:

- Offers a full entitlement and access for all including pupils with Special Educational needs.
- Operates in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect so as to encourage pupils to put forward and explore their ideas.

#### **Within this context also to cover the following aspects:**

##### **1. Legal and cultural**

- To understand the most important aspects of legislation on sexual behaviour.
- To understand and respect the varied cultural and religious influences on individual sexuality.

- To be aware of sources of help within society and have the skills and confidence to use them.

## **2. Personal Relationships**

By exploring moral and sexual issues and values to:

- Endow the pupils with positive pro-active attitudes, patterns of behaviour, lifestyles, values, communication and decision making skills with respect to sexuality and personal relationships, e.g. those appropriate to informed decision-making and evaluation of the socio-economic/cultural influences on sexual behaviour.
- Promote the value and importance of the family as a social institution; its contribution to the development of attachment, love and concern in caring for others.
- Promote non-exploitation, commitment and trust in sexual relationships;
- Promote an understanding that both sexes have responsibilities in sexual matters;
- Develop the skills to identify, avoid, resist and report unwanted sexual experience.
- Foster self-esteem, self-awareness and a sense of moral responsibility.

## **3. Physical Aspects**

- To give pupils knowledge and understanding of the following in order for them to make informed choices:
- To provide information on the physical, emotional and social aspects of an individual's development as a male or female, personal relationships; responsible attitudes and appropriate behaviour.
- To acquire knowledge of risks and diseases associated with sexual activity, including HIV/AIDS, cervical and testicular cancer.

## **4. Informing and Involving Parents:**

The views and participation of parents is vital for the most effective sex education. When required the School will organise a separate evening when the sex education, HIV and drugs programmes are discussed and the relevant resources viewed. Parents may borrow DVDs to watch at home - this may be for review purposes or simply to watch and discuss them with their child. Parents are fully informed and encouraged to enhance that part of the SRE Programme provided by the School by having discussions at home.

### **Offering Advice:**

The Governors and staff believe that the School's function is to provide a general education about sexual matters and issues and not to offer individual advice, information or counselling on aspects of sexual behaviour and contraception - however sources of professional information and advice will be identified when appropriate. If the offering of outside expert advice is not taken up, then a teacher may only give such advice after receiving written permission from the Headteacher and the parents/guardians - clearly this would not be done if the pupil did not wish it. Advice does not legally require consent but the following procedure protects the teacher and the pupil, and acknowledges that teachers may not be qualified to give the required advice.

### **Teachers cannot:**

- give personal advice or counselling on sexual matters (including contraception) to a pupil (either individually or within a group) if a parent has withdrawn that pupil from sex education;
- give personal contraceptive advice to pupils under 16 for whom sexual intercourse is illegal, without first seeking parental consent.

### **Teachers can:**

- provide pupils with education and information about where and from whom they can receive confidential sexual advice and treatment, e.g. health advisor, their GP or the Brook Advisory Centre. This is not the provision of sex education, but merely the imparting of factual information as to where advice, counselling (and treatment) can lawfully be obtained. Appointments to see the health advisor can be arranged by the pupil through the form tutor or the Student Development Leader or any member of the senior team.
- give a child under 16 contraceptive advice if the teacher believes that doing so is in the child's best interests. However, in certain circumstances the teacher could be liable to criminal charges and therefore the Headteacher's instructions are not to give such advice and to refer the matter to him.

### **Explicit Questions:**

Establishment of Ground Rules / working agreement at start of each session to establish boundaries.

It is unlikely to be appropriate to deal with a pupil's explicit questions by dealing with it in front of the whole class, e.g.

questions on oral and anal sex. In practice this means that teachers have to say 'I'm sorry but the School Policy and legislation does not allow me to answer that question'. The teacher may deem it appropriate to discuss the child's concerns with the parents - a decision may then be taken on how best to deal with it. Answers to the 'questions in a box' approach must only be given after very careful screening of the questions.

### **Confidentiality and Child Protection:**

Having considered all available advice and guidance, the Governors and Headteacher state that in circumstances where a pupil is considered at some risk of any type of abuse (e.g. moral or physical) or in breach of the law, the teacher must refer this immediately in writing to the Headteacher or to the Child Protection Senior Person (CPSP) in compliance with the LEA procedures for Child Protection. They will decide whether to inform the parents and/or appropriate authorities and may arrange for counselling.

Although there is no legal duty on a teacher, or a Headteacher, to inform parents of matters which a child has confided to them:

- teachers must not promise confidentiality even though they cannot be made to break it once given;
- pupils must be made aware that any incident may be conveyed to the Headteacher or the CPSP and possibly to parents
- teachers must use their professional judgement to decide whether confidence can be maintained having heard the information;
- teachers must indicate clearly to pupils when the content of a conversation can no longer be kept confidential - the pupil can then decide whether to proceed or not.

### **The division between biological and non biological aspects of sex education:**

The division between biological and non biological aspects of sexual behaviour has been decided upon, and is indicated by the contribution to the SRE Programme made by the Science Department. The themes of parenting, relationships and the ethical and moral considerations of sex education are firmly restricted to the timetabled PSHE and Citizenship lessons.

The Science Department deals only with the biological aspects of human sexual behaviour in its timetabled lessons. The separate but strategically co-ordinated PSHE course deals with:

- a) Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and Human Immuno-deficiency Virus (HIV);
- b) any other sexually transmitted diseases (STD's);
- c) aspects of human sexual behaviour, other than biological aspects.

N.B. It is the work covered in timetabled PSHE lessons and non science lessons upon which parents can exercise their right to withdraw their child - see below.

### **Withdrawing pupils from the SRE Programme (part of Partnership with parents):**

Relevant sections of this policy are made available to parents in the School prospectus together with details about the parents' right to withdraw their child from many aspects of sex education - parents will always be provided with a full copy following a request to do so. Shortly after enrolling at the School, a pupil's parents have a handbook which details the content of the SRE course and identifies those parts from which the parents can exercise their right to withdraw their child. A full audit of PSHE has shown that issues such as over population, birth control and other sexual matters are met in a minor way in subjects such as Humanities. However, as any discussion is limited and set within the context of the other subject concerned, it does not constitute part of the SRE Programme (PSHE framework).

N.B. Parents do not have to give reasons for withdrawal, but we respectfully invite them to do so -sometimes we can then resolve misunderstandings. Once a parent's request to withdraw is made, that request must be complied with until revoked by the parent.

### **What we do if a request for withdrawal is made by a parent?**

- we discuss the nature of the concerns with the child's parent and if appropriate attempt to reassure them;
- we consider whether the programme can be amended or improved in a way that will reassure parents - care is taken not to undermine the integrity of the SRE Programme and the entitlement of the other pupils, e.g. it may be appropriate and desirable to have single sex classes for some sections of the SRE Programme;
- we attempt to ensure that where a pupil is withdrawn there is no disruption to other parts of their education,
- we point out that pupils who have been withdrawn are vulnerable to teasing - we therefore attempt to cause minimal embarrassment to the pupil and minimal disruption to the programme;
- we also point out that pupils may receive inaccurate information from their peers;
- we offer the parents access to appropriate information and resources.

N.B. If the pupil does not agree with the parents desire to withdraw their child from the SRE Programme, the pupil can challenge the parents under Section 8 of the Children Act - the child has to apply to the court for a 'specific issues order'.

### **Using Visiting Speakers and others:**

We believe that most of the SRE Programme is best discussed openly with teachers who are known and trusted by the pupils. However visitors such as nurses, family planning or sexual health workers, can greatly enhance the quality of the provision as long as they are used in addition to, not instead of a planned programme of SRE.

Care is taken to provide the visitor, well in advance of the visit, with a copy of the SRE Policy. After gaining approval from the member of the senior team responsible for PSHE for the visit, the organizer makes the visitor aware of the ethos of the School and the manner of delivery of the SRE Programme. Issues to consider are:

- the degree of explicitness of the content and presentation;
- will the visitor be accompanied by teaching staff?
- will the staff take an active role in the visitor's activities?
- how will the visitor be prepared for the visit?
- how will the visit be built upon and followed up?

### **Lesbian and Gay issues:**

#### **Inclusion – meet needs of all students taking into account sexuality, disability, ethnicity and faith.**

Teachers do not promote any one life-style as the only acceptable one for society and therefore it is inevitable and natural that homosexuality will be discussed during a programme of sex education. Teaching about homosexuality is not avoided, although teachers take care not to advocate homosexual behaviour, present it as the norm, or encourage homosexual experimentation by pupils. One of the many advantages of exploring gay and lesbian issues is the opportunity to correct false ideas, assumptions and address prejudice.

#### **Equal Opportunities Issues and Special Needs:**

The nature of work undertaken must be appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. As pupils mature and develop at different rates, the SRE Programme is a 'spiral system' in as much as key concepts are revisited several times throughout the programme. This allows for reinforcement as well as the differentiated stages of pupil maturity.

Children with learning difficulties may need more help than others in coping with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up; they may also need more help in learning what sorts of behaviour are and are not acceptable, and in being warned and prepared against abuse by others. Some parents find it difficult to come to terms with the idea that their child (special needs or not) will some day become sexually active.

#### **INSET:**

All teachers involved in this work do not necessarily have to be 'experts' on the issues concerned. However, they do require sensitivity to the needs of the group, an ability to deal with questions openly/honestly and a readiness to refer to more expert advice if necessary. Areas that we intend to address by In Service Training are:

- an examination of the School's SRE policy;
- an examination of the timing of the different elements of the SRE Programme;
- an examination of who should teach the programme;
- developing skills plus confidence related to managing group work and discussion.

#### **Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing the SRE Programme:**

We are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this programme. This will be achieved by using the same methods as used for the monitoring, evaluating and reviewing of the PSHE/Citizenship Policy. Specifically important to the Sex Education Programme are:

1. pupil feedback;
2. staff review and feedback, particularly at pastoral meetings;
3. parental feedback.

#### **Other Benefits:**

SRE can also contribute to the School by contributing to the quality of display work, assembly themes, etc.

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: FEBRUARY 2013