



Connection ● Communication ● Independence ● Aspiration

Sex and Relationships Policy

2024 / 2025

Sex and Relationship Education Policy

What Is Sex and Relationship Education (SRE)?

SRE is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care, for family life. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes.

All schools must have an up to date SRE policy which is made available for inspection and to parents. The policy must:

- Define sex and relationship education
- Describe how sex and relationship education is provided and who is responsible for providing it
- Say how sex and relationship education is monitored and evaluated
- Include information about parents' right to withdrawal; and
- Be reviewed regularly

Context

The term sex and relationships education (SRE) is used in this policy rather than sex education. This is to stress that our approach goes beyond provision of biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values, and developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships.

SRE is:

'...lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of 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 Relationship Education Guidance, DfE 0116/2000).

Sex and Relationship Education in this school has three main elements:

Knowledge and understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages
- Understanding human sexuality, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- Learning about contraception and a 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

Attitudes and Values

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations
- Learning the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children

- Learning the value of respect, love and care
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making
- Challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour

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
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences and choices made
- Managing conflict
- Empower students with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures of advances (both as exploited or exploiter)

Aims

The aim of SRE is to provide balanced factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of sexual health. Our SRE programme aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour; have the confidence and self esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want.
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships.
- avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.
- communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues.
- develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity
- understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity.
- understand the reasons for having protected sex.
- have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections including HIV.
- be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary
- know how the law applies to sexual relationships.

Organisation and Content of Sex and Relationship Education

Redwood Secondary School specifically delivers Sex and Relationship Education through its PSHE Programme, RE and Science lessons at KS3 and KS4.

Much of the Sex and Relationship Education at Redwood Secondary School takes place within PSHE lessons. Tutors generally deliver the PSHE Curriculum with support from professionals where appropriate. Form tutors work closely with their classes and we believe that they are usually the best people to work with the students on many of the SRE topics as they are aware of each student's individual circumstances. SRE lessons are set within the wider context of the PSHE curriculum and focus more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction are also included. The Science National Curriculum is delivered by staff in the science department. These lessons are more concerned with the physical aspects of development and reproduction, although the importance of relationships is not forgotten.

The PSHE Programme and Science National Curriculum is taught in every year.

Any SRE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When students ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the students, the question may be dealt with individually at another time.

More expert or specialist teachers support tutors who are uncomfortable with teaching certain aspects of the curriculum. Support is offered with the year team or from the PSHE co-ordinator who will help with planning or delivery lessons if required.

Assessment is carried out at the end of every module and involves teacher, pupil and peer assessment of knowledge and understanding, interpersonal skills, and attitudes.

Inclusion

Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns.

Special Educational Needs

We will ensure that all young people receive sex and relationship education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them.

Right of Withdrawal of Students from Sex and Relationship Education

Some parents prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of this element of education. They have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex and relationship education except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (i.e. in Science lessons). We would make alternative arrangements in such cases. Parents are encouraged to discuss their decisions with staff at the earliest opportunity. Parents are welcome to review any SRE resources the school uses.

Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Teachers are not legally bound to inform parents or headteacher of any disclosure unless the headteacher has specifically requested them to do so.

In a case where a teacher learns from an under 16-year-old that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

- the young person will be persuaded, wherever possible, to talk to parent/career and if necessary to seek medical advice.
- child protection issues will be considered, and referred if necessary to the teacher responsible for Child Protection under the school's procedures.
- the young person will be properly counselled about contraception, including precise information about where young people can access contraception and advice services.

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first.

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Sex and Relationship Education

It is the responsibility of the PSHE Co-ordinator to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of PSHE, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The PSHE programme will be treated as a subject department in this exercise, under which all departments undertake yearly self-evaluation and a twice yearly monitoring and evaluation exercise led by SLT.

The Governors Curriculum Staffing and Resources Committee is responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the Sex and Relationship Education Policy

Ofsted is required to evaluate and report on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. This includes evaluating and commenting on the school's sex and relationship education policy, and on support and staff development, training and delivery.

Moral and Values Framework

Our approach to SRE will be conducted within a clear morals and values framework based on the following principles:

- The value of stable and loving relationships
- Respect, understanding and empathy towards others who may have different backgrounds, cultures, sexuality, feelings and views
- The development of relationships, including sexual relationships, based on mutual consent, rather than coercion
- The right not to be abused by other people or be taken advantage of
- The right of people to follow their own sexuality, within legal parameters

We also believe that students have an entitlement to:

- Age and circumstance appropriate SRE
- Access to help from trusted adults and helping services

SRE involves consideration of a number of sensitive issues about which different people may hold strong and varying views. Redwood's approach to SRE will be balanced and take account of, and be sensitive to, different viewpoints but will not be based on personal bias.

Inclusion

'Mainstream schools and special schools have a duty to ensure that children with special educational needs and learning difficulties are properly included in sex and relationships education. Sex and relationship education should help all pupils understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives'.

DfE SRE Guidance July 2000

Young people may have varying needs regarding SRE depending on their circumstances and background. The Trust strongly believes that all students should have access to SRE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this the Trust's approach to SRE will take account of:

The needs of boys as well as girls: Girls tend to have greater access to SRE than boys, both through the media (particularly teenage magazines) and the home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.

Ethnic and cultural diversity: Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to SRE. The school will consult students and parents/carers about their needs, take

account of their views and promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups.

Varying home backgrounds: We recognise that our students may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

Sexuality: If a student defined themselves as gay, lesbian or bi-sexual (GLB), some students may consider themselves transgender. Students may also have GLB or transgender parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. Our approach to SRE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. Our pastoral support will take account of the needs of GLB students. We shall also actively tackle homophobic bullying.

The teaching programme for Sex and Relationship Education: We intend that all pupils shall experience a programme of sex and relationships education at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development.

Contraceptive advice to KS4 pupils: Pupils will be taught, in the context of sexual intimacy and safer sex, that intercourse should always involve using a condom. Questions about forms of contraception will be answered accurately and honestly within the student's ability to understand. If pupils need further personal advice about contraceptive use, counselling and support will be sought from appropriate agencies and personnel.

A Whole School Approach

A whole school approach will be adapted to SRE that actively involves the whole school community. All groups who make up the school community have rights and responsibilities regarding SRE. In particular:

The senior leadership team (SLT) will endeavour to support the provision and development of SRE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.

The designated SRE co-ordinator will maintain an overview of SRE provision and have overall responsibility for its development. This will include keeping up to date with developments and good practice, developing the provision to meet student's needs, providing support and resources for staff, arranging staff training, liaison with outside agencies and monitoring and evaluation.

All Teaching staff are involved in the school's SRE provision. Some teach SRE through the Well-being programme and some through science and other curriculum areas. All teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to students. Any teacher can be approached by a student who experiences a difficulty regarding sex or relationships issues. Teachers will be consulted about Redwood's approach to SRE and aided in their work by provision of resources, background information, support and advice from experienced members of staff and access to appropriate training.

Non-teaching staff may be involved in a supportive role in some SRE lessons and also play an important, informal pastoral support role with students. They will have access to information about the SRE programme and be supported in their pastoral role.

Parents/carers have a legal right to view this policy and to have information about the school's SRE provision. They also have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated sex education lessons if they wish. The school will seek and take account of parent/carer views and endeavour to adopt a partnership approach with parents/carers. The school's approach to SRE will encourage dialogue between parents/carers and their children.

The school nurse can play a key role in supporting the teacher in SRE both in terms of advice, input into lessons, provision of pastoral support for students and resources. The school will work in ongoing consultation and partnership with the school nurse.

Outside agencies and speakers may be involved in inputting to SRE lessons and as points of referral as support services for students. Redwood will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to student needs. We shall work in partnership with and also promote relevant helping agencies that students can access.

Students have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate SRE and to pastoral support. They will be actively consulted about their SRE needs and their views will be central to developing the provision.

Aims of the programme

- To provide accurate information about, and understanding of, SRE issues
- To explore what students know, understand, think and feel and to identify their needs
- To create an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment
- To counteract myths
- To explore a range of attitudes towards SRE issues and to help students to reach their own informed views and choices for a healthier lifestyle
- To develop respect for each other as individuals, and to encourage boys and girls to understand one another
- To recognise the value of loving and caring relationships and the place of intimacy within them
- To increase student's self-esteem
- To appreciate the value of family life, the implications of parenthood and the needs of the very young

National and local support and guidance for schools to develop SRE

To continue to reduce the rates of teenage pregnancy, sexual transmitted disease and abortions amongst teenage girls in the UK, the Government has developed a comprehensive strategy to change this situation and SRE for pupils in both primary and secondary schools is seen, alongside other initiatives, as a key element. Redwood's approach to SRE is in line with the Government's strategy and guidance given to schools

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The School will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the School.

Presented to Governors for approval

05/03/2024

To be reviewed annually or as appropriate