

Healthy Relationships and SRE Policy

Sexual Relationship Education



St John's College

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND SRE POLICY

This policy applies to the Senior School.

Version: September 2020

Policy Formulation

Under the Education Act (1993) and the Education Reform Act (1998), all schools are required to maintain a statement of Policy regarding Sex & Relationships Education and make it available to parents on request, free of charge. This policy complies with DfE Guidance on Sex and Relationships (0116/2000) and the supplementary guidance SRE for the 21st Century, produced 2014.

Aims

Sex and Relationships Education aims to help students to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding about the value of loving, diverse and stable relationships along with developing an understanding of their own sexuality and sexual health. The aim is to help young people lead confident, healthy lives to enable them to be active citizens with due regard to the value of family life in all its forms.

The aims of this policy are to:

- prepare students to progress from adolescence to adulthood with an awareness of the rights of others and develop the capacity to make choices in a caring and sensitive manner;
- enable students to conduct personal relationships with a full understanding of the meaning of responsibility;
- enable students to conduct their lives with confidence knowing their own legal rights.

Objectives

Sex and Relationships Education lessons seeks to:

- provide knowledge about loving relationships, including LGBTQ+ relationships, the nature of sexuality and the processes of human reproduction;
- lead to the acquisition of understanding and attitudes in order to enable students to view their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner;
- provide structured lessons that are tailored not only to the age but also the understanding of student;
- present information in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, which has an awareness of the law on sexual behaviour;
- encourage the development of social skills and strategies, which will reduce the risk of exploitation, misunderstanding and abuse;
- allow students to examine the physical and emotional implications of sexual behaviour and to appreciate the need for all genders to behave responsibly in sexual matters;
- develop awareness of their gender and sexual identity, and to challenge sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and prejudice in society;
- ensure that students have a clear understanding of sexual and reproductive biology, including knowledge of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases;

- make students aware of the unrealistic nature of pornography both physically and emotionally.

Organisation and Delivery

- Sex and Relationships Education is delivered through PSE and Tutor Periods to all Year groups from R12 to Sixth Form. Some aspects are also addressed in Science (KS3 and KS4) and in other curricular areas, including assemblies, where appropriate.
- All students within the school have equal access to sex and relationships education. Topics are revisited in order to allow provision for previous absence and different levels of understanding and maturity. The programme allows teachers to adapt materials and approaches to suit students of different learning abilities.
- Teachers and all those contributing to sex and relationships education will work within an agreed values framework as set out in this policy and where appropriate receive training.

Working with Parents

- Under the Education Act 1993, parents have the right to withdraw their children from either part, or all, of the Sex Education provided by the School. This does not include aspects of Sex Education covered by the Science National Curriculum.
- Parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. Many parents find it difficult to talk to their children about these matters. The School is committed to supporting parents in this area of bringing up their children. The School believes that the sex and relationships education programme is of the utmost importance for all students.
- Parents/guardians are very welcome to meet members of staff to discuss any concerns they may have and to view the teaching materials. Parents wanting to exercise the right of withdrawal are invited to write to the Headteacher in the first instance.

Course Content

Within the framework of objectives outlined above, and with due regard for the values of family life, the course will deal with the following aspects of sexuality and reproduction:

- The preparation of students for puberty;
- The preparation of girls for menstruation before their periods start;
- Precise information about access to confidential contraceptive information, advice and services;
- Sexual Orientation and different forms of identity within relationships. Teachers will deal openly and honestly with questions relating to sexual orientation and gender identity;
- Precise information about access to confidential contraceptive information, advice and services;
- The moral and personal dilemmas involved in abortion and information on how to access further guidance;

- The impact of pornography;
- Awareness of the risks of STIs including HIV and information about prevention, diagnosis and treatment;
- Knowledge about what safe sex is, why it is important, and how to negotiate with a partner.

Sensitive or controversial topics

- During sex and relationships education lessons (and at other times), controversial topics may arise. The judgement of individual teachers will decide as to whether the subjects are suitable for class discussion. Teachers will try to answer pupils' questions honestly, sensitively and in such a way that takes the context into account. In all circumstances, the professional judgement of the teacher must come into play
- Teachers should establish a set of ground rules so that young people are aware of parameters. For example:
 1. If a question is too personal, remind the young person about the ground rules;
 2. If the young person needs further support, refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and follow the guidelines set out in the Safeguarding and child Protection Policy;
 3. If a question is felt to be too explicit, acknowledge it and deal with it outside the whole class setting. This may require referral to the DSL.
- Any concern about sexual abuse must be followed up under the Child Protection procedures.
- Where discussions about sexual behaviour arise from apparently unrelated topics, teachers will give attention to relevant issues, again using professional judgement.
- **HIV/AIDS** - Informative discussions covering the transmission of the HIV virus may, by the very nature of the subject, include mention of sexual acts and practices. Teachers will deal sensitively and objectively with information of this kind, at the same time trying to avoid the development of bias and prejudice. Staff should also be aware that they may be dealing with students who are HIV positive or who have close links with others who are.

Confidentiality

Effective sex and relationships education should enable and encourage young people to talk to a trusted adult if they are in a sexual relationship or contemplating being so. It is desirable, but not always possible, that that person should be their parent or carer. The law allows health professionals to see, and in some circumstances to treat, young people confidentially; and part of this process includes counselling and discussion about talking to parents.

In order to be able to take responsibility for their actions, young people need to be more generally aware of the law in relation to sexual activity and local confidential services.

Nevertheless, there may be cases where a teacher learns from an under 16-year-old that they are having, or are contemplating having sexual intercourse. In these circumstances the School will take steps to ensure that:

- Wherever possible, the young person is persuaded to talk to their parent or carer;
- Any child protection issues are addressed;
- That the child has been adequately counselled and informed about contraception, including precise information about where they can access contraception and advice.

When the teacher who receives the information believes that there is a child protection issue to be addressed, they should refer the case to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. They should also ensure that the pupil understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first.

It is only in the most exceptional cases that the School should be in the position of having to handle such information without parental knowledge and, where younger pupils were involved, this would be grounds for serious concern.

The Role of Health Professionals in the Delivery of Sex and Relationships Education

The School will work closely with health professionals, including doctors, nurses, youth and social workers in the development and implementation of the schools Sex and Relationships programme.

Any visitors used to help in the delivery of the Sex and Relationships Education programme will be clear about the boundaries of their input and will be aware of the Sex and Relationships Education curriculum, relevant school policies and their work will be planned and agreed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation of this policy will be monitored and evaluated through the normal processes of Departmental Review that apply to all areas of the curriculum. The Headteacher and Trustees will review this policy annually.

NOTE: Child Protection - Disclosures on matters relating to child sexual abuse are addressed within the School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.