

Sex and Relationships Education Policy

Policy Created:	Frequency of Review	Review Date:	Ratified By:	Date Ratified
Nov 2015	3 Yrs	Nov 2018	Governing Body	Nov 2015

1. How this Policy was developed

The policy has been developed by the Assistant Head / PSHE Lead, in consultation with staff, students, parents/carers, governors and relevant outside agencies.

This policy takes full account of Wapping High School's legal obligations and the latest DfE guidance 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' (2000), the updated guidance procedures (2010) and the briefing paper 'Sex and Relationships Education in Schools' (2015).

2. What is SRE?

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.

According to the latest DfE guidance 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'.

The guidance suggests that SRE should have three main elements as follows:

Knowledge and understanding

- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy. 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 reasons for delaying sexual activity, the benefits to be gained from such delay

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.

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 of choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

Wapping High School's approach to SRE consists of:

1. The taught National Curriculum Science Programme of Study.
2. SRE modules within each Key Stage delivered within a planned PSHE programme.
3. Pastoral support for students who experience difficulties.
4. Provision of appropriate information through school nurse drop-down sessions.

3. Why SRE?

3.1 Legal obligations

Schools in England and Wales have a legal responsibility to provide a 'sex education' programme. They also have a responsibility to keep an up to date written statement of the policy they choose to adopt and this must be available to parents.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from 'sex education' lessons which fall outside those aspects covered in the National Curriculum Science. This right no longer applies when children reach 15 years of age. See section 7.7 for further details.

3.2 The needs of young people and the role of Wapping High School

It is the aim of Wapping High School:

1. To provide opportunities for all students to learn and to achieve.
2. To promote student's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

The DCSF 'Sex and Relationship Guidance' (2000) recommends that 'effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives'. The Academy has a key role, in partnership with parents/carers, in providing SRE.

Research has shown that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about sex and relationships, are more likely to be more discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours, and have more fulfilling relationships.

'Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive sex and relationship education does not make young people more likely to enter into sexual activity. Indeed it can help them learn the reasons for, and the benefits to be gained from, delaying such activity'.

3.3 National and local support and guidance for schools to develop SRE

Rates of teenage pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted infection in the UK are among the highest of all European countries. The Government has developed a comprehensive strategy to change this situation and SRE for students in both primary and secondary schools is seen, alongside other initiatives, as a key element. Our Academy approach to SRE is in line with the Government's strategy and guidance given to schools in DfE 'Sex and Relationship Guidance' 2000.

4. Morals 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. Wapping High School'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. We shall endeavour to have an approach that is educational, rather than one based on propaganda.

5. 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 students understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives'.

Young people may have varying needs regarding SRE depending on their circumstances and background. Wapping High School strongly believes that all students should have access to SRE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this the School'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

On average, about 5% of our students will go on to define themselves as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT). Students may also have LGBT parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our students will meet and work with LGBT people. Our approach to SRE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. Our pastoral support will take account of the needs of LGBT students. We shall also actively tackle homophobic bullying.

Special educational needs

We shall take account of the fact that some students may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical disabilities that result in particular SRE needs.

The teaching programme for Sex and Relationship Education

We intend that all students shall experience a programme of sex and relationships education at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development, with adaptations for those whose cognitive development is particularly slow.

Students who use alternative methods of communication

Some students have physical, visual or hearing impairments or are unable to use speech and may use signing, symbols and/or communication switches and aids. The staff will adapt their teaching of sex and relationship education to ensure that these students have equal access.

Students with profound and multiple learning difficulties

Students with learning difficulties will not be excluded from the programme. Using appropriate methods, they will experience most of the basic content; self-awareness, gender awareness, body recognition, privacy.

Students with autism

This will require individual teaching to meet their specific needs, with the help of a trained Learning Support Assistant. Explicit teaching and use of pictures and visual aids is essential to avoid confusion.

Contraceptive advice to older students.

Students 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 students need further personal advice about contraceptive use, counselling and support will be sought from appropriate agencies and personnel.

6. A Whole School Approach

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

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

The designated PSHE Lead / 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 Academy's SRE provision. Some teach SRE through the PSHE 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 Wapping High School'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 supported in their pastoral role.

Governors have responsibilities for Academy policies. They will be consulted about the SRE provision and policy and have regular reports at Governor's meetings.

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 (see section 7.7). The Academy will seek and take account of parent/carer views and endeavour to adopt a partnership approach with parents/carers. This will periodically include information/education workshops for parents/carers. The Academy'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 nurse.

Outside agencies and speakers may be involved in inputting to SRE lessons and as points of referral as support services for students. The Academy will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to student needs. We shall work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within the School. We will 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.

7. The Taught SRE Programme

The SRE programme will be delivered as part of Wapping High School's approach to PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education).

7.1 Aims of the programme

The overall aims of the SRE programme are:

- To provide accurate information about, and understanding of, SRE issues.
- To dispel 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 and care for others.
- To increase student's self esteem.
- To develop skills relevant to effective management of relationships and sexual situations. Examples include communication with and empathy towards others, risk assessment, assertiveness, conflict management, decision making, seeking help and helping others.
- To contribute to a reduction in local and national teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and abortion rates.

7.2 Place in the curriculum

The main SRE programme will be delivered by PSHCE teachers and specialist staff. In addition, certain biological aspects are delivered through Science lessons.

7.3 Content and learning objectives

The SRE programme is delivered in a developmental manner so that issues are explored in greater depth as students mature. The following areas of content are addressed in the following years through 'drop mornings'

Year 7 - Puberty: some lessons taught in separate boy/girl groups, some in mixed groups. Emotional well-being including self esteem.

Year 8 - Relationships: managing conflict and behaving assertively. Sexuality.

Year 9 - Life Choices: including contraception, values relating to becoming sexually active. Links between alcohol/diet/exercise and behaviour.

Year 10 - Sexual health, pregnancy, values within relationships, link to milestones in life (having children, marriage, death and bereavement etc.)

Year 11 – Self and others: recognising abusive relationships, linking healthy relationships to mental health, staying balanced, reducing stress

7.4 Methodology and resources

A wide range of teaching methods are used, that enable student's to actively participate in their own learning. This includes use of quizzes, case studies, research, role-play, video, small group discussion and use of appropriate guest speakers. Where it is regarded as particularly beneficial students are divided into single gender groups for a part of lessons or whole lessons. Occasional use of drama productions also forms part of the programme.

Teaching is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that students are not put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. Teaching resources are selected on the basis of their appropriateness to students.

7.5 Answering student's questions

Wapping High School believes that students should have opportunities to have their genuine questions answered in a sensible and matter-of-fact manner. However, occasionally a student may ask a particularly explicit, difficult or embarrassing question in class. Teachers will use their skill and discretion to decide about whether to answer questions in class and, if so, how. They will establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in class by discussing ground rules with students and by taking an approach that encourages students to be mature and sensible.

If a teacher does not know the answer to a question they will acknowledge this and suggest that they and students research the answer to the question later. If a question is too explicit or inappropriate to answer in class at that moment, teachers will acknowledge it and attend to it later with the student who asked it. If a question is too personal teachers will remind students about the ground rules and if necessary point out appropriate sources of support.

If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of sexual abuse they will follow the Wapping High School's safeguarding procedures, such as emailing safe@wappinghigh.org

7.6 Monitoring, evaluation and assessment

The programme is regularly evaluated by the SRE co-ordinator. The views of students and teachers who deliver the programme are used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an ongoing basis.

7.7 Parental concerns and withdrawal of students

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated 'sex education' lessons up until students reach the age of 15. They do not have a right to withdraw their children from those aspects of SRE that are taught in Science or where SRE issues arise incidentally in other subject areas.

We will work in active partnership with parents/carers, value their views and keep them informed about our SRE provision. If a parent/carer has any concerns about the SRE provision we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have. If any parents/carers decide to withdraw their child we shall work with them and their child to explore possible alternative provision.

8. Pastoral Support for Students who Experience Difficulties

8.1 The nature of support available to students

Wapping High School takes its role in the promotion of student welfare seriously.

Staff endeavour to make themselves approachable and to provide caring and sensitive pastoral support for students in a number of ways. Staff may be approached for help on an individual basis and through the tutor / pastoral system. They offer a listening ear and, where appropriate, information and advice.

The school nurse can be asked to visit in order to offer health and support services to students. Where appropriate, students are referred to the school nurse and/or outside helping agencies. The School will keep up to date about the development of local services and national helplines for young people promote their existence to students and endeavour to form working relationships with local agencies that are relevant to student needs.

8.2 Confidentiality and informing parents/carers

We are aware that some parents find it hard to cope with their children's sexual development, and are happy for Wapping High School to take the initiative. We will take every opportunity to inform and involve parents and carers.

Wapping High School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by student for help. Staff must make this clear to students. Safeguarding and child procedures must be followed when any disclosures about abuse are made.

It is very rare for a student to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving child protection issues, staff must make a careful judgement about whether or not a third party needs to be informed. This judgement will be based upon:

- The seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the student may be experiencing.
- The student's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions.

Where it is clear that a student would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek the consent of the student to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the student. Unless clearly inappropriate, students will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer.