



Sex and Relationships Education Policy

1. Policy statement

Teaching and learning is the foundation of all our work at St Edmund's Girls' School: it is central to all that we do and our approach is rooted in the vision, values and moral purpose of the school. We expect all of our staff to deliver high quality, stimulating and dynamic lessons, where all students are supported and challenged to make excellent progress in their learning over time.

As a Church of England school, we take seriously, our moral duty as educators to provide a holistic education that ensures our students leave with a sense of their responsibility as global citizens who can contribute positively to society along with excellent qualifications. Our moral duty extends to ensuring we provide high quality sex and relationships education. Our core values of respect, responsibility and resilience support the delivery of this curriculum.

The words of the Micah verse underpin our spiritual values as a school.

'What does the Lord require of me? To love kindly, to act justly and to walk humbly (with your God).

2. Aims of Sex and Relationships Education^[MAS1]

The aims of sex and relationship education (SRE) at St Edmund's are to:

- i. Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- ii. Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- iii. Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- iv. Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- v. Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- vi. To guide and support students through their physical, emotional and moral development
- vii. To give students the skills and understanding they need to move with confidence from
 - a. childhood through adolescence into adulthood
- viii. To reduce or delay sexual activity and the incidence of STIs and teenage pregnancy

3. Statutory requirements

As an academy, St Edmund's School is not required to follow the National Curriculum and as such, we are not obliged to teach SRE. However, we would not be fulfilling our moral duty to our students if we did not place a high priority on SRE within our curriculum offer.

As an academy that does teach SRE, we are required by our funding agreement to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

403 Sex education: manner of provision.

(1) The governing body and head teacher shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that where sex education is given to any registered pupils at a maintained school, it is given in such a manner as to encourage those pupils to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life.

(1A) The Secretary of State must issue guidance designed to secure that when sex education is given to registered pupils at maintained schools—

(a) they learn the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and the bringing up of children, and

(b) they are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate having regard to the age and the religious and cultural background of the pupils concerned.

(1B) In discharging their functions under subsection (1) governing bodies and head teachers must have regard to the Secretary of State's guidance.

(1C) Guidance under subsection (1A) must include guidance about any material which may be produced by NHS bodies for use for the purposes of sex education in schools.

(1D) The Secretary of State may at any time revise his guidance under subsection (1A).

Please also refer to Appendix 1 SRE House of Commons Note published in 2014.

At St Edmund's we teach SRE as set out in this policy.

4. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – the Deputy Headteacher pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance. Discussion with SRE teaching staff, pastoral and medical staff took place and informed the review.
2. Staff consultation – relevant school staff with responsibility for delivery and support of SRE were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
3. Student consultation – we consult regularly what exactly students want from their SRE.
4. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

5. Definition

SRE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

SRE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

SRE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

6. Delivery of SRE

SRE is predominantly taught within Personal, Social, Health and Careers Education (PSHCE); discreet lessons embedded into the school curriculum by a small team of specialist teachers.

Whilst some areas are taught as specific topics, for example, contraception, many elements of SRE, for example, the importance of healthy, committed relationships are integral to all topics as well as other subject areas taught throughout the School.

Specific topics taught within SRE are age appropriate and build on prior knowledge learned in previous years.

Students are also made aware of organisations and agencies who can offer advice and guidance.

Biological aspects of SRE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious studies (RS).

Students also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by trained health professionals.

Across all Key Stages, students will be supported to develop the following skills:

- Communication, including how to manage changing relationships and emotions
- Recognising and assessing potential risks
- Assertiveness
- Seeking help and support when required
- Informed decision-making
- Self-respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and maximising a healthy lifestyle
- Managing conflict
- Discussion and group work

These skills are taught within the context of family [life\[MAS2\]](#) and healthy relationships.

7. Teaching Strategies

It is good practice to set out ground rules to help create a safe environment in which students do not feel anxious or embarrassed by ensuring the following:

- a) Teachers/health professionals will not have to answer personal questions
- b) No student will be forced to take part in a discussion
- c) Students will be encouraged to use the correct name for body parts
- d) Meaning of words will be explained in a factual way

Teachers will use distancing techniques that involve de-personalising discussion.

Teachers will be given training on how to respond to difficult questions. The ground rules should reduce the chance of a difficult personal question being asked. If a question is asked that is too personal or too explicit then the teacher should -

- a) Acknowledge the question and promise to speak to the student later on an individual basis and/or
- b) In consultation with the head of year and pastoral manager, refer the student to an appropriate agency – school nurse, helpline or school counsellor.

8. Roles and responsibilities

i. The governing board

The governing board will hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy. The governing board has delegated the approval of this policy to the Headteacher.

ii. The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that SRE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from [non-statutory/non-science] components of SRE.

iii. Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering SRE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to SRE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of SRE
- Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching SRE. Staff who have concerns about teaching SRE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

iv. Students

Students are expected to engage fully in SRE and, when discussing issues related to SRE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

9. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents^[MAS3] have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of SRE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from SRE.

10. Training

Teaching staff and teaching involved in the delivery of SRE are supported with guidance and training in line with this policy.

The subject leader of PSHCE will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses, theatre companies or sexual health professionals^[MAS4], to provide support and training to staff teaching SRE.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of SRE is monitored by the senior leader with responsibility for this area through: Learning walks, parent and student voice, planning meeting with staff responsible for the delivery of SRE.

Students' development in SRE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the senior leadership team, annually.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher and the Local Governing Body

Date of last review: May 2018

Date policy is due for review: May 2019

Policy has been approved by: Nicola Bull, Headteacher and Local Governing Body

Policy authors: Caroline Smith, Deputy Headteacher and Amanda Sluman, subject leader for PSHCE