



SHAPWICK SCHOOL

'The same road by different steps'

SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION **POLICY**

Review: 31st August 2019

SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION POLICY

Shapwick School takes its responsibility to provide relevant, effective and responsible sex and relationship education (SRE) to all of its pupils as part of the school's personal, social, health education (PSHE) curriculum very seriously. The school wants parents and pupils to feel assured that sex education will be delivered at a level appropriate to both the age and development of pupils, and safe to voice opinions and concerns relating to the sex education provision.

This policy is drafted by the Principal in consultation with the Advisory Board, SENCo, Head of Therapy, Medical Coordinator and the PSHE lead teacher. The policy is reviewed and approved by the Advisory Board annually.

1. Policy aims

SRE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that is fully understood and effectively retained by pupils in our care. It is also about teaching what it is to be in a caring, stable and mutually supportive relationship with another person, and how to control and understand feelings that come with being in a relationship.

The school would like to emphasise that by providing comprehensive SRE we are not encouraging pupils to become sexually active at a young age. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the right provision is in place so that pupils may have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions and responsible choices as they grow up.

Through the provision outlined in this policy we also aim to raise pupils' self esteem and confidence, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media. We hope to teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them. We want our pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teach them to care for and respect their bodies and provide them with all the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

2. Roles and responsibilities

School staff

It is important that *all* school staff feel comfortable to take PSHE classes and answer questions from pupils. If the teacher does not feel confident leading SRE discussions then that is likely to be reflected by the pupils, and their learning will be compromised. The school provides professional development training in how to deliver sex education; this includes sessions on confidentiality, setting ground rules, handling controversial issues, responding to awkward questions and an introduction to the rationale of why teaching SRE is so important. There are certain members of the school leadership team, such as the PSHE lead teacher and the Medical Coordinator who will hold more responsibility for ensuring that the school's sex education provision is relevant to our pupils and effective, but this is generally a

responsibility for all staff members and the school expects staff to voice opinions and share expertise in this area.

Advisory Board members and senior leaders will:

- Develop this school policy and review it on a yearly basis. This policy is developed in consultation with teachers, pupils and with the wider staff team to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole school community.
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with school policy and guidance relating to sex education.
- Provide support to staff members who feel uncomfortable or ill-equipped to deal with the delivery of sex education to pupils. This may be because they do not feel that their training has been adequate or that aspects of the curriculum are in conflict with their religious beliefs.
- Ensure that sex education is age-relevant and appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our pupils do and meets their needs.
- Ensure that the knowledge and information regarding SRE to which all pupils are entitled is provided in a comprehensive way.
- Support parental involvement in the development of the SRE curriculum.
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing a balanced SRE in school.
- Communicate freely with staff, parents and the Advisory Board to ensure that everyone is in understanding of the school policy and curriculum for sex education, and that any concerns or opinions regarding the provision at the school are listened to, taken into account and acted on as appropriate. We want the provision of sex education at home to be complementary to the provision the school provides, and this should be clearly communicated to parents and additional support given where necessary or requested.

All staff will:

- Take it upon themselves to ensure that they are up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements regarding sex education. Any areas that they feel are not covered or inadequately provided for should be reported back to their line manager.
- Attend and engage in professional development training around sex education provision.
- Encourage pupils to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence, listen to their needs and support them seriously. If a pupil comes to a member of staff with an issue that that member of staff feels they are not able to deal with alone, they should take this concern to their manager. No one else should be informed at this stage, and a breach of confidentiality may fall under staff misconduct and disciplinary procedures.
- Provide regular feedback to their managers on their experience of teaching SRE and pupil response.
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced SRE in school.
- Tailor their lessons to suit all pupils in their class, across the whole range of abilities. If teachers need support in this area they should speak to the the PSHE lead or their line manager.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend sex education classes that are in their school timetable and take them seriously. Although they are not assessed through examination, these classes are still a very important part of the curriculum and a tool to aid personal development and the school expects pupils to recognise this.

Pupils should support one another with issues that arise through SRE. Listening in class, being considerate of other people's feelings and beliefs, and complying with confidentiality rules that are set in class are key to effective provision. Pupils who regularly fail to follow these standards of behaviour will be dealt with under the school's Management of Behaviour Policy – Rewards and Sanctions. This is available in the Policy Folder in the staffroom or on the school website.

We also hope that pupils will feel comfortable to talk to a member of staff, in confidence, regarding any concerns they have in school related to sex education or otherwise. Conversations of this nature between staff and pupils will be held in confidence; however, staff may take concerns to their manager if there is a child protection concern or they feel ill-equipped to deal with the issue at hand.

We ask pupils for feedback on the school's sex education provision and expect them to take this responsibility seriously. Opinions on provision and comments will be reviewed by senior managers and taken into consideration when the curriculum is prepared for the following year's pupils. In this way, the school hopes to provide pupils with the education they need on topics they want to learn about.

Parents

The school expects parents to share the responsibility of sex education and support their children's personal, social and emotional development. We encourage parents to create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through school PSHE. Parents are also encouraged to seek additional support in this from the school where they feel it is needed. For information on accessing school support, see section 5.

3. Implementation and curriculum

It is important that we implement our SRE policy consistently throughout the school, and provide effective provision throughout classrooms. We encourage teachers to provide classes that are specific to the needs of the pupils in that class, and responsive to their behaviour and development.

Through this aspect of our curriculum we aim to explore different attitudes, values and social labels, and develop skills that will enable our pupils to make informed decisions regarding sex and relationships. It is important that pupils know the difference between fact, opinion and belief.

Guest speakers

We may invite guest speakers into school to talk on issues related to sex and relationships. It may be the case that the subject under discussion is better coming from an expert or experienced health professional who can challenge pupil's

perceptions. A teacher will be present throughout these lessons. Visitors will be given a copy of this policy and expected to comply with the guidelines outlined within it.

Terminology

Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang or everyday terms used in certain social circles will be discussed; this will surround discussion about what is and isn't acceptable language to use.

Dealing with difficult questions

Staff training will include sessions on how to deal with difficult questions. There may still be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel uncomfortable or ill equipped to answer. In this case, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from the PSHE coordinator.

Ground rules in class are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter. Some strategies staff may use to support this might be:

- an anonymous question box; this will enable pupils to feel more comfortable to ask questions without being identified
- making the classroom a zone of silence; this means that whatever is discussed in the classroom stays in the classroom and should not be brought up at any other time. We hope this will give pupils the sense that they are in a safe zone to speak freely about sex and relationships.

Pupils with additional needs

The school works hard to ensure that all aspects of the school curriculum are inclusive and support the needs of pupils of all ranges of abilities. Staff should differentiate lessons to ensure that all members of the class can access the information fully, and this is no different when it comes to SRE.

The school will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all pupils have access to the same information. Some of these include:

- interactive teaching methods e.g. contraceptive card game
- use of expert guest speakers
- practical activities
- using DVDs or video
- group and paired activities.

Withdrawal from SRE

The school aims to keep parents informed about all aspects of the SRE curriculum and urges parents to read this policy. Parents can request access to resources and information being used in class, and the school will do everything it can to ensure that parents are comfortable with the education provided to their children in school. It is, however, a statutory right of parents or carers to withdraw the children in their care from SRE. This excludes withdrawal from the elements on human growth and reproduction which fall under the National Curriculum science.

Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from SRE should contact the PSHE coordinator who will arrange a meeting to discuss their concerns. SRE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development and we strongly urge parents to carefully consider their decision before withdrawing their child from this aspect of school life. However, it is acknowledged that the final decision on the issue is for the parent to take.

Complaints

Parents or carers who have complaints or concerns regarding the SRE curriculum should contact the school and follow the school's complaints policy.

Equal opportunities

SRE lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously. This is the case for bullying of any kind and the procedures regarding this are outlined in the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Safeguarding and confidentiality

We hope to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Training around confidentiality will be provided to all teachers.

It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case, the school's **child protection and safeguarding procedure** will be followed. This is available in the Policy folder in the Staff Room or on the school's website.

Personal information about pupils who have approached a teacher or other member of staff for discussion should not be shared with any other person. If there is a child protection concern, the information must *only be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputy DSLs*. Staff members that breach the right to a child's privacy by disclosing or sharing confidential information with no reason to do so will be dealt with under the school's **disciplinary procedures**. The Disciplinary Policy and Procedure is available in the Policy Folder in the Staff Room.

If a staff member is approached by a pupil under 16 who is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, the staff member should:

- Ensure that the pupil is accessing all the contraceptive and sexual health advice available and understands the risks of being sexually active.
- Encourage the pupil to talk to their parents or carers. Pupils may feel that they are more comfortable bringing these issues to a member of staff that they trust, but it is important that children and their parents have open and trusting relationships when it comes to sexual health and the school will encourage this as much as possible.
- Decide whether there is a child protection issue. This may be the case if the member of staff is concerned that there is coercion or abuse involved. If a

member of staff is informed that a pupil under 13 is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, this will be dealt with under child protection procedures.

Pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from *their manager/PSHE coordinator/DSL/DDSLs* to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

Advice and treatment

Staff who are approached by pupils with a concern about having contracted or possibly contracted a sexually transmitted disease should refer them immediately to the *Medical Coordinator*. Providing advice on contraception and practising safe sex is a key part of the school's SRE provision. We also encourage parents to engage their child in open discussion about practising safe sex.

There is no reason for staff to expect to be made aware of a pupil or colleague's HIV or hepatitis status, and no person will be discriminated against because of this if there is a disclosure of this type of information.

The school's **first aid policy** covers protection for all school members against infection from blood-borne viruses. The First Aid policy sits within the Health & safety Policy which can be found in the Policy Folder in the Staff Room.

4. Monitoring, review and evaluation

The educational and personal needs of our pupils develop in line with varying societal pressures and economic change. Our aim is to provide SRE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our pupils, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason we are continually reviewing the SRE curriculum and will inform parents of any revisions to the school policy or sex education curriculum.

We aim to monitor the effectiveness of our sex education provision through:

- feedback from pupils
- feedback from parents
- feedback from staff
- classroom observations.

The school will review this policy annually, evaluating its effectiveness by taking into account feedback from pupils, staff and parents, as well as what has come to light through classroom observations and information we receive from national reports and curriculum reviews.

5. Support

We hope that pupils will feel safe in the school environment to talk to any member of staff in confidence about any areas of concern regarding their personal, social and

emotional development, including matters raised by or relating to sex education. We promote the school ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of school activity and hope that pupils respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom.

6. Syllabus

Shapwick uses the Bristol Sex and Relationship Education syllabus - 'Sex... and stuff'. The major themes of the scheme of work are based around the National Curriculum's End of Key Stage Statements for personal well-being. These cover Personal Identify, Healthy Lifestyles, Diversity, Relationships, Getting Help and Risks. These are split into 6 lessons for each year group. The lesson plans build and progress around a number of different issues, relevant age and likely experience of young people. It is our aim that SRE will prepare young people not only for what is happening to them currently but also for their future development.

Issues such as recognising and managing feelings, differences around gender and sexuality, media and peer pressure, readiness for sex, appropriate behaviour, contraception, STIs, relationships and getting help are covered and revisited.