

Policy: Sex & Relationship Education



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What is sex and relationship education?

Why is sex and relationships education in schools important?

High quality SRE helps create safe school communities in which pupils can grow, learn, and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life. It is essential for the following reasons:

- **Children and young people have a right to good quality education, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.**
- **Children and young people want to be prepared for the physical and emotional changes they undergo at puberty, and young people want to learn about relationships. Older pupils frequently say that sex and relationships education was ‘too little, too late and too biological’. Ofsted reinforced this in their 2013 *Not Yet Good Enough* report.**
- **SRE plays a vital part in meeting schools’ safeguarding obligations. Ofsted is clear that schools must have a preventative programme that enables pupils to learn about safety and risks in relationships.**
- **Schools maintain a statutory obligation under the Children Act (2004) to promote their pupils’ wellbeing, and under the Education Act (1996) to prepare children and young people for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life. A comprehensive SRE programme can have a positive impact on pupils’ health and wellbeing and their ability to achieve, and can play a crucial part in meeting these obligations.**

This policy builds on existing practice, and forms part of the overall PSHE Policy for the College, that also includes policies for Drugs Education, Citizenship and Safeguarding. This document should also be read in conjunction with policy on Child Protection and Safeguarding issues, including proper practice in the event of a pupil making a disclosure that they might be at risk.

The Personal Development curriculum and Impact Days, through which the majority of SRE is covered, have been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. It seeks to address some of the most pressing issues that face young people in modern life.

The Whole College PSHE map identifies where SRE and PSHE take place across the curriculum and enables students to make links to other subject areas.

Sex and Relationship Education at the College seeks:

- To help our students to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives.
- To help and support our students through their physical, emotional and moral development.
- To develop the skills and understanding needed to lead confident, healthy and independent lives.
- To examine the nature and importance of marriage and family life, in bringing up children, while also giving due weight to strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage.
- To help students to learn to understand human sexuality.
- To signpost to appropriate advice on sexual health.
- To help students to gain the skills and knowledge to protect themselves and their partner from unintended conceptions and sexually transmitted infections including HIV / AIDS.
- To develop healthy attitudes to relationships
- To challenge students ideas about self image

Sex and relationships education at Sidmouth College:

- is a partnership between home and school
- ensures children and young people's views are actively sought to influence lesson planning and teaching
- starts early and is relevant to pupils at each stage in their development and maturity
- is taught by people who are trained and confident in talking about issues such as healthy and unhealthy relationships, equality, pleasure, respect, abuse, sexuality, gender identity, sex and consent
- includes the acquisition of knowledge, the development of life skills and respectful attitudes and values
- has sufficient time to cover a wide range of topics, with a strong emphasis on relationships, consent, rights, responsibilities to others, negotiation and communication skills, and accessing services
- helps pupils understand on and offline safety, consent, violence and exploitation
- is both medically and factually correct and treats sex as a normal and pleasurable fact of life
- is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief, or other life experience
- uses active learning methods, and is rigorously planned, assessed and evaluated
- helps pupils understand a range of views and beliefs about relationships and sex in society including some of the mixed messages about gender, sex and sexuality from different sources including the media

- teaches pupils about the law and their rights to confidentiality even if they are under 16, and is linked to school-based and community health services and organisations.
- promotes equality in relationships, recognises and challenges gender inequality and reflects girls' and boys' different experiences and needs

It contributes to:

- a positive ethos and environment for learning
- safeguarding pupils (Children Act 2004), promoting their emotional wellbeing, and improving their ability to achieve in school
- a better understanding of diversity and inclusion, a reduction in gender-based and homophobic prejudice, bullying and violence and an understanding of the difference between consenting and exploitative relationships
- helping pupils keep themselves safe from harm, both on and offline, enjoy their relationships and build confidence in accessing services if they need help and advice
- reducing early sexual activity, teenage conceptions, sexually transmitted infections, sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence and bullying

How is sex and relationship education provided?

Sex and Relationship Education at Sidmouth College is provided in a range of ways and has been specifically designed to complement the wider work in Personal Development.

The majority of SRE is taught during Impact Days where the whole year group spends time with a health professional. This is supported by the tutor with follow up during PD.

The program is as follows:

Year 7 – Changes in Puberty, Managing Feelings and Getting Help and Support

Year 8 – Talking about SRE, Conception and Contraception

Year 9 – Recognising and Managing Risk, Contraceptives and STI's

Year 10 – Relationships and Body Image, Negotiation skills and Accessing sexual health services

Year 11 – Safer Sex, Choices and Decisions and Personal Safety and Consent

Our objectives are to:

- Create a learning environment in which pupils feel able to discuss issues of a sexual nature in an open and supportive way
- Create a learning environment in which there is clear understanding of ground rules, including issues such as confidentiality.
- Enable pupils to understand and respond to the factors that may influence decisions about sexual activity, including the media, and peer group.
- Understand and consider the wider social and legal framework, including family and society's attitudes and the law on sexual activity.

Who is responsible for providing it?

Each individual tutor is responsible for the provision within their lesson. Heads of House support the tutors to deliver the sessions and the PSHE coordinator will provide each year team with appropriate resources to enable tutors to deliver appropriate and relevant sessions.

The Schools and Community Nurse and other health professionals, provide additional sessions during Impact Days on sexual development, sign posting to sexual health services and teaching about contraception. The nurse also provides a weekly lunch time drop in service at the College for students. Governors having given consent for the provision, by the College Nurse and on the College site, of Emergency Contraception in certain circumstances; this provision is explained and discussed in Key Stage 4 sessions.

How is sex and relationship education monitored and evaluated?

An evaluation forms part of the impact day for all year groups and this is completed at the end of the sessions. This information is then passed to the Heads of House and core SLT.

The CPSHE coordinator will also carry out a learning walk during the tutorials in order to monitor the quality of delivery and engagement of students.

Information about parents' right to withdrawal

Unlike most other elements of the curriculum, the law provides for the right of parents and carers to withdraw their children from some or all of the Sex and Relationship Education provided, except where it forms part of the taught Science curriculum. It remains the practice that parents wishing to exercise this right should put this request in writing to the Principal. This right has been extremely rarely, if ever, exercised at the College. We aim to ensure that this situation continues. Staff have always believed that the work being done in this area has the support of parents and the community, and works in partnership with parents. If parents have any questions or concerns about the provision of SRE, we encourage them to raise these immediately with relevant staff.

Is SRE reviewed regularly?

SRE is reviewed annually by the CPSHE coordinator and pastoral team.