

Bowden House School

Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) Policy & Guidance

Bowden House School accepts its obligation to teach effective SRE with regard to the Government's SRE Guidance (July 2000); the Education Act 1996 (sections 403 and 405) and the House of Commons briefing paper SRE in Schools number 06103, 16 July 2015.

1. Rationale

Bowden House School is committed to an effective Sex and Relationship Education Policy which reinforces its collective Healthy Schools Policy and is an important aspect of the school's overall aim of educating students by promoting their spiritual, moral, emotional and cultural development to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide all students with Sex and Relationships Education within a framework for PHSE and other curriculum areas which will help them to respect themselves and others and move, with confidence, from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

3. Definition

Sex and Relationships Education is 'Lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, including marriage, for family life, to respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health'. (Sex & Relationship Education Guidance, DfE 0116/2000). It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity which would be regarded as inappropriate teaching.

3. Legal/National Requirements

a) National Curriculum Science – Sex Education (statutory)

The formal SRE elements of the National Curriculum Science Orders across all key stages are mandatory for all students of primary and secondary age and cover the biological aspects of SRE (see section 8. Implementation)

b) National Curriculum PHSE – Sex and Relationship Education (non-statutory)

It is widely recognised that sex education should be more than solely science if it is to meet student's needs. The national Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (DfEE, 0116/2000) advises schools on the themes that should be covered in SRE to support students through their physical, emotional and moral development. This includes:

- being taught to respect their own bodies
- their responsibilities to others and being aware of the consequences of sexual activity

- building positive relationships with others involving trust and respect
- the importance of committed long term and loving relationships, including marriage
- the importance of self control, including managing risk
- hygiene issues
- cultural difference and diversity in relation to aspects of SRE (see also the Equality & Diversity Policy (Equality Act 2010))

In addition, the 1996 Education Act, the Learning and Skills Council Act 2000, together with the Sex and Relationship Guidance, state that all:

- schools must have an up-to-date policy that describes the content and organisation of SRE provided outside the National Curriculum Science Order. It is the school's Governing Body's responsibility in consultation with the Headteacher, to ensure that this Policy is developed and made available to parents and carers
- students of maintained school should be receive Sex and Relationships Education
- all parents have the 'right to withdraw' their children from all or part of the school's SRE programme except the formal SRE elements found in the statutory National Curriculum Science (see Section 8. Implementation).

c) Additional relevant legislation: The Equality Act 2010

The teaching in SRE should meet the needs of all students whatever their developing sexuality or family circumstances. Schools should adhere to this guidance dealing sensitively and appropriately with issues around sexuality.

For more information see:

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/equality/sexualorientation/regulation/s2007/guidanceforschools/

d) Section 28

This Act was repealed in November 2004. All schools and teachers must deal openly and honestly with issues relating to homophobic bullying and sexual orientation, e.g. lesbian and gay sexuality

e) OFSTED

Under Section 10 of the Schools Inspections Act 1996, OFSTED is statutorily required to evaluate and report on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students at any school they inspect and this also includes evaluating and commenting on a school's Sex and Relationship Education Policy.

4. School Background

Bowden House is a residential school providing a nurturing, therapeutic environment. It caters for the individual academic and social needs of its students over a 24 hour curriculum. The school actively promotes social inclusion and aims to give each student the opportunity to develop the required skills to participate as a successful member of society. The school acknowledges the impact that many of its students have experienced in previous educational settings where their social, emotional and mental

health difficulties have limited their educational progress. The school offers a curriculum which reflects that accessed in a mainstream school but is delivered by specialist teaching staff supported by Teaching Assistants and Care Staff aimed at promoting a willingness and aptitude for learning. The joint approach of all staff in the school helps each student to recognise the consequences of their inappropriate behaviour; develop less destructive methods of expressing their feelings and work towards a greater sense of personal responsibility for their actions.

5.Ethos and Values

At Bowden House School, the SRE curriculum will reflect the values of our school/PHSE programme and will be taught in the context of relationships. In addition, SRE will promote children's self-esteem and emotional well-being and help them to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, based on respect for themselves and for others, at home, school, work and in the community.

Every student will receive their full entitlement to SRE* regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation (*see 'right to withdraw' in Legal Requirements and Guidance)

Sex and Relationships Education aims to:

- contribute to the foundation of PHSE and the school's SRE programme
- inform students about relationships, emotions, puberty, personal safety and hygiene
- enable them to develop personal and social skills and a positive attitude to puberty and well-being.
- teach the taking on of responsibility and the consequences of actions in relation to sexual activity and parenthood
- provide students with information about different types of contraception, safe sex and how they can access local sources for further advice and treatment
- link sex education and relationships education with issues of peer pressure and other risk-taking behaviour such as drugs, smoking and alcohol
- ensure that students understand how the law applies to sexual relationships

Objectives:

The school's SRE programme will:

- provide information which is relevant and appropriate to the age and maturity of the students
- include the on-going development of communication and social skills
- encourage the exploration and clarification of values and the development of positive attitudes.

7. Policy, Leadership and Management

The Governors of Bowden House School, in consultation with the Headteacher, have a statutory responsibility for SRE in this school. The Governing Body, together with the PHSE co-ordinator, are expected to involve parents, students, staff, health professionals and other agencies to ensure that the school's SRE programme addresses the needs of the community, education, health priorities and the needs of the students themselves.

8. Implementation

a) Curriculum

The National Curriculum (Science) and the Personal Learning programme within the school, provides an appropriate vehicle for SRE. A planned and coordinated approach to Personal Learning can provide an appropriate framework for SRE to take place providing students with a consistent message. Whilst parents have a legal right to withdraw their son from dedicated SRE lessons within the PHSE curriculum, they do not have the right to withdraw them from those aspects of SRE that are taught in National Curriculum Science or where SRE issues arise incidentally in other subject areas.

Teachers of Sex and Relationship Education will be sensitive to:

- cultural differences
- homophobic/sexist attitudes
- sexual orientation
- different types of strong, mutually supportive relationships whilst students learn the significance of stable, loving relationships, including marriage, as key elements of community and society.

The teaching and care teams covering the 24 hour curriculum will ensure that consistency is applied.

b) Dealing with difficult questions

Within the classroom, it is important to create an atmosphere where questions and discussion on SRE matters take place without embarrassment and that there is respect and understanding for each other as individuals. Class teachers should:

- use specific ground rules for this work which will clarify boundaries for the students
- be aware of the law on sexual behavior, consent and abuse
- allow the students to explore other people's attitudes and values
- clarify that personal questions should not be asked
- acknowledge if a question cannot be answered
- acknowledge that if a question is too explicit, is age inappropriate for the student or the whole class, then it should be dealt with on an individual basis
- clarify that students should not give out personal information in class but speak to someone they trust after the lesson, e.g. Student & Family Co-ordinator, Heads of Care, etc.

c) Dealing with difficult topics

Sex and Relationships Education can sometimes raise difficult areas for some schools. Within Bowden House School, questions that are class appropriate will be covered with the whole class: more sensitive questions/areas will be covered on a one-to-one basis and for more in depth questions, the school will discuss with parents/carers how they wish this to be approached. All staff will answer all questions from students in a manner which is straightforward, honest, age and maturity appropriate and inclusive, ensuring that they feel equally valued within the school community. Topics could include:

- masturbation/wet dreams
- teenage pregnancy
- contraception
- emergency contraception/termination (Abortion)
- lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender sexuality
- arranged marriages
- domestic violence/rape and sexual abuse/sexual exploitation and/or grooming

d) Use of External Professionals

Health professionals who are involved in delivering programmes are expected to work within the school's Sex and Relationships Education Policy and under the instruction of the Headteacher. However, when they are in their professional role in consultation with an individual student, they should follow their own professional codes of conduct (this is irrespective of the agency who is employing them).

d) Working with Parents/Carers

Bowden House School recognises that there may be a variety of responses from parents to the introduction or updating of the SRE curriculum. Some parents will want the school to take total responsibility for educating their child about SRE, others very little. The school will support all parents/carers in their choice.

Before the delivery of the SRE curriculum each year, parents will be informed if there have been any changes to resources and topics that will be covered.

In the situation where students are withdrawn from SRE lessons, the school has a responsibility to find alternative provision.

9. Monitoring, Assessing and Reviewing

To ensure that this Policy is adhered to and is effective, it will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated on a regular (every 2 years unless there are fundamental changes in legislation), by the school's Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body. The whole school community should be consulted and given the opportunity to review and assess this Policy including students, parents and staff.

10. Relationship with other policies

a) PHSE

Sex and Relationships Education sits within of the PHSE curriculum and as such should be planned, delivered, coordinated, assessed and monitored in line with the PHSE programme.

b) Anti-bullying

An effective SRE programme will include raising awareness about lesbian and gay sexuality and the school's Anti-bullying Policy (LBTH, June 2011) includes strategies for addressing homophobic bullying in school.

c) Safeguarding

If any disclosure occurs within or outside an SRE lesson or concerns are raised, the staff member will follow the school's procedure for Safeguarding.

d) Confidentiality

Children have rights under The Children Act 1989 and can thus expect to be treated sensitively regarding seeking information and advice. However, staff should not give guarantees of confidentiality where the safety and welfare of a student is at risk.

11. Breaches of the Policy

In line with the requirements of all school Policies, all staff of Bowden House School are under a contractual obligation to uphold this Policy.

School: Bowden House

Policy: Sex & Relationships
Education

Agreed: Summer Term 2016

Responsibility: Governors

Review Date: Summer Term
2018

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Date:
