

## Policy

# Sex and Relationship Education

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## Section 1: Introduction & Purpose

### Sex and Relationship Education Policy (SRE)

This policy was developed in response to and links with the following policies and legislation:

- Sex and Relationship Education Guidance DfES 2000 and the DFE Policy Statement: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (2017).
- Sex and Relationship Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (PSHE association, 2018) the National Teenage Pregnancy Strategy and National Healthy Schools Programme.
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, principals, senior leadership teams, progress Tutors (2019).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

This Sex and Relationship Education Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(statutory guidance\)](#)
- [Behaviour and Discipline in Schools \(advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between Students\)](#)
- [Equality Act 2010 and schools](#)
- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years \(statutory guidance\)](#)
- [Alternative Provision \(statutory guidance\)](#)
- [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools \(advice for schools\)](#)
- [Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying\)](#)
- [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools \(advice for schools\)](#)
- [The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance \(provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts\)](#)
- [Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools \(guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural \(SMSC\)](#)
- [SMSC requirements for independent schools \(guidance for independent schools on how they should support Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development\).](#)
- [National Citizen Service guidance for schools](#)

The consultation process regarding the delivery of the Sex and Relationship Education policy has involved:

- Discussions with students
- Wellbeing Award for School stakeholder voice engagement (2018)
- Review of SRE curriculum content with the Pastoral and Safeguarding team
- Consultation with the wider school community e.g. Health and Wellbeing Officer, NHS Sexual Health Team, Youth Work Organisations, School Counselor, Progress Tutors, Pastoral Support Managers and the Safeguarding team
- Consultation with named school governors with responsibility and awareness of safeguarding and the Core programme.

### What Is Sex and Relationship Education (SRE)?

Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. Although the SRE statutory requirements do not apply to Sixth Form Colleges, 16-19 academies or Further Education (FE), Durham Sixth Form Centre meets the statutory expectations placed upon education providers as a means of good practice and educational integrity.

We believe that SRE is lifelong learning around physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is about developing an understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships and having respect, love and care, for family life. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. It allows students to make considered decisions and to weigh up different options. It aims to promote respect for others and for those of a different sexual orientation.

During 16-19 education young people are at the legal age of consent and many, but not all, will be in intimate relationships and will be interested to know about the challenges of long-term commitments and the qualities needed for successful loving relationships. We aim to help students fully understand what healthy, happy and responsible relationships look like. Our programme recognises that young people will be interested to know more about being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. We recognise that students will need more information on sexual risk, pregnancy, sexual health, fertility and infertility. Our curriculum will address, violence, exploitation, the law, and discrimination and look at relationships between self esteem and body image and how to challenge negative messages from peers, the media and society.

Our knowledge based SRE curriculum will ensure that students:

- have strong relationship skills
- have a good knowledge of their own bodies
- develop self-worth and self-efficacy
- know the qualities and behaviours relating to different types of positive relationships
- recognise unhealthy relationships
- recognise and challenge media stereotypes
- have knowledge of prejudice and its negative effects
- have knowledge about consent, and how to seek and assertively communicate consent
- can seek help and advice
- know how to express their feelings
- know how to make informed choices that reduce risk
- know about basic forms of contraception e.g. condom and the contraceptive pill
- are aware of harmful sexual behaviours (HSB) and know how to access support and help
- are aware what female genital mutilation (FGM) is and the laws and guidance linked to the crime.

### Principles and Values

Durham Sixth Form Centre believes that SRE should:

- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life.
- Be an entitlement for all students.
- Be delivered in a variety of ways and not just in the classroom e.g. wellbeing stalls, Google Sites and Student Briefings.
- Encourage students and Progress Tutors to share and respect each other's views through delivery of the Core programme.

- Be aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure.
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual and sensitive matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals e.g. Sexual Health team.
- Evolve and adapt inline technological and society changes e.g. social media, mobile phones.

#### Aims of SRE

SRE within Durham Sixth Form Centre aims to help students:

- Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide decisions, judgements and behaviour.
- Develop moral conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want.
- Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and personal relationships.
- Avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.
- Communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues.
- Develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity.
- Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity.
- Understand the reasons for having protected sex and the dangers of having unprotected sex.
- Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from uninvited/unwanted conception and sexually transmitted infections.
- Be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary.
- Understand how the law applies to sexual relationships.
- Understand how relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health.
- Be aware of the risks of online relationships as well as contact from strangers online.
- Make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships.
- Make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts regarding sex and relationships.
- Be aware of responsibility and the consequences of one's actions in relation to sexual activity.
- Know about different types of contraception.
- Know how to access local sources of further advice and treatment.
- Have a clear understanding of the arguments for delaying sexual activity.
- Link sex and relationship education with issues of peer pressure and other risk taking behaviour, such as drugs, smoking and alcohol.

## Section 2: Sex and relationship education within DSFC

### Attitudes and Values

- Learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices.
- Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.
- Challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour.

### Personal and Social Skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices with an absence of prejudice.
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Empower students with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter).

### Knowledge and Understanding

- Understanding human sexuality, emotions and relationships.
- Learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services.
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay.
- Avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

Students at Durham Sixth Form Centre will address the themes below via the delivery methods identified in Section 3.

Families - Students will be taught:

- That there are different types of committed and stable relationships.
- How to: determine whether other students, adults or sources of information are trustworthy.
- The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships.
- How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage.
- That in school and in the wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others.
- About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
- That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality.

Online and media - Students will be taught:

- Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.
- Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.
- What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.
- That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including prison.

Being safe - Students will be taught:

- The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.
- How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health - Students will be taught:

- That all aspects of health can be affected by the choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressuring others.
- That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.
- The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices.
- That there are choices in relation to pregnancy.
- How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

Safer Sex - Students will be taught:

Students will develop knowledge about safer sex. Sexual health remains important to ensure that young people are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life. This will be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment. Progress Tutors will use strategies such as setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion.

Contraception - Students will be taught:

Britain has the highest rate of teenage pregnancy in western Europe. A major part of the Government's strategy to reduce unintended teenage pregnancy is to teach young people, through the SRE curriculum, about the different types of contraception and give them knowledge of where to access it; this is equally relevant to boys and girls. The average age of first sex is 16, but Progress Tutors need to be aware that some students younger than 16 will be sexually active.

Sexually transmitted infections and sexual health - Students will be taught:

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, remain one of the strongest causes of illness due to infectious disease among young people. STIs can cause long-term fertility problems, long-term illness or even death. The age group most at risk of being diagnosed with an STI are young people aged 16-24. Students need to be aware of the risks of contracting an STI and how to prevent it.

Sexual orientation and gender identity - Students will be taught:

Students will be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age appropriate and inclusive way. When teaching about these topics, our Progress Tutors recognise that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity. Therefore, our curriculum uses equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same sex relationships.

Consent - Students will be taught:

Key aspects of the law relating to sex will be taught which includes the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment and obtain knowledge of the law surrounding consent.

Grooming, child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse - Students will be taught:

Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, will be addressed sensitively and clearly. The CORE curriculum will include the physical and emotional damage caused by FGM. Students will be taught where to find support and have knowledge that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM. As well as addressing this in the context of the law, students will be taught to recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence, including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for oneself or others at risk.



## Section 3: Organisation and Content of Sex and Relationship Education

Durham Sixth Form Centre delivers Sex and Relationship Education through:

- CORE Curriculum
- Student Briefings
- Safeguarding Google Site
- Stalls in the Refectory
- Sexual Health Support Workers
- Community Sexual Health Workers e.g. school nurse
- Health and Wellbeing Officer
- NHS (Community Sexual Health)
- Drop in Sessions
- Referrals-Talking Changes
- Referrals- Counsellor
- Safeguarding Team
- Mentors
- Being an accredited C-Card School
- Links with Durham University LGBT- Q support group
- Pastoral team

## Section 4: Inclusion

### Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. Durham Sixth Form Centre and its staff have a good understanding of student's faith backgrounds and local faith communities. This helps to create a constructive context for the teaching of these subjects. In all subjects, the religious and personal background of students is taken into account when planning and teaching, so that the topics that are included in the CORE content are appropriate.

Durham Sixth Form Centre ensures that it complies with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics.

Durham Sixth Form Centre teaches the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.

### Students with Special Needs

We will ensure that all students receive sex and relationship education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary. High quality delivery that is differentiated and personalised ensures that information is accessible and fit for purpose. Durham Sixth Form Centre is aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. These students are supported by the schools SENCo and have the appropriate support documentation in place e.g. Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) or Student Support Plan (SSP).

### Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Students, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them.

In teaching SRE at Durham Sixth Form Centre we ensure that the needs of all students are appropriately met, and that all Students understand the importance of equality and respect. As an establishment we comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics.

### Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. In any case where child protection procedures need to be followed, the member of staff will ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first.

Any policy on confidentiality should make it clear that child protection procedures must be followed if any work with a student leads to a disclosure which makes you suspect that a student is at risk of abuse. All information about individual students and staff is private and should only be shared with staff that need to know.

All social services, medical and personal information about students at Durham Sixth Form Centre is stored in a safe and secure location, which cannot be accessed by individuals other than key members of staff and meets all GDPR requirements.

## Section 5: Withdrawal from SRE

Students and parents/carers have the right to request that they are withdrawn from some aspects of SRE. Before granting any such request, a Pastoral Support Manager (PSM) or Progress Tutor at our school would discuss the request with both students and parents. The PSM would discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the student. This process is the same for students with SEND. However there may be exceptional circumstances where the PSM or SENCo may want to take a student's specific needs arising into account when making this decision. There is no right to withdraw from Health Education.

## Section 6: Protected Characteristics

The protected characteristics that are protected by the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership (in employment only)
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.