

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Aims

The purpose of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is to provide knowledge and understanding of how the human body changes during puberty and the processes of human reproduction, within the context of relationships based on love and respect. It should develop understanding and attitudes which will help pupils to form relationships in a responsible and healthy manner and to appreciate the value of stable family life, including the responsibilities of parenthood and marriage. Our relationships and sex education is always culturally sensitive to meet the needs of the diverse group of young people our College caters for, including those of particular religious backgrounds or none, and those who may identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered. We actively promote tolerance and understanding within our school community and hope that our students will take this into their future lives. SRE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, 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.

The main aims of relationship and sex education at Ellesmere College can be summarised as follows:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- 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

Delivery and Curriculum

SRE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of SRE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Across all Key Stages, pupils will be supported with developing 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.

The scheme of work is tailored to suit the group but may cover:

1. Friendships and healthy relationships
2. The differences between males and females as well as understanding gender identity
3. Physical changes in adolescence
4. Emotional changes in adolescence
5. The importance of hygiene in adolescence
6. Making informed decisions, including saying “no”
7. Contraception and safe sex
8. Sexually transmitted diseases
9. Pregnancy and childcare
10. Staying safe online
11. Staying on the right side of the law

Where a need is identified students can be offered 1:1 support, for instance through the PANTS programme (which helps young people and children understand and respect their own privacy and that of others) or through specific tailored work which would always be agreed with parents or carers first.

Most lessons are taught in tutor groups which are generally mixed gender but sometimes class tutors may decide that for a particular group it is necessary to teach certain topics in single sex groups.

For younger students the bulk of relationships and sex education will focus on healthy friendships and general social skills, with an increased focus on puberty as that time approaches. As students become older and are at a stage of maturity where they can understand the more complex issues around physical relationships these topics are sensitively introduced, with an emphasis on the need to have a close and loving relationship before it is wise to begin a sexual relationship.

The aim of lessons is always to allow students a safe forum to ask questions and to understand their own thoughts and feelings, and to provide students with the tools to stay safe and happy and, when the time is right, to understand what makes a good healthy relationship and that they have a right to expect this from their own relationships in future.

Parent’s right to Withdraw

Parents’ have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of SRE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Executive Principal. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Executive Principal or the Assistant Principal will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Once a mutual decision has been reached this information will be added to the child's information and SPARC form.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from SRE.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of SRE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Vice Principal will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching SRE when appropriate.

Monitoring Arrangements

The delivery of SRE is monitored by Rebecca Tobitt through:

Quality assurance processes including medium term planning scrutinise, learning walks, etc.

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

This policy will be reviewed by Rebecca Tobitt, Executive Vice Principal annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Full Governing Board

Review Date: November 2023