



Marches Academy Trust

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# Sex and Relationship Policy

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## **1. What is SRE?**

The term sex and relationship education – SRE – is used in this policy rather than sex education. This is to stress that our approach goes beyond provision of biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values, and developing self esteem and the skills to manage relationships.

According to the latest DfES guidance, SRE is: ‘...lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health’. DfES ‘Sex and Relationship Guidance’, 2000.

SRE should have three main elements

### **1.1 Knowledge and Understanding**

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- Understanding human sexuality, sexual health, emotions and relationships.
- Learning about contraception and a range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services.
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, the benefits to be gained from such delay.
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

### **1.2 Attitudes and Values**

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.
- Learning the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children.
- Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.

### **1.3 Personal and Social Skills**

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice.
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

The school's approach to SRE consists of:

1. The taught SRE programme.
2. Pastoral support for students who experience difficulties.
3. Provision of appropriate information through leaflet, book and display of books in the library and SSS.

## **2. Why SRE?**

### **2.1 Legal Obligations**

Maintained secondary schools in England and Wales have a legal responsibility to provide a 'sex education' programme. They also have a responsibility to keep an up to date written statement of the policy they choose to adopt and which is available to parents. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from 'sex education' lessons which fall outside those aspects covered in the National Curriculum Science.

### **2.2 The needs of young people and the role of schools.**

The overall aims of the school are:

1. To provide opportunities for all students to learn and to achieve.
2. To promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

The DfES 'Sex and Relationship Guidance' (2000) recommends that 'Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives'. The school has a key role, in partnership with parents/carers, in providing SRE.

## **3. Morals and Values Framework**

Our approach to SRE is conducted within a clear morals and values framework based on the following principles:

- The value of stable and loving relationships.
- Respect, understanding and empathy towards others who may have different backgrounds, cultures, sexuality, feelings and views.
- The development of relationships, including sexual relationships, based on mutual consent, rather than coercion.
- The right not to be abused by other people or to be taken advantage of.

SRE involves consideration of a number of sensitive issues about which different people may hold strong views. The school's approach to SRE will be balanced and take account of, and be sensitive to, different viewpoints but will not be biased.

## **4. Equal Opportunities**

Students may have varying needs regarding SRE depending on their circumstances and background. The school believes that all students should have access to SRE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this schools approach to SRE takes account of:

- The needs of boys as well as girls.
- Ethnic and cultural diversity.
- Varying home backgrounds.
- Sexuality.
- Special educational needs.

## **5. A Whole School Approach**

A whole school approach is adapted to SRE that actively involves the school community.

The Leadership Group endeavours to support the provision and development of SRE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.

The designated SRE coordinator maintains an overview of SRE provision and has overall responsibility for its development.

Many teachers are involved in the school's SRE provision. Some teach SRE through the PSHE programme and some through Science and other curriculum areas. All teachers play an important role by offering support to students.

Non-teaching staff may be involved in a supportive role in some SRE lessons.

Governors have responsibility for school policies. They are consulted about the SRE provision and policy and have regular reports at Governors meetings.

Parents/carers have a legal right to view this policy and to have information about the school's SRE provision. They also have a legal right to withdraw provision. They also have a legal right to withdraw their children from sex education lessons if they wish.

Outside agencies and speakers are involved in inputting to SRE lessons and as points of referral as support services for students.

## **6. The Taught SRE Programme**

The SRE programme will be delivered as part of the school's approach to PSHE and Citizenship.

### **6.1 Aims of the Programme**

The overall aims of the SRE programme are:

1. To provide accurate information about, and understanding of, SRE issues.
2. To dispel myths.
3. To explore a range of attitudes towards SRE issues and to help students to reach their own informed views.
4. To develop respect and care for others.
5. To increase students' self-esteem.
6. To develop skills relevant to effective management of relationships and sexual situations.

### **6.2 Place in the Curriculum**

The main SRE programme is delivered through PSHE lessons by a team of teachers. In addition certain biological aspects are delivered through Science lessons and other aspects of SRE arise in Religious Education, History, English and Drama.

### **6.3 Methodology and Resources**

A wide range of teaching methods are used. This includes quizzes, case studies, research, role play, video, small group discussions and use of appropriate guest speakers. Where appropriate, students are divided into single gender groups. Occasional use of drama productions also forms part of the programme.

### **6.4 Monitoring and Evaluation**

The programme is regularly evaluated by the SRE Coordinator. The views of students and teachers who deliver the programme are used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an on-going basis.

## **7. Pastoral Support for Families Who Experience Difficulties**

The nature of support available to students:

The school takes its role in the promotion of student welfare seriously. Staff endeavour to make themselves approachable and to provide sensitive and caring pastoral staff in a number of ways. The pastoral staff may be approached for help on an individual basis and where appropriate students are referred to the school counsellor, youth worker or outside helping agencies.

Confidentiality and informing parents/carers:

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a student for help. Staff must make this clear to students. Child protection procedures must be followed when disclosures about abuse are made.

In some situations judgements must be made about whether or not a third party needs to be informed. This judgement will be based upon:

- The seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the student may be experiencing.
- The student's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions.

Unless clearly inappropriate, students will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer.

Dealing with bullying:

Bullying commonly includes inappropriate and hurtful comments and behaviours concerning sexism, homophobia, appearance and other sex/relationship issues. The school takes the issue of bullying very seriously and this is reflected in the school's anti-bullying policy. Staff will challenge and deal sensitively with any evidence of bullying. Students are encouraged to report any incidents. Staff endeavour to investigate any incidents of bullying as soon as possible and give feedback to students who complain of bullying. The SRE and PSHE programme consider bullying and aim to discourage bullying based on sexism, homophobia, appearance and other sex/relationship issues.

## **8. Dissemination of the Policy**

This policy will be circulated to all members of staff. Further copies may be obtained from HR.

## **9. Policy Review**

This policy has been written by the Deputy Headteacher, in consultation with the Leadership Group and Governors. It takes full account of the school's legal obligations and the latest DfES guidance 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' (2000). The policy will be reviewed one year after its approval by Governors, and the Deputy Headteacher.