

St Gregory's School, Marnhull

Sex & Relationships Policy



Date reviewed	January 2025
Governors approved	January 2025
Date of next review	January 2027

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Introduction:

At St Gregory's, we aim always to provide a caring environment where every child can thrive and is supported to achieve their unique & amazing potential as a child of God. We are proud of our Sex & Relationships Education (SRE) Programme & see it as an important way of helping children to make sense of growing up as well as some of the bigger questions in life.

We believe that our Sex & Relationships programme promotes pupils' self-esteem, emotional development and resourcefulness and helps children to form and maintain satisfying relationships.

This begins a lifelong process of relationships and feelings, acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex and sexuality. It should help young people to learn to respect themselves and others and to move with confidence from childhood, through adolescence and into adulthood. Sex & Relationship education is learning about physical, moral, social and spiritual development and therefore helps pupils develop the skills and understanding they need to live confident, healthy and independent lives.

Main Elements of SRE:

At St Gregory's, there are three main elements to our Sex & Relationships Programme:

1. Attitudes and Values – These are based within the Christian context of our school and includes learning about love, respect and care in stable loving relationships as well as the value of family life and marriage within different family makeups for the nurture of children.

2. Personal and Social Skills – This includes: learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively; making choices and understanding differences and without prejudice. It includes being aware of and recognising the dangers of child sexual exploitation and taking sensible and firm action to avoid this, i.e. following online safety rules, avoiding social media and chat rooms (especially when underage) and reporting intrusive responses both online and to an adult.

3. Knowledge and Understanding – This includes: learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages as well as understanding human sexuality and reproduction. This includes the contribution of Science whereby babies can be made in different ways such as IVF, sexual health, emotions and relationships.

Whilst some elements of the programme may be taught throughout the year as part of Science curriculum (particularly Y2 & Y5 in the 'Animals Including Humans' and Y6 in their 'Evolution & Inheritance' topics) most of it will be taught during the summer term as part of our Personal, Social, Health & Emotional (PSHE) curriculum. As part of this work, we cover the various 'life processes' for both animals & humans but will have a particular focus on relationships, healthy living & growing up.

At St Gregory's, we believe that Effective Sex & Relationships Education should be:

- Is an integral part of the PSHE and Science curriculum & is delivered as part of that curriculum.
- Is provided early: before puberty, before feelings of sexual attraction and before young people develop sexual relationships.
- Is taught together within class groups, although children may be separated as and when appropriate.
- Is the entitlement of each child in school.
- Is covered with great sensitivity & provides opportunity for children to reflect, ask questions and to discuss their views on this vital aspect of life & learning.
- Offers a positive and open view of sex and sexuality and supports sexual self-acceptance.

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In line with the Valuing All God's Children document (CEEO, Autumn 2017) we believe that our Sex & Relationships Education should be empowering for all pupils, regardless of gender, gender identity, sexuality, ethnicity, faith, ability and disability. It must also promote gender as well as LGBT equality; challenge all discrimination as well as ensure that our children understand that there are a variety of relationships & family patterns in the modern world.

Coverage:

Parents & carers are notified before SRE sessions take place each year.

In Key Stage 1 pupils learn to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others, identify and share their feelings with each other, recognise safe and unsafe situations and identify and be able to talk to someone they trust.

In Key Stage 2 pupils learn to express their opinions about relationships and bullying and to listen to and support others, including respecting other people's viewpoints and beliefs. They learn to recognise their own worth and identify positive things about themselves and try to balance the stresses in life in order to promote their own mental health and well-being of others. Life processes are discussed including the physical changes that take place at puberty, why they happen and how to manage them.

To support some units the Dorset Sex and Relationship resources, developed by Healthwise are used. Age and cultural backgrounds of the pupils were regarded in relation to images used. Suitable DVDs may be shown to KS2 children with the guidance from the school nurse. The range of material used is available to parents/carers and informative books are available to children in the library.

Responsibilities:

- It is the responsibility of the Local Governing Body to ensure that SRE is taught within the parameters of the PHSCE and Science curriculum and that it is an entitlement of every child
- Governors will ensure that staff and parents are informed about the content and delivery of the curriculum.
- Parents are informed of their right to withdraw their child from part or the entire SRE programme except for those parts which fall within the statutory National Curriculum for Science.
- The PSHE leader at St Gregory's provides an overview of the SRE programme and this is available to all parents on request. Parents also have the opportunity to look at the resources used if they wish.
- The PSHE Subject Leader monitors and evaluates SRE teaching and learning, and reviews and updates SRE policy and resources regularly.

Sensitive Issues:

From time to time, sensitive issues will be raised by pupils. It is important that all individuals concerned with the delivery of SRE in school are aware of the agreed values framework (see attitudes and values above). Parents and others should be reassured that the personal beliefs and attitudes of a teacher should not influence the teaching of SRE. The issues concerned may include contraception, abortion, safe sex, HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, sexual identity or orientation, homophobic bullying and different families. It is important to acknowledge that pupils may hear these terms through different sources such as the media, and need to feel able to ask for further information. The response from the member of staff will be appropriate to the child's age and maturity, and thought will be given to whether the response is appropriate in a class, small group or individual situation. The detailed lesson planning will clearly state the content that will be

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covered. Questions will always be treated with respect and with a caring response. Staff and other adults will always be sensitive to underlying problems which may be worrying a child.

The main guidelines in this situation are:

- be sensitive;
- is the context appropriate?
- is the question relevant to the content of the lesson?
- is the group ready in terms of maturity?

In such instances, teachers may answer a question with the response "***We are not learning about this in Year... You may ask your Mum/Dad /carer when you get home. You will learn more about this in Year... (if known)***". If staff have a concern, then parents may be contacted.

Confidentiality:

Staff should be clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities. They should be familiar with the procedures set out DfE document: '***Keeping Children Safe in Education***' as stated in regular Safeguarding Training. Teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality.

In certain circumstances a child may wish to confide in a trusted member of staff. They should be made aware before any disclosure that information may have to be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer/ Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer. If there is a concern about the child's safety, then teachers and the DSL should follow the guidelines in the Dorset Safeguarding Policies adopted by the school.

Right of Withdrawal:

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of SRE sessions, except those elements taught as part of the National Curriculum Science. Any parent wishing to discuss this aspect of the curriculum in more detail should contact the class teacher or Headteacher for more information.