



Policy Title	Relationships and Sex Education
Reference	WPS/24.05.2016/Version 1
Approving Committee	Parents & Partnerships
Chair of Governors	Head teacher
Date of Next Review	May 2018

Mission Statement:

Woodborough School is about

Christian caring
Happiness
Inspiring
Learning together
Diversity
Rewarding
Enabling
Nurturing

As a Christian school, we believe that every child should feel wonderful, amazing, loved, valued and unique, because God made us that way.

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Statutory Guidance on Sex and Relationship Education (DfE)
- Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools (DfE)

We have a statutory duty to teach human growth and reproduction as set out in the national curriculum for science and that this policy should be readily available to parents.

We believe sex education is best defined as ‘...learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding 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’. (Sex Education and Relationship Education Guidance)

In this school RSE is part of the personal, social and health education curriculum. Through RSE we inform children about sexual issues but in the context of morality and individual responsibility. This allows children to ask and explore moral questions. Under no circumstance do we use sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

We aim to work closely with parents, carers and governors and to create an ethos that will ensure all pupils receive appropriate, accurate and honest answers to their questions about RSE.

We wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

We as a school community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

Aims

- To offer all pupils a planned programme of education about human development, relationships, sexuality and family life, which is developmental and appropriate to the age and maturity of the child.
- To teach sexuality within a moral framework emphasising stable relationships and family life.
- To encourage pupils to develop a positive attitude to all body functions.
- To help children understand that they have rights over their bodies.
- To help pupils recognise peer social pressure and boost self esteem.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body has:

- appointed a member of staff to be responsible for Personal, Social and Health Education: Mrs Wright.
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Head teacher to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;
- produced a policy outlining the rationale and organisation of the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) programme;
- a duty to inform parents of the policy;
- a duty to inform parents of their right of withdrawing their child from all or part of the school's RSE programme if they so wish
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- nominated the Safeguarding and Equality Committee to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- nominated a link governor: Mrs Partis, who will:
 - work closely with the Head teacher and the coordinator;
 - ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
 - ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
 - attend training related to this policy;
 - annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

Role of the Head teacher

The Head teacher will:

- implement the policy;

- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- work closely with the link governor and coordinator;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- organise effective training for the teaching staff so that they can handle any difficult issues with sensitivity
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by:
 - monitoring learning and teaching through observing lessons
 - monitoring planning and assessment
 - speaking with pupils, school personnel, parents and governors
- annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

Role of the Coordinator

The coordinator will:

- lead the development of this policy throughout the school;
- work closely with the Head teacher;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- provide guidance and support to all staff;
- provide training for all staff on induction and when the need arises;
- keep up to date with new developments and resources;
- undertake risk assessments when required;
- review and monitor;
- annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

Role of School Personnel

School personnel will:

- comply with all aspects of this policy;
- use a variety of teaching methods and resources to deliver the RSE programme;
- implement the school's equalities policy and schemes;
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community.

Role of Pupils

Pupils will:

- be aware of and comply with this policy;
- listen carefully to all instructions given by the teacher;
- be encouraged to ask questions in order to further develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes;
- ask for further help if they do not understand;
- treat others, their work and equipment with respect;
- support the school Golden Rules to ensure the smooth running of the school;
- liaise with the school council;
- take part in questionnaires and surveys.

Role of Parents

All parents should:

- acknowledge that they have a primary role in their child's RSE programme;
- be fully aware of the school's RSE policy;
- ask any pertinent questions regarding their child's sex education at the school;
- be aware of their right of withdrawing their child from all or part of the RSE programme that we teach in this school

Sex Education Programme

We carry out the main RSE teaching in our Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHE) curriculum.

We also teach some sex education through other subject areas (for example, science and PE), where we feel that they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body, and how it is changing and developing.

Organisation of the Sex Education Programme

The organisation and management of our RSE programme is undertaken by:

- The leadership team
- Teaching staff
- Governors

The planning and delivery of the programme for KS2 is undertaken by Mrs Partis, a suitably experienced and knowledgeable Teaching Assistant (TA), who holds an Accreditation in PSHE from Roehampton University. The class teachers support the TA and the lessons take place in mixed gender groups. In YR and KS1 the class teachers deliver the programme. All input to RSE lessons is part of a planned programme and negotiated and agreed with teachers in advance.

The delivery of this programme will be flexible and it will be delivered through:

- topics;
- planned aspects of science;
- class discussions or circle time;

Confidentiality

The teaching staff will endeavour to respect a child's confidence, unless we consider the child to be at risk. Where confidentiality has to be breached, reasons will be given. Teachers cannot promise a child that they will 'keep a secret'.

Child Protection

The school has a separate Child Protection Policy. Effective RSE may bring about disclosures of child protection issues and staff should be aware of the procedures for reporting their concerns.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the School Prospectus

- the school website
- communications with home
- Head teacher reports to the Governing Body

Controversial and Sensitive Issues

We are aware that views around RSE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all RSE issues are taught within the framework of Christian values. Pupils are made aware of a variety of views and beliefs so that they are able to form their own, informed opinions but also understand that others may have different opinions.

The Whole School Approach to Relationships and Sex Education

Woodborough School's approach to RSE is most effective when:

- It is addressed by the whole school community - staff, parents/carers, pupils and governors
- It is consistent with the school's values and ethos and developed by members of the school community
- RSE is part of a well-planned programme of PSHE education delivered in a supportive environment, where pupils feel able to engage in open discussion and feel confident about asking for help if necessary
- Pupils' needs and views are taken into account

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Head teacher and the nominated governor.

Linked Policies

- Curriculum
- PSHE
- Teaching & Learning

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Why Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is important
- Appendix 2 What is Relationships and Sex Education?
- Appendix 3 Organisation of Work
- Appendix 4 Scheme of Work *available in hard copy from school if required.*
- Appendix 5 DfES Leaflet

Appendix 1

Why Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is important?

Every parent and every school wants to see children grow up safely and be able as an adult to enjoy the positive benefits of loving, rewarding and responsible relationships, to be informed, comfortable with the changes during puberty and emotionally supported. Parents play a vital role in providing the building blocks for healthy and fulfilling social and personal relationships while protecting their children from harm. They should lead on instilling values, but schools have a clear role in giving young people accurate information and helping them to develop the skills they need to make safe and responsible choices.

It is important that children start to build up the vocabulary and confidence to talk openly and positively about emotions, relationships and their bodies. Learning the words to describe feelings and emotions, the correct terms for parts of the body and developing “health literacy” is vital for children to stay safe and seek help if they feel at risk or are being harmed. When cases of sexual abuse have come to light years after the event parents, teachers and young people have spoken of their regret that RSE was started so late and that they/the child was unable to report it because they did not have the language and did not know that what was happening to them was wrong.

In the 21st Century, children and young people are also exposed to sexual imagery and content in a wide array of media including adverts, the Internet, video games, mobile phones, pop songs, TV and magazines. These media often present a distorted and inaccurate view of sex and relationships, and provide increasingly explicit images of sex and sexuality. In addition some children and young people will use the new technology to bully and intimidate others or to place themselves in compromising positions e.g. send revealing photos of themselves to girl or boy friends. Far from “destroying their innocence” RSE equips children with the values, skills and knowledge to understand and deal appropriately with these social and cultural pressures.

School provides a safe place for children to make sense of the information they have picked up from the media and also playground myths. Guided by a skilled teacher, children are able to separate facts from fiction and clarify and strengthen their own values.

Some children start puberty as young as eight years old. RSE prepares children for the physical and emotional changes of puberty. As children approach adolescence so the nature of their relationships with parents, carers and their peers begins to change. They want new experiences and want to form new friendships and relationships. RSE is critical in that it provides accurate information. In addition, the school curriculum has a role to play in reducing the likelihood of sexist, sexual and homophobic and bullying occurring. RSE within PSHE education is the most obvious location for specific coverage of issues relating to bullying, gender equality and sexuality. PSHE education provides the context for focusing on the less biological aspects of RSE, such as how to develop and maintain effective relationships of all types, and to learn ways of keeping safe and healthy.

Appendix 2

What is Relationships and Sex Education?

RSE is learning about our bodies, health and relationships; with a particular focus on puberty and growing up, sexual health, sexual intimacy, dealing with emotions and managing personal relationships. RSE is taught gradually, so that learning can be built up year-by-year in a way that is appropriate to the age and maturity of each child; responds to the needs they have, and enable them to successfully manage the challenges they face as they grow up.

RSE teaches children to develop values, attitudes, and learn personal and social skills, and increase their knowledge and understanding to enable them to make informed decisions and healthier life choices.

RSE makes an essential and significant contribution to safeguarding children during their school-age years and into the future. RSE should enable young people to develop skills and confidence to access professional advice and appropriate health services. It enables children to understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to take increasing responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and that of others.

Appendix 3

Organisation of Work

Schools have the flexibility to decide how to organise RSE teaching within their curriculum design and timetabling. Our well-structured scheme of work for RSE ensures that:

- There are some units of work focused on RSE for each year
- Earlier learning is built on and there is progression year-on-year
- Topics are introduced in a logical order
- Development of personal and social skills, values and attitudes are included as well as knowledge and understanding
- There is discrete time for RSE and adequate allocation for PSHE education in the timetable
- Links with other curriculum subjects can be anticipated and used to enrich learning
- Learning outcomes are documented
- Opportunities for assessment of learning are built in

In Key Stage 1 children 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. This will be known and taught as “Living and Growing.”

In Key Stage 2 children 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. Children will be taught what is and what is not legal with regard to sexual relationships at an age appropriate level. This will be known and taught as “Relationships and Sex Education.”

Organisation

At Woodborough School the main content of RSE is delivered through PSHE lessons, using the ‘Living and Growing’ resources produced by Channel 4. This resource promotes relationships and sex education as a developmental process beginning in the early years at an appropriate level and progressing through childhood and adolescence into adulthood. ‘Living and Growing’ will be supported by themes found in our printed schemes ‘Telling Tales’, SEAL and ‘Love & Sex Matters’, in which topics are repeated from year to year in greater depth taking into account the child’s development and maturity. RSE will not be delivered in isolation but included in all curriculum areas when the subject arises. We believe that we should take the relevance and age of the children involved into account when designing our curriculum and lessons. The children will therefore be taught in year groups with boys and girls together for all lessons. The DVD resources from Channel 4, ‘Living and Growing-Alternative’ and ‘Living and Growing’ are used in our lessons. **Channel 4 Learning developed ‘Living and Growing – Alternative’** in response to requests from schools who appreciated the original version but required an even more sensitive approach to the subject in consideration of the diverse faiths that exist within society today. In our view it is appropriate to use: **‘The Living and Growing – Alternative’** resource in Years R, 1, 2, 5 & 6 and the original **‘Living and Growing’** resource will continue to be used in Years 3 & 4.

Ground rules

RSE in school must offer a safe learning environment, which supports the participation of all pupils. Establishing ground rules will help both pupils and teachers to have a clear understanding of personal boundaries. Ground rules will be developed with each class. It is essential to include a rule that no personal questions are asked of or comments made about pupils or staff. This helps to prevent unintended disclosures about personal experience. The classroom is not a confidential environment; the teacher is unable to maintain this if a safeguarding disclosure is made. But teachers should ensure that pupils are aware of where they can go if they need to discuss a personal matter.

Assessment

In RSE, assessment must measure progress in knowledge and understanding, skills and attitudinal development. This will be teacher assessed.

Withdrawal from lessons

Section 405 of the Education Act (1996) gives parents/carers the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the relationships and sex education provided at school, but not from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction provided under the National Curriculum for Science 2014. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited to see the Head teacher who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. Each academic year parents will be informed when their child will be involved in RSE by a letter and permission slip, which needs to be returned before the child can become involved in the sessions. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RSE programme.

Appendix 4

Scheme of Work

OfSTED RSE learning outcomes for KS1 and KS2

“The RSE scheme of work should be firmly embedded in an overall programme of PSHE and SEAL that addresses core themes and builds pupils' skills and confidence. These core themes include listening skills, empathy, and understanding of feelings and emotions.” (OfSTED 2002)

By the end of KS1, pupils will be able to:

- Recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans.
- Recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and treat others with sensitivity.
- Make a friend, talk with them and share feelings.
- Recognise safe and unsafe situations.
- Be aware that their feelings and actions have impact on others.
- Use simple rules for dealing with strangers and resisting pressure when they feel uncomfortable or at risk.
- Identify and share their feelings with others.

By the end of KS2, pupils will be able to:

- Form opinions that they can articulate to a variety of audiences.
- Recognise and challenge stereotypes, for example in relation to gender.
- Express opinions, for example, about relationships and bullying.
- Be self-confident in a wide range of situations, such as seeking new friends.
- Listen to, support their friends and manage friendship problems.
- Identify adults they can trust and who they can ask for help.
- Recognise the pressure of unwanted physical contact, and know ways of resisting it.
- Respect other people's viewpoints and beliefs.
- Recognise their changing emotions with friends and family and be able to express their feelings positively.
- Recognise their own worth and identify positive things about themselves.
- Balance the stresses of life in order to promote both their mental health and wellbeing and that of others.
- See things from other people's viewpoints, for example, their parents and carers.
- Discuss moral questions.

RSE Lesson Content

Early Years

- Myself and Others
- Families
- Channel 4 DVD, 'Living and Growing-Alternative' Unit 1, Programme 1 – “Differences”, Chapter 1 - “Babies of all kinds” - the children will be introduced to life cycles.

Who are we like?

Living and Growing Unit 1 Resource Book – Activity Sheet 14 p29

Year One

- Myself and Others
- Family
- Friendships
- Channel 4 DVD, 'Living and Growing-Alternative' Unit 1, Programme 1 – “Differences”, Chapter 2 “Girls and Boys,” - the children will see that we grow and change, as do all living things, we become more independent and able to think of others; reinforces the belief that we are special.

Growing up

Living and Growing Unit 1 Resource Book – Activity Sheet 11 p26

What can you do now?

Living and Growing Unit 1 Resource Book – Activity Sheet 12 p27

Year Two

- Differences: Boys and girls
- Naming Body Parts
- Safe and unsafe situations
- Channel 4 DVD, 'Living and Growing' Unit 1 – “Differences” – Review of life cycles and differences between male and female from previous learning and additional reflection on differences other than physical ones.

Girls and boys

Living and Growing Unit 1 Resource Book – Activity Sheet 3 p14

Naming body parts (safe and unsafe situations)

Living and Growing Unit 1 Resource Book – Activity Sheet 4 p15

Year Three

- Naming Body Parts
- Challenging Gender Stereotypes
- Self Esteem
- Channel 4 DVD, 'Living and Growing-Alternative' Unit 1, Programme 2 - “Differences”, “How did I get here?” – the children will learn that a baby develops inside its mother’s womb and that both male and female parts are needed to make a baby.

- **Key vocabulary will include:** breast, fertilisation, foetus, hospital, ovaries, penis, pregnant, testicles, vagina and womb.

Same but different

Living and Growing Unit 1 Resource Book – Activity Sheet 5 p16

Family tree

Living and Growing Unit 1 Resource Book – Activity Sheet 20 p39

Who does what?

Living and Growing Unit 2 Resource Book – Activity Sheet 19 p38

Year Four

- Growing and Changing
- Body changes / Differences: Male and Female
- Channel 4 DVD, 'Living and Growing' Unit 1, Programme 3 – “Growing up” - the children will learn that we grow and change, as do all living things. They will learn that some changes are social and that we become more independent and able to think about others as well as ourselves.
- **Key vocabulary will include:** a revision of what was learnt in Year 3 - breast, fertilisation, foetus, hospital, ovaries, penis, pregnant, testicles, vagina and womb.

How do we change?

Living and Growing Unit 2 Resource Book – Activity Sheet 1 p12

Sort the changes

Living and Growing Unit 2 Resource Book – Activity Sheet 4 p15

Year Five

- Talking about puberty
- Becoming men and women
- Channel 4 DVD, 'Living and Growing-Alternative' Unit 2, Programme 4 - “Changes”; the children will learn about the physical and emotional changes that occur during puberty.
- **Key vocabulary will include:** clitoris, egg, ovaries, penis, period, puberty, menstruation, scrotum, sperm, testicles, vagina and uterus.

PowerPoint presentation – “Changes”

Year Six

- Puberty and reproduction
- Channel 4 DVD, 'Living and Growing-Alternative' Unit 3, Programme 7 - “How babies are made” & Programme 8 - “How babies are born”, Unit 2, Programme 5 – “Girl talk” & Programme 6 – “Boy talk”; Y6 will learn about the physical and emotional changes that take place as girls and boys go through puberty, how babies are made and born and explore the idea of relationships.
- **Key vocabulary will include:** boyfriend, caring, conception, crush, egg, fertilisation, foetus, friend, girlfriend, honesty, hormone, labour, love, making love, masturbation, menstruation, period, pregnancy, pregnant, puberty, relationship, sexual attraction.

PowerPoint presentations -

Session 1 – Puberty and Menstruation

Session 2 – Male Reproductive Organs and How Babies Are Made

Session 3 – How Babies Are Born

Firm Foundations

Love and Sex Matters – Session 2 Dolly Mixing p33

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Appendix 5

Letter to Parents



Dear Parent/Carer

Nowadays there is a vast amount of, sometimes confusing, information about relationships and sex on TV, in magazines, the internet etc. which young people may have access to, and this can sometimes make an already confusing time seem even more complicated! Therefore, as part of the school's Personal, Social and Health Education programme your child will soon receive lessons on relationships, sexual health and puberty.

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.

If young people can start their transition into adulthood with good information and the confidence and knowledge to understand what is happening to them, they will hopefully grow into confident and healthy adults able to make positive choices. This can start with learning the basics about growing up and the sessions in school may reinforce what you are already doing at home.

The key aims of RSE are:

- The value of family life, marriage and of loving and stable relationships in bringing up children.
- To provide accurate and relevant information about the physical and emotional changes that children and young people will experience through their formative years and into adulthood.
- To foster self-awareness and self-esteem.
- To develop a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves and others.

The RSE programme includes watching a video from the Channel 4 *Living and Growing* series and input from the class teacher. All teaching materials are appropriate to the age and emotional maturity of the pupils concerned and the teachers will aim to present the programme in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner.

The RSE policy and scheme of work can be viewed on the website or a printed copy is available on request. You are welcome to contact your child's class teacher to discuss the programme or to view any of the teaching materials used.

In the Foundation Stage the children will be introduced to life cycles. During Key Stage 1 the children will reflect on differences other than physical ones. They will see that we grow and change, as do all living things; that we become more independent and are able to think of others. Children learn to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other; what is appropriate and inappropriate. The belief that we are special is reinforced. Their class teacher teaches these lessons.

At Key Stage 2 (KS2) learners are supported to maintain their emotional and physical health and wellbeing, sustain their growth and development, and how to keep themselves safe. As the children develop they need to understand bodily changes, the main stages and life processes of the human lifecycle and responsible and happy relationships. They are also encouraged to explore their feelings, develop self-awareness and self-respect and develop their self-esteem. A suitably experienced and knowledgeable Teaching Assistant (TA), who holds an Accreditation in PSHE from Roehampton University, delivers RSE at Woodborough School. The class teachers support the TA and the lessons take place in mixed gender groups.

Parents can withdraw their children from all or part of RSE provided at school, but not from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction provided under the National Curriculum for Science 2014. If you wish to withdraw your child from all or part of the schools RSE programme you are invited to see the Head teacher who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on your child. We will require a formal written request that your child will not be participating in the RSE programme, received by the Head teacher before the programme starts. Class teachers will begin the programme during Term 6.

The RSE Policy is available for viewing on the school website; paper copies can be requested from Mrs Hobbs.

There will be an information session for KS2 parents on
Please contact Mrs Hobbs to inform us if you will be attending.

Yours sincerely

Head teacher

Appendix 6

DfES Leaflet

What should you do?

TALK:

- To your children. Ask them about lessons at school. Say what your views and values on sex and relationships are. Answer their questions.
- To your school, especially if you have concerns. Initially talk to your child's tutor or class teacher. They might well suggest you discuss the matter with the head teacher, or senior teacher, if concerns remain.
- To other parents, especially from your community and those with similar beliefs to yourself.

LISTEN:

- To your children, their questions and wishes.
- To your child's teacher and / or head teacher. Clearly understand the school's values, policy and approach to SRE.
- To the opinions of other parents and how they manage this with their children.

Some useful values statements to think about when talking with your child:

- Have sex with someone you really care about and who will share responsibility for contraception and safer sex.
- It would be better to wait to have sex until you are old enough to take responsibility.
- Families have different beliefs about sex, sometimes these are guided by the religion that they follow.
- Sex should never be used to exploit someone.

You may choose to approach a range of organisations that exist to offer advice and support regarding sex and relationships. A list can be obtained from the Sex Education Forum at:

National Children's Bureau
8 Wakeley Street
London EC1V 7QE
Tel: 020 7843 6000
E-mail: sexedforum@ncb.org.uk

For more copies of this leaflet please call DfES publications on 0845 602 2260 quoting reference code **DfES 0706/2001**

Who is this leaflet for?

It is written for parents and carers. Particularly those who may have worries about sex and relationship education (SRE) at school and those who want to find out more.

What is sex and relationship education (SRE)?

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding 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. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity.

Why does sex and relationship education (SRE) matter?

Our children learn about sex and relationships from the very youngest age, even if we don't talk with them. Some of the things they learn are incorrect, confusing and frightening. In a world where sex is used to sell things from food to fast cars, and celebrities' lives become everyone's business, we should talk to our children to help them make sense of it all.

As well as this, in the UK we have the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in Western Europe. We also have high rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Effective SRE does not encourage early sexual experimentation - but it does enable young people to mature, to build up their confidence and self-esteem and to understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity until they are ready.

Parents and sex and relationship education (SRE):

As a parent / carer, you are the key person for your child's learning about sex and relationships. Schools should always work in partnership with parents / carers. You need to know that the school's SRE programme will complement your role and support you as sex educator of your child. For example, governing bodies and schools should consult with parents / carers when developing or updating the school's SRE policy. They should ensure your views are heard and that taught SRE is culturally appropriate and inclusive of all children.

Department for
education and skills

SRE & Parents

The content of school sex and relationship education:

National guidance from the DfES (Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, published in July 2000) advises schools on the themes that should be covered. SRE should support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development.

Formal SRE will be taught through compulsory science lessons (see table) and during other, specific lessons, often called PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education). Informally, your child will learn about SRE through the values and ethos of the school and through contact with other children.

National Curriculum Science.

Key Stage 1

- Animals, including humans, move, feed, grow, use their sense and reproduce
- Children should recognise and name the main external parts of the human body.
- That humans can produce offspring and these grow into adults
- Children should recognise similarities and differences between themselves and other and treat others with sensitivity.

Key Stage 3

- Fertilization in humans is the fusion of a male and female cell
- Students should know the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence
- The human reproductive cycle, including the menstrual cycle and fertilisation
- How the growth and reproduction of bacteria and the replication of viruses can affect human health.

Key Stage 2

- Life processes common to humans include nutrition, growth and reproduction
- The main stages of the human lifecycle.

Key Stage 4

- Hormonal control in humans, including the effects of sex hormones
- Medical uses of hormones, including the control and promotion of fertility
- How sex is determined in humans.

What do young people say:

- They want to learn about sex and relationships from their parents / carers.
- They want more than just the biological facts. They want to talk about feelings and morals.
- They want adults to answer their questions.
- Just over half found it easy to talk to a parent about sex.*

What do other parents say:

- They have anxieties about sex and relationships and their children.
- 84% say there would be fewer teenage pregnancies if more parents talked to their children about sex.*
- 87% feel too many teenagers are pressurised into having sex.*
- Many find TV programmes or a book a helpful way to raise the subject.*
- One in three mums and two in three dads have not told their children 'a lot or anything' about sex and relationships.*

* Source: research by BMRB on behalf of the Department of Health, December 2000

Young people who have good sex and relationship education at home and at school, start sex later and are less likely to have an unplanned pregnancy or to get a sexually transmitted infection.

Your rights as a parent.

You should be consulted by your child's school about its SRE policy and informed about what is taught in the SRE lesson. Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from some, or all, SRE lessons, but not statutory science lessons. Where schools work within the SRE guidelines and consult effectively with parents/carers, you should feel re-assured about the content of the lessons.

However, should you be considering such a step, talk it through with your child and then with either the head teacher or another senior teacher at the school. If you decide this step is necessary, then the school should provide information about the lessons being missed and ideas for other sources of support for you to fulfil the task of educating your child.