



## Five Acres High School

### Sex and Relationships Education Policy

**Proposed October 2020**

#### **Approval and review**

This policy is the responsibility of: *DSL/DDSL/Early help lead.*

This policy was approved by the Local Governing Body on:

This Policy applies to Five Acres High School and all governors and staff of the school must abide by this policy which has been adopted in accordance with and pursuant to the Curriculum Policy of the Greenshaw Learning Trust.

It is the responsibility of the local governing body and Headteacher of the school to ensure that their school and its staff adhere to this policy. In implementing this policy school staff must take account of any advice given to them by the CEO and/or Board of Trustees.

This policy is subject to the GLT Curriculum Policy and the Scheme of Delegation approved for the school. If there is any ambiguity or conflict then the GLT Curriculum Policy and the Scheme of Delegation and any specific Scheme or alteration or restriction to the Scheme approved by the Board of Trustees takes precedence. If there is any question or doubt about the interpretation of this, the Chief Executive Officer of the GLT should be consulted.

## **Five Acres High School**

### **Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) policy**

#### **Policy aims**

Five Acres High School would like to emphasise that by providing comprehensive SRE we are not encouraging students to become sexually active at a young age. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the right provision is in place so that students may have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions and responsible choices as they grow up.

Through the provision outlined in this policy we also aim to raise students' self-esteem and confidence, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media. We hope to teach students to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them. We want our students to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teach them to care for and respect their bodies and provide them with all the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

#### **Roles and responsibilities**

##### **School staff**

It is important that all school staff feel comfortable to take PSHE classes and answer questions from students. If the teacher does not feel confident leading SRE discussions then that is likely to be reflected by the students, and their learning will be compromised. The school provides regular professional development training in how to deliver sex education; this includes sessions on confidentiality, setting ground rules, handling controversial issues, responding to awkward questions and an introduction to the rationale of why teaching SRE is so important. There are certain members of the school leadership team, such as the *DSL/DDSL/Early help lead*, who will hold more responsibility for ensuring that the school's sex education provision is relevant to our students and effective, but this is generally a responsibility for all staff members and the school expects staff to voice opinions and share expertise in this area.

##### **Senior leaders/DDSL/Early Help lead**

- Develop this school policy and review it *annually*. This policy is developed in consultation with school parents/carers, students and staff to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole school community.
- Ensure that all staff are given regular and ongoing training on issues relating to SRE and how to deliver lessons on such issues.
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with school policy and guidance relating to sex education.
- Provide support to staff members who feel uncomfortable or ill-equipped to deal with the delivery of sex education to students. This may be because they do not feel that their training has been adequate or that aspects of the curriculum are in conflict with their religious beliefs.

- Ensure that sex education is age-relevant and appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our students do and meets their needs.
- Ensure that the knowledge and information regarding SRE to which all students are entitled is provided in a comprehensive way.
- Support parental involvement in the development of the SRE curriculum.
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing a balanced SRE in school.
- Communicate freely with staff, parents/carers and the governing body to ensure that everyone is in understanding of the school policy and curriculum for sex education, and that any concerns or opinions regarding the provision at the school are listened to, taken into account and acted on as is appropriate. We want the provision of sex education at home to be complementary to the provision the school provides, and this should be clearly communicated to parents/carers and additional support given where necessary or requested.

#### **All staff will:**

- Ensure that they are up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements regarding sex education. Any areas that they feel are not covered or inadequately provided for should be reported back to *DSL/DDSL/Early help lead*.
- Attend and engage in professional development training around sex education provision.
- Encourage students to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence, listen to their needs and support them seriously. If a student comes to a member of staff with an issue that that member of staff feels they are not able to deal with alone, they should take this concern to their manager. No one else should be informed at this stage, and a breach of confidentiality may fall under staff misconduct and disciplinary procedures.
- Provide regular feedback to their managers on their experience of teaching SRE and student response.
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced SRE in school.
- Tailor their lessons to suit all students in their class, across the whole range of abilities, including those students with special educational needs. If teachers need support in this area they should speak to the *DSL/DDSL/Early help lead*.

#### **Students**

Students are expected to attend sex education classes that are in their school timetable and take them seriously. Although they are not assessed through examination, these classes are still a very important part of the curriculum and a tool to aid personal development and the school expects students to recognise this.

Students should support one another with issues that arise through SRE. Listening in class, being considerate of other people's feelings and beliefs, and complying with confidentiality

rules that are set in class are key to effective provision. Students who regularly fail to follow these standards of behaviour will be dealt with under the school behaviour policy.

We also hope that students will feel comfortable to talk to a member of staff, in confidence, regarding any concerns they have in school related to sex education or otherwise. Conversations of this nature between staff and students will be held in confidence; however staff may take concerns to their manager if there is a child protection concern or they feel ill-equipped to deal with the issue at hand.

We ask students for feedback on the school's sex education provision annually and expect them to take this responsibility seriously. Opinions on provision and comments will be reviewed by senior managers and taken into consideration when the curriculum is prepared for the following year's students. In this way, the school hopes to provide students with the education they need on topics they want to learn about.

### **Parents/carers**

The school expects parents/carers to share the responsibility of sex education and support their children's personal, social and emotional development. We encourage parents/carers to create an open home environment where students can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through school PSHE. Parents/carers are also encouraged to seek additional support in this from the school where they feel it is needed. For information on accessing school support, see section 5.

### **Implementation and curriculum**

It is important that we implement our SRE policy consistently throughout the school, and provide effective provision throughout classrooms. We encourage teachers to provide classes that are specific to the needs of the students in that class, and responsive to their behaviour and development.

Through this aspect of our curriculum we aim to explore different attitudes, values and social labels, and develop skills that will enable our students to make informed decisions regarding sex and relationships. It is important that students know the difference between fact, opinion and belief.

### **Guest speakers**

We may invite guest speakers into school to talk on issues related to sex and relationships. It may be the case that the subject under discussion is better coming from an expert or experienced health professional who can challenge student's perceptions. A teacher will be present throughout these lessons. Visitors will be given a copy of this policy and expected to comply with the guidelines outlined within it.

### **Terminology**

Students will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang or everyday terms used in certain social circles will be discussed; this will surround discussion about what is and isn't acceptable language to use.

### **Dealing with difficult questions**

Staff training will include sessions on how to deal with difficult questions. There may still be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel uncomfortable or ill equipped to answer. In this case, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from the *DSL/DDSL/Early help lead*.

Ground rules in class are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter. Some strategies staff may use to support this might be:

- an anonymous question box; this will enable students to feel more comfortable to ask questions without being identified
- making the classroom a cone of silence; this means that whatever is discussed in the classroom stays in the classroom and should not be brought up at any other time. We hope this will give students the sense that they are in a safe zone to speak freely about sex and relationships.

### **Students with special educational needs**

The school works hard to ensure that all aspects of the school curriculum are inclusive and support the needs of students of all ranges of abilities. Staff should differentiate lessons to ensure that all members of the class can access the information fully, and this is no different when it comes to SRE.

The school will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all students have access to the same information. Some of these include:

- interactive teaching methods e.g. contraceptive card game
- use of expert guest speakers
- practical activities eg visual aids
- using DVDs or video
- group and paired activities.

### **Withdrawal from SRE**

The school aims to keep parents/carers informed about all aspects of the SRE curriculum and urges parents/carers to read this policy. Parents/carers can request access to resources and information being used in class, and the school will do everything it can to ensure that parents/carers are comfortable with the education provided to their children in school. It is, however, a statutory right of parents/carers or carers to withdraw the children in their care from SRE. This excludes withdrawal from the elements on human growth and reproduction which fall under the National Curriculum science.

Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from SRE should contact the *job title* who will arrange a meeting to discuss their concerns. SRE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development and we strongly urge parents/carers to carefully consider their decision before withdrawing their child from this aspect of school life. However, it is acknowledged that the final decision on the issue is for the parent to take.

### **Complaints**

Parents/carers or carers who have complaints or concerns regarding the SRE curriculum should contact the school and follow the school's complaints procedure.

### **Equal opportunities**

SRE lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously. This is the case for bullying of any kind and the procedures regarding this are outlined in the school's behaviour policy.

### **Safeguarding and confidentiality**

We hope to provide a safe and supportive school community where students feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Training around confidentiality will be provided to all teachers.

It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case, the school's child protection and safeguarding procedure should be followed.

Personal information about students who have approached a teacher for discussion should not be shared with any other person. If there is a child protection concern, the information must be handled as outlined in the school child protection and safeguarding procedure. Staff members that breach the right to a child's privacy by disclosing or sharing confidential information with no reason to do so will be dealt with under the school's staff discipline, conduct and grievance procedures.

If a staff member is approached by a student under 16 who is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, the teacher should:

- Ensure that the student is accessing all the contraceptive and sexual health advice available and understands the risks of being sexually active.
- Encourage the student to talk to their parent or carer. Students may feel that they are more comfortable bringing these issues to a teacher they trust, but it is important that children and their parents/carers have open and trusting relationships when it comes to sexual health and the school will encourage this as much as possible.
- Decide whether there is a child protection issue. This may be the case if the teacher is concerned that there is coercion or abuse involved. If a member of staff is

informed that a student under 13 is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, this will be dealt with under child protection procedures.

Students with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from *DSL/DDSL/Early help lead* to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

### **Advice and treatment**

Staff who are approached by students with a concern about having contracted or possibly contracted a sexually transmitted disease should refer them immediately to *DSL/DDSL/Early help lead*. Providing advice on contraception and practising safe sex is a key part of the school's SRE provision. We also encourage parents/carers to engage their child in open discussion about practising safe sex.

There is no reason for staff to expect to be made aware of a student or colleague's HIV or hepatitis status, and no person will be discriminated against because of this if there is a disclosure of this type of information.

### **Support for pregnant teenagers and young fathers**

#### **Monitoring, review and evaluation**

The educational and personal needs of our students develop in line with varying societal pressures and economic change. Our aim is to provide SRE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our students, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason we review the SRE curriculum *annually*, and will inform parents/carers of any revisions to the school policy or sex education curriculum.

We aim to monitor the effectiveness of our sex education provision through:

- yearly feedback from students
- yearly feedback from parents/carers (parent information sessions)
- feedback from staff
- classroom observations.

The school will review this policy *annually*, evaluating its effectiveness by taking into account feedback from students, staff and parents/carers, as well as what has come to light through classroom observations and information we receive from national reports and curriculum reviews.

### **Support**

We hope that students will feel safe in the school environment to talk to any member of staff in confidence about any areas of concern regarding their personal, social and

emotional development, including matters raised by or relating to sex education. We promote the school ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of school activity and hope that students respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom.