



Barnes Primary School

Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) Policy

Rationale

SRE is a lifelong learning process of acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about relationships, feelings, sexuality and sex. The subject is infinitely wider than a few lessons about 'birds and bees'! Puberty and human reproduction are taught within the wider framework of learning about relationships. Effective SRE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain happy, meaningful relationships. It also enables young people to make responsible, informed decisions and choices, both now and in the future. These choices relate to their health, happiness and general well-being. SRE should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school.

What is Sex and Relationships Education?

SRE is the name now used to encompass many aspects of the Personal Development curriculum – including sex education, relationship education and birth education - concerning the ways in which individuals relate to each other. It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of stable, loving relationships, including marriage, that value respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health.

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.**

Why teach SRE?

Britain has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in Europe. In developing the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy beyond 2010 (www.education.gov.uk) the government commissioned a review of the evidence regarding what works in SRE. This review provides a research base from which to develop SRE for all children and young people. Conclusions aimed at reducing unintended conceptions in young people clearly indicate that high quality sex and relationship education should, amongst other things:

empower pupils

offer a positive and open view of sex and sexuality, and support sexual self acceptance

be sustained by working within a theoretical framework

meet local needs

ensure the entitlement of all children to sex and relationship education and undertake specific work to meet the needs of vulnerable and marginalised children and young people

be provided early, before puberty, before feelings of sexual attraction and before young people develop sexual relationships

reinforce value messages

focus on risk reduction

use active learning and participatory techniques

avoid focusing too heavily on biological issues

ensure that children and young people have a critical awareness of the messages that are portrayed in the media.

The Legal Position

In accordance with the Learning and Skills Act 2000, through SRE children learn about the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and the raising of children. They are helped to appreciate the importance of loving and lasting relationships. Finally, they learn that not all people make the same choices about the kinds of relationships they want and the different choices people make about entering into loving, committed relationships should be respected. Primary schools are required to teach health and relationship education and elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum. As a primary school we follow guidance from Department of Education's 2019 curriculum: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

The Right to Withdraw

Parents are not allowed to withdraw their children from health and relationship education as it is a compulsory subject as of September 2020. This includes the teaching of puberty. You may withdraw your child from sex education lessons. Parents wishing to do this should make an appointment to see their child's teacher to discuss how this will be managed.

Aims

We aim to provide the basis for an ongoing programme of SRE that begins in reception and continues through to Year 6 that will assist children to:

- provide a safe framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behavior
- 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
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within all relationships
- have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others, and to have respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationships they want
- communicate effectively
- avoid being exploited, or exploiting others
- avoid being pressurised into behaviours, or situations, they do not feel comfortable with
- understand the processes of puberty, conception and birth
- show respect for their own bodies and other people's
- recognise their emotions and express them effectively and appropriately
- understand the importance of family life for all, and in particular in the development of a child
- recognize and respect that different people make different decisions about the relationships they choose to enter into.

The objectives of our SRE programme are to:

- enable pupils to develop knowledge, communication skills and understanding in order to facilitate personal decision making
- guide pupils to understand the impact of external factors, such as the media, Internet or peer groups and remain independent decision-makers
- enable pupils to develop the ability to form positive, non-exploitative relationships
- enable pupils to be aware of personal, psychological, emotional and physical changes in themselves and others
- teach pupils about the process of human reproduction
- emphasise the role and the value of family life
- inform pupils what is and what is not legal in matters relating to sexual activity

inform pupils of where they can go for further information and advice.

Values Framework

SRE is always taught with due regard to moral and legal considerations and within the explicit values of family life and committed, supportive relationships. It is taught by teachers who are experienced and have been specifically trained - through our continuing professional development programme - in this aspect of education. Children will be given frequent opportunities to explore values.

Among the values we will promote are:

respect for oneself and other people
taking responsibility for one's actions in all situations
honesty and loyalty in relationships
the importance and responsibilities of the family unit for all members
sensitivity towards the needs and views of others, especially if those views are different to one's own
to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications and risks of certain types of behaviour
to accept that different people are entitled to hold different views and to respect this right.

When discussing sexual intercourse staff will present it as part of a committed and stable relationship. At no time will children explore or learn issues of a sexual nature free from a context that supports this.

How the objectives are achieved.

In line with recognised good practice for SRE, our programme will continually address the following three areas:

a) skills

If SRE is going to be effective it needs to include opportunities for children to develop skills, as it can be hard for them to act on the basis of only having information. The kinds of skills children develop as part of SRE are linked to more general life-skills and will be common to other areas of the Personal Development curriculum. For example, being able to communicate, listen, negotiate, ask for and identify sources of help and advice, are all useful life-skills and can be applied to matters connected with relationships. Effective SRE develops children's skills in:

negotiation
making choices based on probable outcomes
assertion
listening
recognising pressures from other people and how to resist them
dealing with and challenging prejudice
seeking help from adults - including parents, carers and professionals
differentiating between accurate and inaccurate information
empathising with others.

b) attitudes and beliefs

Children can be exposed to a wide range of attitudes and beliefs in relation to sex and sexuality. These sometimes appear contradictory and confusing. Most children as they get older are very interested in the moral and cultural frameworks that bind sex and sexuality. They often welcome opportunities to talk about issues where people may have strong views. At Barnes we are always aware that talking in a balanced way about differences in opinion does not promote one set of views over another, or mean that one agrees with a particular view. Part of exploring and understanding cultural, religious and moral views is finding out that you can agree to disagree.

Among the attitudes and values we will explore are:

learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations

learning the value of family life, marriage and stable, 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.

c) knowledge and understanding

Children get information about sex and sexuality from a wide range of sources including each other, through the media including advertising, television, music (and music videos) and magazines, as well as leaflets, books and websites which are intended to be sources of information about sex and sexuality. Providing knowledge through SRE is therefore about finding out what children already know and adding to their existing knowledge and correcting any misinformation they may have. We will help children to develop a critical awareness of images portrayed by the media.

The knowledge and understanding component of SRE includes:

- learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages
- understanding human sexuality, reproduction and sexual health
- understanding emotions
- learning about the importance of committed relationships.

Our curriculum

The school has adopted the SRE core curriculum for London which builds upon children's knowledge and understanding year by year, introducing new elements at age appropriate stages from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 2. Some adaptation of the materials will take place. Children will have SRE lessons as follows:

- The Early Years – 4 a year
- Key Stage 1 – 5 a year
- Key Stage 2 – 6 a year

The Early Years & Key Stage 1			
Topics	Early Years	Year 1	Year 2
	Our Day	Feelings	Differences: boys and girls
	Family	Body parts	Differences: male and female
	Hygiene	Friendships	Everybody needs caring for
		Choices	Mental Health
		Families	Myself and others (Similarities and Differences)

Topics	Key Stage 2			
	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Self Esteem	Growing and Changing (inc differences male and female)	Talking about Puberty	Puberty and Reproduction	
Challenging Gender Stereotypes	What is Puberty	Becoming Men and Women	Relationships and Reproduction	
Personal Space and Secrets	Body Changes and Reproduction	Puberty and Hygiene	Conception and Pregnancy	
Family Differences	Thinking, Feeling, Doing – Changing Relationships	Building Good Relationships	Being a Parent	
Decision Making	Assertiveness	Citizenship	Taking Risks	
Citizenship	Mental Health	Health and Prevention	Alcohol and Drug Education	

SRE delivery

Staff will use a variety of learning approaches and teaching methods which encourage pupils to participate, question and communicate. This includes use of:

- posters
- leaflets
- books
- small group discussion
- art
- case studies
- role play
- debates
- pupils carrying out their own research
- DVDs.

There is an emphasis upon discussion throughout all units.

Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review –the Headteacher pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
- Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly the Key Stage 2 Pupil Council wanted from their SRE
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board will approve the SRE policy, and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that SRE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-science components of SRE.

Staff are responsible for:

- delivering SRE in a sensitive way
- modelling positive attitudes to SRE
- monitoring progress
- responding to the needs of individual pupils
- responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-science components of SRE
- staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching SRE. Staff who have concerns about teaching SRE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

Pupils are expected to engage fully in SRE and, when discussing issues related to SRE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Monitoring arrangements

- The delivery of SRE is monitored by The Headteacher through learning walks
- Pupils' development in SRE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.
- This policy will be reviewed by the governing body annually.

Our approach to specific issues

Using outside speakers

When working with outside speakers and facilitators a partnership approach is used, though the school remains responsible for all aspects of provision. In particular:
teachers will clearly explain the ethos and approach of the SRE programme to visitors.
the input of visitors will be integrated into the programme and jointly planned with teachers.
the approach used by visitors will complement the philosophy and aims of the school programme.
in all cases teachers will be present, so that they can follow up the input with pupils at a later stage.
pupils will be told that visitors are coming in beforehand and spend time preparing for the session (for example, discussing with them what they will be doing, deciding what questions they want to ask them).

The role of parents

We hope and expect that our programme will support the initiation of dialogue at home. Parents and teachers both need to engage with children about the messages that they get from the media, and give them opportunities for discussion. Therefore parents will be informed and supported to understand the programme delivered at Barnes and the part they can play in this. We have an important role to play in helping and supporting parents to talk to their children and we will do so by providing a clear outline of our work in school newsletters and through this policy, and by request.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed for children or their parents. Should any individual be in possession of information that they feel may indicate a child is at risk of harm in any way they will always report this, in confidence, to the school's Child Protection Officer who will deal with it in line with school policy. Other information, views or beliefs will be kept within the confines of the classroom where they are discussed, or between the individuals who are discussing them.

Child protection

SRE may sometimes bring about disclosures of child protection issues and teachers should always inform the Child Protection Officer if they have any concerns about something a child has said or done.

Dealing with questions

Clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate will be established within the ground rules that are established for all personal development lessons.

Staff will operate a three level approach to answering questions.

Level 1

If a child asks a question that relates to the syllabus for SRE for that year, it will be answered there and then in front of other children who may be present.

Level 2

If a child asks a question that relates to the syllabus for SRE for the school but not for their year, the question will be answered privately away from the hearing of any other child.

Level 3

If the child asks the question that is not covered by the syllabus for SRE in the school they will either be encouraged to ask their parent the question, or if the staff member is willing to answer they may offer to get permission from the parent to answer the question on an individual basis away from the hearing of any other child.

Questions will be answered using simple, accurate and straightforward language. The answers given will always be honest but may not be, on occasion, everything there is to know. The age of the child will always be taken into consideration as will their level of maturity.

It is generally good practice when asked a question to try and find out a little about why this question has arisen. Any question that leads a staff member to suspect an inappropriate knowledge, curiosity or experience will be reported immediately to the Child Protection Officer.

Sexual identity and sexual orientation

We accept that the children at our school will, when they mature, demonstrate the full range of human sexuality and identity. We will seek to provide every child with an equally supportive view of themselves and their choices and beliefs, without prejudice or bias.

When discussing families and relationships all contributions from children will be equally valued. Children living with single parents, same-sex parents, extended families and the nuclear family will all be encouraged to share what is positive about their family and to feel those contributions have equal weight. The school will not actively promote any sexual orientation over another. Care will be taken to use inclusive language wherever possible. For example when talking about forming a lasting and stable committed relationship, children will not be told *“men will want to find a wife and women will want to find a husband”*. Rather we will say that when they are grown up *“people may want to find a partner to share their life with”*. Inclusive terminology will always be used. Teachers must take great care at all times to avoid propagating any of their personal beliefs. What they believe must be left behind in SRE lessons.

Supporting difference and diversity

The SRE programme, as with other areas of the curriculum will be delivered to reflect the multicultural nature of modern British society. Through stories, music, pictures and real-life examples diversity will be explored in relation to race, belief and faith, ethnicity and culture and sexual orientation. The programme will actively encourage respect for diversity and any display of prejudice through actions or words will be dealt with by explanation, the demonstration of appropriate behaviour and words and if necessary through the behaviour management procedures outlined in the policy.

Some children will have specific learning needs in relation to SRE as with any other area of the curriculum. Teachers will honour the specific needs of individuals in their planning by ensuring a range of opportunities to learn are provided and supported.

Monitoring and evaluation

Evaluation enables teachers to plan future work from a more informed perspective. Four useful questions teachers can ask themselves and the children are:

- Skills – what have you/they learnt to do?
- Information – what do you/they now know?
- Attitudes and values – what do you/they think, feel, believe?
- What do you/they need to learn next?

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Appendix 1 - Questions to ask children during SRE lessons

AGE 3-6 questions

At this age children are interested in the differences between boys and girls, naming body parts, where babies come from, and friends and family. What areas of the body are private and should not be touched and who they can talk to if they are worried are also important.

Questions to help you understand what children want to learn about are listed in themes below.

Relationships

- Who is in my family?
- How are other families similar or different to mine?
- What does my family do for me?
- What do I like about my friend?
- What does my friend like about me?
- What can other people do to make me feel good?
- Who do I look after?
- Why shouldn't I tease other people?

My body

- Why are girls' and boys' bodies different?
- What do we call the different parts of girls' and boys' bodies?

Life cycles

- Where do babies come from?
- How much have I changed since I was a baby?
- How are other children similar and different to me?

Keeping safe & looking after myself

- Which parts of my body are private?
- When is it OK to let someone touch me?
- How can I say 'no' if I don't want someone to touch me?
- Who should I tell if someone wants to touch my private parts?

People who help me

- Who can I ask if I need to know something?
- Who can I go to if I am worried about something?

AGE 7-8 questions

Relationships

- How have my relationships changed as I have grown up?
- Why do friendships change?
- How can I be a good friend?
- Why can it be fun to have a friend who is different to me?
- What are some of the bad ways people can behave towards one another?
- How do I know when I am being bullied?
- What do I do if I am being bullied?

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- How can I make up with my friend when we have fallen out?
 - Why are some parents married and some not?

My body

- How has my body changed since I was a baby?
- Why is my body changing?
- Why are some children growing quicker than others?
- Why are some girls in my class taller than the boys? How do girls and boys grow differently?
- Why are we all different? Is it ok to be different?
- What are similarities and differences between boys and girls?
- Should boys and girls behave differently?

Feelings

- What makes me feel good?
- What makes me feel bad?
- How do I know how other people are feeling?
- Why are my feelings changing as I get older?
- How do I feel about growing up and changing?
- How can I cope with strong feelings?

Life cycles

- Why does having a baby need a male and a female?
- What are eggs and sperm?
- How do different animals have babies?
- How do different animals look after their babies before and after birth?
- What happens when people get older?

Keeping safe & looking after myself

- What are good habits for looking after my growing body?
- What do I do if someone wants me to do something dangerous, wrong or makes me feel uncomfortable?
- When is it good or bad to keep secrets?

People who help me

- Who can I talk to if I feel anxious or unhappy?
- Where can I find information about growing up?

AGE 9-10 questions

Relationships

- What are the important relationships in my life now?
- What is love? How do we show love to one another?
- Can people of the same sex love one another? Is this ok?
- What are the different kinds of families and partnerships?
- What do the words 'lesbian' and 'gay' mean?
- Why does calling someone 'gay' count as bullying?
- What should I do if someone is being bullied or abused?
- Are boys and girls expected to behave differently in relationships? Why?
- Can some relationships be harmful?
- Why are families important for having babies and bringing them up?

My body

- What is puberty?
- Does everyone go through it? At what age?
- What body changes do boys and girls go through at puberty?
- Why are some girls 'tomboys' and some boys a bit 'girly'?
- Is my body normal? What is a 'normal' body?
- How will my body change as I get older?

Feelings and attitudes

- What kinds of feelings come with puberty?
- What are sexual feelings?
- What are wet dreams?
- What is masturbation? Is it normal?
- How can I cope with these different feelings and mood swings?
- How can I say 'no' to someone without hurting their feelings?
- What should I do if my family or friends don't see things the way I do?
- What do families from other cultures and religions think about growing up?
- Can I believe everything I see on the TV about perfect bodies/ relationship/girls and boys...to be true?

Lifecycles/ human reproduction

- What is sex?
- What is sexual intercourse?
- How many sperm does a man produce?
- How many eggs does a woman have?
- How do sperm reach the egg to make a baby?
- Does conception always occur or can it be prevented?
- How do families with same-sex parents have babies?
- How does the baby develop?
- How is the baby born?
- What does a new baby need to keep it happy and healthy?

Keeping safe & looking after myself

- How can I look after my body now I am going through puberty?
- How can girls manage periods (menstruation)?
- How can people get diseases from sex and can they be prevented?
- What is HIV, how do you get it and how can you protect yourself from it?

People who help me/getting help and advice

- Who can I talk to if I want help or advice?
- Where can I find information about puberty and sex?
- How can I find reliable information about these things safely on the internet?

Appendix 2

National Curriculum (2014) Science programme of study – Life processes and living things

Key Stage 1

Pupils should be taught to:

- identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with which sense
- notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults

Key Stage 2

Pupils should be taught to:

- describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals
- describe the changes as humans develop to old age
- learn about the changes experienced in puberty
- recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents.

