



Sex and Relationships Education Policy

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1a.INTRODUCTION

From September 2020, all schools must have in place a written policy for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). This policy sets out the framework for Relationships and Sex Education at Digitech Studio School providing clarity on how our RSE curriculum is informed, organised and delivered. This policy was reviewed and developed in response to the following guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2020)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE, 2019)
- 16-19 Study Programmes Guidance (DfE/ESFA, 2019)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2018)
- Preventing and tackling bullying (DfE, 2017)
- Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (UKCCIS, 2016)
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE, 2015)
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (DfE, 2014)
- National Curriculum in England – Key Stages 1-4 (DfE, 2014) This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:
 - Child Protection Policy and Procedures
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - SEN Policy
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
 - Teaching and Learning Policy
 - ESafety Policy
 - IT Systems and Services Acceptable Use Policy

1b.AIMS AND INTENT

At Digitech Studio School, our over-arching aims for RSE are as follows:

- To deliver high-quality, age-appropriate and ability appropriate RSE lessons as part of our overall planned school curriculum and ethos
- To fulfil our legal obligations related to RSE, whilst taking account of parental views
- To ensure pupils are provided with accurate information from reliable sources
- To use a range of appropriate resources matched to the strengths and needs of individual pupils

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- To provide pupils with opportunities to engage positively in sensitive discussions and enable them to have the confidence to ask questions to help address any misconceptions
- To encourage pupils to remember what they learn to support their ongoing preparation for the future

In order to achieve our aims, we plan to teach the RSE content set out by the DfE.

2. CONTEXT

All schools must have an up to date SRE policy which is made available for inspection and to parents. The policy must:

- Define sex and relationship education
- Describe how sex and relationship education is provided and who is responsible for providing it
- Say how sex and relationship education is monitored and evaluated
- Include information about parents' right to withdrawal; and
- Be reviewed regularly

The term sex and relationships 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.

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' (Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, DfE 0116/2000).

3. THE 3 ELEMENTS OF SRE

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 and the benefits to be gained from such delay
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy

Attitudes and values

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations

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- 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

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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

4. APPROACH TO SRE WITHIN DIGITECH STUDIO SCHOOL

We consult with parents regarding the topics of delivery for the term before showing visual resources to which parents have the option to opt their child out.

5. WHY SRE?

5.1 Legal obligations

The Relationships, Sex and Health Education Regulations (2019) made under the Children and Social Work Act (2017) brought some compulsory changes into effect in all schools from September 2020. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is now compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. The regulations also make Health Education compulsory in all schools. Details of what is taught as part of Health Education are outlined in our school's Digitech plus lessons. The focus of Relationships Education is to teach the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. The aim of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.

5.2 The needs of young people and the role of schools

The overall aims of the school are:

- a) To provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve
- b) To promote pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life

The DfE '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.

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Research has shown that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about sex and relationships, are more likely to be more discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and to have fulfilling relationships.

5.3 National and local support and guidance for schools to develop SRE

Rates of teenage pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted infection in the UK are among the highest of all European countries. The Government has developed a comprehensive strategy to change this situation and SRE for pupils in both primary and secondary schools is seen, alongside other initiatives, as a key element. The Trust's approach to SRE is in line with the Government's strategy and guidance given to schools in DfE 'Sex and Relationship Guidance' 2000.

6. MORALS AND VALUES FRAMEWORK

Our approach to SRE will be 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 be taken advantage of
- The right of people to follow their own sexuality, within legal parameters

We also believe that students have an entitlement to:

- Age and circumstance appropriate SRE
- Access to help from trusted adults and helping services

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

7. INCLUSION

'Mainstream schools and special schools have a duty to ensure that children with special educational needs and learning difficulties are properly included in sex and relationships education. Sex and relationship education should help all pupils understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives'.

DfE SRE Guidance July 2000

Young people may have varying needs regarding SRE depending on their circumstances and background. The Trust strongly believes that all students should have access to SRE

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that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this the Trust's approach to SRE will take account of:

The needs of boys as well as girls: Girls tend to have greater access to SRE than boys, both through the media (particularly teenage magazines) and the home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.

Ethnic and cultural diversity:

Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to SRE. The school will consult students and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups.

Varying home backgrounds:

We recognise that our students may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

Sexuality:

On average, about 5% of our students will go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual (GLB), some students may consider themselves transgender. Students may also have GLB or transgender parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. Our approach to SRE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. Our pastoral support will take account of the needs of GLB students. We shall also actively tackle homophobic bullying.

Special educational needs or disabilities:

We shall take account of the fact that some students may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical disabilities that result in particular SRE needs. Teaching and resources will be differentiated as appropriate to address the needs of these children in order for them to have full access to the content of sex and relationship education.

The teaching programme for Sex and Relationship Education:

We intend that all pupils shall experience a programme of sex and relationships education at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development.

Contraceptive advice to KS4 pupils:

Pupils will be taught, in the context of sexual intimacy and safer sex, that intercourse should always involve using a condom. Questions about forms of contraception will be answered accurately and honestly within the student's ability to understand. If pupils need further personal advice about contraceptive use, counselling and support will be sought from appropriate agencies and personnel.

8. A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

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A whole school approach will be adapted to SRE that actively involves the whole school community. All groups who make up the school community have rights and responsibilities regarding SRE. In particular:

The senior leadership team (SLT) will endeavour to support the provision and development of SRE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.

The designated SRE teacher (DP Teacher) will maintain an overview of SRE provision and have overall responsibility for its development. This will include keeping up to date with developments and good practice, developing the provision to meet student's needs, providing support and resources for staff, arranging staff training, liaison with outside agencies and monitoring and evaluation.

All Teaching staff are involved in the school's SRE provision. Some teach SRE through the Tutor programme others teach it through our discrete DP lessons, and some through science and other curriculum areas. All teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to students. Any teacher can be approached by a student who experiences a difficulty regarding sex or relationships issues. Teachers will be consulted about the Academy's approach to SRE and aided in their work by provision of resources, background information, support and advice from experienced members of staff and access to appropriate training.

Non-teaching staff may be involved in a supportive role in some SRE lessons and also play an important, informal pastoral support role with students. They will have access to information about the SRE programme and be supported in their pastoral role.

Academy Councillors have responsibilities for school policies. They will be consulted about the SRE provision and policy.

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 their children from dedicated sex education lessons if they wish (see section 7.8). The school will seek and take account of parent/carer views and endeavour to adopt a partnership approach with parents/carers. The school's approach to SRE will encourage dialogue between parents/carers and their children.

Outside agencies and speakers may be involved in inputting to SRE lessons and as points of referral as support services for students. Digitech will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to student needs. We shall work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within the school. Digitech will also promote relevant helping agencies that students can access.

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Students have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate SRE and to pastoral support. They will be actively consulted about their SRE needs and their views will be central to developing the provision.

9. AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

The overall aims of the Trust's sex and relationship education programme are:

- a) To provide accurate information about, and understanding of, SRE issues
- b) To explore what students know, understand, think and feel and to identify their needs
- c) To create an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment
- d) To counteract myths
- e) To explore a range of attitudes towards SRE issues and to help students to reach their own informed views and choices for a healthier lifestyle
- f) To develop respect for each other as individuals, and to encourage boys and girls to understand one another
- g) To recognise the value of loving and caring relationships and the place of intimacy within them
- h) To increase student's self-esteem
- i) To appreciate the value of family life, the implications of parenthood and the needs of the very young
- j) To develop skills relevant to effective management of relationships and sexual situations. Examples include communication with and empathy towards others, risk assessment, assertiveness, conflict management, decision making, seeking help and helping others
- k) To contribute to a reduction in local and national teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and abortion rates
- l) To be aware of sources of help and to acquire the skills and confidence to use them
- m) To be aware of the law on sexual behaviour

9.1 Place in the curriculum

The main SRE programme will be delivered through Digitech Plus lessons. In addition, certain biological aspects are delivered through Science lessons and other aspects of SRE arise in the tutor programme.

9.2 Content and learning objectives

The following topics are a key focus from the DfE and are included in our Digitech plus and personal development mid term plan:

Mental Wellbeing
Internet Safety and harms
Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco
Respectful relationships, including friendships
Online and Media
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health
Citizenship

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Physical Health and Fitness
Healthy Eating
Health and prevention
Basic first aid
Changing adolescent bodies
Families

9.3 Right of Withdrawal

From September 2020 parents will not be able to withdrawal their child from any aspect of relationship education or health education. Parents will be able to withdrawal their child (following discussions with the school) from any aspect or all aspects of sex education, other than those which are part of the science curriculum up to and until three terms before the age of 16. Where pupils are withdrawal from sex education, schools should document the process and will have to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate purposeful education during the period withdrawal.