



**Mayesbrook Park School**

Alternative Provision for young people in Barking and Dagenham

# SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

JANUARY 2017

# SEX & RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

Version:	<b>2</b>
Approving Committee:	<b>The Governing Body</b>
Date Ratified:	<b>31/01/2017</b>
Reference Number	<b>1</b>
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Date Issued:	<b>January 2017</b>
Review Date:	<b>January 2019</b>
Target Audience:	<b>Staff/Parents/Governors/LA</b>

Version	Date	Control Reason
Version 2	31/01/2017	Quality control

## UNDER REVIEW

# Sex and Relationships Education Policy Statement

Sex and relationships education (SRE) is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships for family life built on 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.

### 1. Policy aims

The aims of this policy are 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;
- 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;
- teach students to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and emotional abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them;
- encourage students to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their time at MPS and after.

The service wants parents/carers and students to feel assured that sex education will be delivered at a level appropriate to both the age and development of students, and safe to voice opinions and concerns relating to the sex education provision.

### 2. Roles and responsibilities

#### School staff

- To ensure that they are up to date with the policy and curriculum requirements regarding sex education. Any areas that they feel are not covered or inadequately provided for should be reported back to their relevant Head of Centre.
- Attend and engage in relevant Mentor sessions relating to 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 the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- 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 activities to students.
- Tailor their lessons to suit all students in their class, across the whole range of abilities, including those students with special educational needs and/or disabilities . If teachers need support in this area they should speak to the Head of Centre
- Ensure that sex education is age--relevant and appropriate across all year groups.
- Ensure that the knowledge and information regarding SRE, to which all students are entitled is provided in a comprehensive way.
- Provide support to staff members who feel uncomfortable or ill--equipped to deal with the delivery of sex education to students.

### **Leadership Group**

- Ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with the school's policy and guidance relating to sex education.
- Communicate freely with staff, parents/carers and the governing body to ensure that everyone is in understanding of the policy and curriculum for sex education, and that any concerns or opinions regarding the Centres' provision are listened to, taken into account and acted on as is appropriate.

### **Governors**

- Review the SRE policy annually to ensure that it meets the needs of all members of the service's community.

### **Students**

- Be considerate of other people's feelings and beliefs. Students who regularly fail to follow these standards of behaviour will be dealt with under the behaviour policy.
- Be encouraged and hopefully feel comfortable to talk to a member of staff, regarding any concerns they have relating to sex education. Staff must consult the DSLs if there is a safeguarding or child protection concern or they feel ill--equipped to deal with the issue at hand.
- Provide feedback on the centre's SRE provision. Opinions on provision and comments will be reviewed by SLT and taken into consideration when the curriculum is prepared for the following year's students. In this way, MPS hopes to provide students with the education they need on topics they want to learn about.

### **Parents/Carers**

- Share the responsibility for sex education and support their children's personal, social and emotional development.
- Be encouraged to create an open home environment where students can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through SRE activities.

- Be vigilant and responsive to concerns relating to inappropriate material available or viewed on--line.
- Be encouraged to seek additional support in this from the Centre where they feel it is needed.

### **3. Implementation and curriculum**

There is a cross--curricular approach to the delivery of SRE (e.g. Topics in Biology, Religious Education and Drop Down Days).

It is important that we implement our SRE policy consistently. We provide teachers with resources that are specific to the age of the students in their classes.

Possible conflicts arising between the curriculum and religious views (such as those relating to the use of contraception) are acknowledged; sex education is delivered at every stage with sensitivity and in cooperation and inclusion with different views and religions.

#### **Guest speakers**

We may invite guest speakers to talk on issues related to sex and relationships. It is our experience that certain subjects are better received when delivered by an expert or experienced health professionals who can challenge student's knowledge and perceptions. A teacher will be present throughout these lessons. Visiting speakers 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 may be discussed;; this will accompany a discussion about what is and is not acceptable language to use.

#### **Dealing with difficult questions**

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 zone 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.

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.

#### **Withdrawal from SRE**

MPS aims to keep parents informed about all aspects of the SRE curriculum and urges parents to read this policy. Parents can request access to resources and information being used in class, and the service will do everything it can to ensure that parents are comfortable with the education provided to their children. It is, however, a statutory right of

parents 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 relevant Head of Centre who will discuss their concerns. SRE is a vital part of the centre's curriculum and supports child development and we strongly urge parents to carefully consider their decision before withdrawing their child from this aspect of their education. However, it is acknowledged that the final decision on the issue is for the parent to take.

## **Complaints**

Parents or carers who have complaints or concerns regarding the SRE curriculum should contact the relevant Head of Centre and follow the MPS complaints policy.

## **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 anti-bullying policy and the behaviour policy.

## **Safeguarding and confidentiality**

We provide a safe and supportive 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 is 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 child protection and safeguarding procedure will be followed.

Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities 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 to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

**Advice and treatment** Providing advice on contraception and practising safe sex is a key part of the MPS's SRE provision. We also encourage parents to engage their child in open discussion about sexual activity and practising safe sex.

Staff who are approached by students with a concern about having contracted or possibly contracted a sexually transmitted disease will seek advice from the DSLs.

## **4. Monitoring, evaluation and review**

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

## **5. Support**

We promote the MPS's ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of the curriculum and hope that students respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom.