

# Sex and Relationship Policy



Leytonstone School

---

Signed by Chair of Governors: Kate Lord

Date Ratified by Governors: 18/3/15

Date to be Reviewed by Governors: 28/3/17

## **Leytonstone School Sex and Relationship Policy**

### **(To be read in conjunction with the wider PSHCE policy)**

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. We want them to be informed and comfortable with the changes that will take place in their bodies during puberty.

However we live in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century where 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, TV and magazines. This media often presents a distorted and inaccurate view of both sex and relationships. Some children and young people will use the new technology to bully and intimidate others or to place themselves in compromising positions. The purpose of good SRE provision is to equip children and young people with the values, skills and knowledge to understand and deal appropriately with these social and cultural pressures.

SRE makes an essential and significant contribution to safeguarding children and young people during their school-age years and into the future. SRE 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 young people to take increasing responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and that of others.

As a school we aim to provide a safe place for children and young people to make sense of the information they have picked up from the media and also from playground myths. We believe that 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 well informed choices.

Sex and relationship education will also reflect an acknowledgement that family is a broad concept and not just one specific model. Students will be taught that it includes a variety of different types of family structures and the awareness of the different approaches to family life.

The key aims of SRE are to:

- 1 Provide accurate and relevant information about the emotional changes that children and young people will experience through their formative years and into adulthood.
- 2 Establish an awareness of the significance of stable family life and relationships, including the responsibilities of parenthood and marriage.
- 3 Foster self-awareness and self-esteem.
- 4 Develop a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves and others.
5. To help young people understand their own values and beliefs and to respect the values and beliefs of other people.

## **Principles and Values**

In addition Leytonstone School believes that SRE should:

- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life.
- Be an entitlement for all young people
- Encourage every student to contribute to make our community and aims to support each individual as they grow and learn.
- Be set within this wider school context and supports commitment, love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just one model. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches.
- Encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views. We are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure. The important values are love, respect and care for each other.
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.
- Recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents and students, consulting them about the content of programmes.
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.

### Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them. We commit ourselves entirely to the challenging of any prejudice and/or discriminatory behaviour that may occur as a result of sexual identity and orientation, both in the school and also the wider community.

### ***Work done with religious groups***

Waltham Forest recognises the importance of working with faith and community leaders to develop a consensus on the delivery of SRE. Waltham Forest worked collaboratively with faith and community leaders with several positive outcomes:

- Increased understanding of the content and need for SRE amongst faith leaders
- Increased support for SRE, based on a shared values framework
- Increased understanding across faith groups of the different and similar faith perspectives relating to sex and relationships

### **SRE for pupils with additional educational needs & disability**

Mainstream schools and special schools have a duty to ensure that children with special educational needs are properly included in SRE. It is important to recognise that there is a wide range of pupils who may need particular support because of their learning or physical disabilities or who have social and communication difficulties or other needs. SRE should help all pupils understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives.

Some parents and carers of children with special educational needs may find it difficult to accept their children's developing sexuality. Some pupils will be more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation than their peers, and others may be confused about what is acceptable public behaviour. We will endeavour to give students additional help to develop skills to reduce the risks of being abused and exploited, and to learn what sorts of behaviour are, and are not, acceptable.

More active teaching methods may be needed for young people whose learning is slower, giving familiarisation with different situations. Specialist resources will be provided than those used with their peers.

Activities will be differentiated using the resources found in the PSHCE scheme of work on SRE, as well as the topic areas covered in RE and Science Lessons across the key stages. It is the school's policy to not withdraw students with Special Educational Needs from health-related lessons, as these aspects of personal, social and spiritual development are of equal importance to the academic achievement of the pupils.

### **FGM & Forced Marriages**

One of the most sustainable ways of promoting the safety of girls and young women and seeking to prevent FGM is to make it a key component of the school's PSHE education curriculum. (to be included)

### **Ethnic and Cultural Groups**

We intend our policy to be sensitive and respectful to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally or emotionally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns wherever possible. There is a right for parents to withdraw their children from SRE, but that right will no longer apply when a child reaches the age of 15