

# **Marshland High School**



## **Sex & Relationships Education Policy**

*Approved - September 2016*

'Success Through Learning'

Marshland High School Specialist Science College

20160913

## **Introduction**

**Member(s) of staff Responsible:** Headteacher

### Background Information

Marshland High School is a rural comprehensive school catering for children from 11-16 years old.

This policy was developed by the Head Teacher, in consultation with the school PSHE Coordinator, through a variety of consultation methods. These took into account the views of students, parents/carers, staff, governors and the school health adviser. A similar approach was used when developing the Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) programme.

### Policy Statement

SRE is lifelong learning process of acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex, sexuality, relationships and feelings (Sex Education Forum 1999).

Effective SRE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by students if they are to establish and maintain relationships. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being.

The 1996 Education Act consolidates all relevant previous legislation and states that all secondary schools are required to provide an SRE programme that includes (as a minimum) information about sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS. The sex education elements contained in the National Curriculum Science Orders are also mandatory. All schools must provide an up to date policy that describes the content and organisation of SRE provided outside the National Curriculum Science Order. The DfE Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (2000) supports this legislation and suggests that schools should set sex education within a broader base of self-esteem and responsibility for the consequences of one's actions.

Other related policies and documents include the PSHE Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Drugs Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Single Equality Policy.

### Aims and Objectives

This policy is a working document which provides guidance and information on all aspects of SRE in the school for staff, parents/carers and governors. To be accessible to all of these groups the document is available on request and presented in a way that is easy to understand.

## **Moral and Values Framework**

The SRE programme at Marshland High School reflects the school ethos and demonstrates and encourages the following values:

- Respect for self;
- Respect for others;
- Responsibility for their own actions;
- Responsibility for their family, friends, schools and wider community.

## **Equal Opportunities Statement**

The school is committed to the provision of SRE to all of its students. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of students' cultures, faiths and family backgrounds. Equal time and provision is allocated for all groups but there may be occasions where students with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities are given extra support from SEND staff.

## **Content**

In Key Stage 3, students learn how good relationships can promote mental well-being, how to manage their feelings positively and how to manage changing relationships. They learn the law relating to sexual behaviour, how to develop skills of assertiveness in order to resist peer pressure and stereotyping, sources of advice & support and when and where to get help, such as from a genito-urinary medicine clinic.

In Key Stage 4, students learn to recognise the influences and pressures around sexual behaviour and gain advice on how to respond appropriately and how to seek professional health advice with confidence. They learn how HIV and other sexually transmitted infections affect the body, how different forms of contraception work, the risks associated with early sexual activity and the link with the use of alcohol. Arguments around moral issues such as abortion, contraception and the age of consent are also considered.

The content of the lessons was decided upon taking into account the views of students, parents/carers, staff, governors and the school health adviser, and using the OfSTED Sex and Relationship Guidance (2002) as a key source of information and guidance. A more detailed scheme of work is available on request.

Materials and images used are appropriate to the age and cultural backgrounds of the students. The range of material used is available to parents/carers and informative books are available to students in the library.

## **Organisation**

SRE is not delivered in isolation but firmly embedded in all curriculum areas, including Personal, Social, Health, Economic Education (PSHE) and Citizenship. At Marshland High School the *main* content is delivered in PSHE lessons to all years.

SRE is normally delivered by specialist teachers in mixed gender groups other than when it is deemed more appropriate for topics to be covered in single sex groups. Active learning methods which involve children's full participation are used when appropriate. Occasionally, appropriate and suitably experienced and/or knowledgeable visitors from outside school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of SRE in school. Marshland High School has a code of practice for using visitors to support the delivery of PSHE:

- Visitors are invited in to school because of the particular expertise or contribution they are able to make;
- All visitors are familiar with and understand the school's SRE policy and work within it;
- All inputs to PSHE lessons are part of a planned programme and negotiated and agreed with staff in advance;
- All visitors are supervised/supported by a member of staff at all times;
- The input of visitors is monitored and evaluated by staff and students. This evaluation informs future planning.

Evaluation of the SRE programme outside the science order is conducted using a variety of informal activities which have been built into the programme. Teachers are required to make their own personal evaluations of their lessons and these are used by the co-ordinator to inform future planning.

Liaison procedures are already in place with the main feeder schools in the area. Discussions on SRE are included.

Marshland High School believes in the importance of training for staff delivering SRE. Staff are encouraged to access appropriate training and support to help them deliver effective SRE.

### **Specific Issues within SRE**

#### **Withdrawal**

Parents/Carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex and relationships education provided at school, except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the Head Teacher, who will explore any concerns and discuss the impact that withdrawal may have on the child. Once a student has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the SRE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

Materials are available to parents/carers who wish to supplement the school SRE programme or who wish to deliver SRE to their children at home.

#### **Confidentiality**

As a general rule, a student's confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. If this person believes that the student is at risk or in danger, she/he talks to the named student protection coordinator who may confer with the Head Teacher before any decision is made.

The student concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The student will be supported throughout the process.

#### **Safeguarding/Child Protection**

The school has a separate Child Protection Policy. Effective SRE may bring about disclosures of child protection issues and staff should be aware of the procedures for reporting their concerns.

#### **Disclosures**

If a member of staff learns that a student who is less than 16 years old is sexually active or contemplating sexual activity the school will ensure that:

- The young person is counselled to talk to their parent/carer;
- Child Protection issues are addressed;
- The young person receives adequate counselling and information;
- The Head Teacher will monitor the above.

#### **Controversial and Sensitive Issues**

Staff are aware that views around SRE-related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all SRE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that students are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others who may hold different opinions.

#### **Dealing with Questions**

Both formal and informal SRE-related issues arising from students' questions, are answered according to the age and maturity of the student concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly, and can be addressed individually, later. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the designated senior professional if they are concerned.

#### **Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation**

Marshland High School believes that SRE should meet the needs of all students, regardless of their developing sexuality and that those staff delivering SRE should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Homophobic bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively. The school liaises with parents on this issue, with a view to providing reassurance and guidance. This includes informing parents of appropriate external sources of support.

#### **Dissemination**

All members of staff and governors receive a copy of the policy. Training on the policy content is delivered to staff from time

to time, as appropriate. Copies of this policy are available from the school office on request, or on the website. A short summary of the policy is included in the school prospectus and on the school website.

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