



## Sex & Relationships Education (SRE) Policy

### Statement of Intent

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

Effective SRE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils 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 Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.

### 1. Legal framework

- 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. The policy shall be reviewed at the start of each academic year.

## 2. Schools Role

- High quality SRE helps create safe school communities in which pupils can grow, learn, and develop a positive, healthy behaviour for life. It is essential for the following reasons:
- Children and young people have a right to good quality education, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Children and young people want to be prepared for the physical and emotional changes they undergo at puberty, and young people want to learn about relationships. Older pupils frequently say that sex and relationships education was 'too little, too late and too biological'. SRE plays a vital part in meeting schools' safeguarding obligations. Ofsted states that schools must have a preventative programme that enables pupils to learn about safety and risks in relationships.
- Schools maintain a statutory obligation under the Children Act (2004) to promote their pupils' wellbeing and under the Education Act (1996), to prepare children and young people for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life. A comprehensive SRE programme can have a positive impact on pupils' health and wellbeing and their ability to achieve, and can play a crucial part in meeting these obligations.

## 3. Aims of the Policy

### **Moral and Values Framework**

- The SRE programme at Benfield 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 pupils. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family backgrounds. Equal time and provision is allocated for all groups but there may be occasions where pupils with Special Educational Needs are given extra support from SEN staff.

## **Content**

- In Key Stage 3 pupils 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 pupils learn to recognise the influences and pressures around sexual behaviour and respond appropriately and confidently seek professional health advice. They learn how HIV and other sexually transmitted infections affect the body, how different forms of contraception work, the risk of 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. Materials used reflect the consultation with parents/carers and the school health adviser (school nurse). Age and cultural backgrounds of the pupils are regarded in relation to images used. The range of material used is available to parents/carers and informative books are available to pupils in the library.

## **Organisation**

- SRE is not delivered in isolation but firmly embedded in all curriculum areas, including the CORE programme and Religious Studies lessons. At Benfield School the *main* content is delivered in Bespoke PSHE sessions with professionals such as the School Health Team, RE and Science lessons.
- SRE is normally delivered by specialist teachers in mixed ability gender groups. Active learning methods which involve children's full participation are used.

Occasionally, appropriate and suitably experienced and/or knowledgeable visitors from outside school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of SRE in school. Benfield 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 input to PSHE lessons are part of a planned programme 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 pupils.
- This evaluation informs future planning. Evaluation of the SRE programme outside the science curriculum is conducted using a variety of evaluative techniques, which have been built into the programme. Teachers are required to keep their own personal evaluation of each lesson, which will be used by the coordinator to inform future planning and to inform parents of what students have studied with the year. Benfield 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.

#### **4. 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 statutory National Curriculum. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the Headteacher who will explore any concerns and discuss the impact that withdrawal may have on the child. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the SRE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed. Parents will be asked to complete a consent form at the start of Year 7 by the Head of Student Progress.

#### **5. Confidentiality**

- As a general rule a child's confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. If this person believes that the child is at risk or in danger, she/he talks to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who may confer with the Leadership Team before any decision is made. The child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The child will be supported throughout the process.

## 6. Safeguarding and Child Protection

- The school has a separate Safeguarding Policy. Effective SRE may bring about disclosures of child protection issues and all staff are reminded of the procedures for reporting their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, at the start of each academic year and as part of the schools induction programme.

## 7. Disclosures

- If a the member of staff learns that an under 16 years old is sexually active or contemplating sexual activity school will ensure that: The young person is persuaded to talk to their parent/carer; Child Protection issues are addressed;
- The young person receives adequate counseling and information; The Headteacher will monitor the frequency of cases where they handle information without parental knowledge.

## 8. 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 pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have a different opinion.

## 9. Dealing with Questions

- Both formal and informal SRE arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil 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 Child Protection Coordinator if they are concerned.

## 10. Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation (LGBT)

- Benfield School believes that SRE should meet the needs of all pupils regardless of their developing sexuality and 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 to reassure them of the content and context. Benfield School has a Homophobic bullying policy.

## 11. Monitoring and review

- The Headteacher is responsible for reviewing this policy
- The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and evaluated by all members of staff. Any concerns will be reported to the head teacher immediately.