

**Wix Primary School**  
**Sex and Relationships Education Policy**  
**2017**

**This policy is based on:**

Sex and Relationship Education Guidance DfES 2000

Sex and Relationships Education Guidance to Schools (Consultation) DCSF 2010

**1. What is Sex and Relationships Education?**

**1.1 Definition**

Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is learning about our bodies, health and relationships with a particular focus on puberty and growing up, sexual health, sexual intimacy, dealing with emotions and managing personal relationships.

**1.2 Explanation**

SRE teaches children and young people to develop values and attitudes, learn personal and social skills, and increases their knowledge and understanding to enable them to make informed decisions and healthier life choices.

SRE makes an essential and significant contribution to safeguarding children during their school-age years and into the future. It enables children to understand their physical and emotional development and to take increasing responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and that of others.

It is important that children start to build up the vocabulary and confidence to talk openly and positively about emotions, relationships and their bodies. Learning the words to describe feelings and emotions, the correct terms for parts of the body and developing “health literacy” is vital for children to stay safe and seek help if they feel at risk or are being harmed.

SRE equips children with the values, skills and knowledge to understand and deal appropriately with social and cultural pressures (including in the media).

**2. School Statement**

At Wix Primary School we believe that Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) plays a vital role in helping and supporting children through their physical, emotional and moral development. Effective SRE is important to ensure that children grow up able to enjoy the positive benefits of loving, rewarding and responsible relationships, are informed and comfortable with their bodies, understand the changes during puberty, are healthy and are physically and emotionally safe.

SRE teaching at Wix Primary School is set in the context of clear values; most importantly the value of loving and stable relationships (including marriage). It teaches children to develop values, attitudes, personal and social skills, and increases their knowledge and understanding to make informed decisions and choices.

**3. Aims**

Through the curriculum we aim to support, teach and encourage children (at an appropriate stage in their development) to:

**3.1 Enjoy the positive benefits of loving, rewarding and responsible relationships:**

- Have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others
- Understand about the range of relationships, including the importance of

family for the care and support of children

- Develop their confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships, and respect the differences between people
- Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships

### **3.2 Be informed and comfortable with their bodies; understand the changes during puberty:**

- Be able to name parts of the body and understand how their bodies work
- Ensure that children are prepared for the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults
- Understand emotional changes during puberty
- Develop a respect for their own bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term, and loving relationship
- Understand the role the media plays in forming attitudes and stereotypes

### **3.3 Be healthy and emotionally safe:**

- Understand good hygiene and other health practices
- Be able to recognise unsafe situations, know how they can protect themselves and know where to ask for help and support
- Develop an awareness of sex abuse/exploitation, and what they should do if they are worried about any sexual/physical/emotional matters.

## **4. Principles underpinning SRE**

These involve acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. SRE has a key part to play in helping children develop the skills to live confident, healthy and independent lives. All SRE content should be:

### **4.1 Factually accurate and evidence-based**

Teachers should make a clear distinction between factual information and people's views and beliefs. Only the correct biological names for body parts will be used.

### **4.2 Age-appropriate**

SRE should be appropriate to the age and maturity of children. The scheme of work for SRE is developmental and builds on learning year by year. Please see related points 8 and 9 in this policy.

### **4.3 Sensitive to faith and cultural perspectives**

Faith and cultural beliefs have an important role in shaping children's views about sex and relationships. It is right, therefore, that in helping children to make positive and informed choices, faith and cultural perspectives are considered alongside the law and medical facts. Teaching includes the perspectives of a range of different faiths as part of the context for discussions about sex and relationships.

At the same time, however, SRE is about preparing children for the responsibilities and challenges of adult life and so all children should be provided with regular and sustained opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and values they will need in the future to make safe, healthy, responsible and caring choices.

### **4.4 Promote equality, inclusion & acceptance of diversity**

SRE must be aware of and responsive to the diverse faith, cultural and family backgrounds of children and also to abilities, gender and sexual orientation. SRE promotes awareness, respect and understanding for the wide range of practices and beliefs relating to sex and relationships within our society. See point 14 in this policy.

### **4.5 Promote strong and stable relationships**

SRE should provide sufficient focus on personal and social relationships. SRE should

help children to understand the importance of stable and loving relationships for family life. SRE should help children to build the resilience they need to cope with change and loss when there is disruption in family structures for example, due to bereavement or separation.

#### **4.6 Increase awareness of Rights and Responsibilities**

SRE should provide children with a clear sense of rights and responsibilities in relation to sex and relationships. This should include explanation of the law as it applies to relevant issues. For example SRE should, in an age appropriate manner:

- inform children about their right to say no, what consent really means and the nature of abuse and exploitation. It should also teach about the responsibility not to put others under pressure to engage in sexual activity.
- clarify rights relating to equalities and also explain responsibility not to discriminate or cause others distress based on their sexual orientation, gender, belief or their personal choices relating to sex and relationships
- support children with the skills needed to fulfil their rights and responsibilities, including assertiveness, negotiation and accessing help and advice.

### **5. What should be taught in SRE**

SRE has three main elements:

#### **5.1 Values and attitudes**

Because of the personal and social nature of the topics covered in SRE, values and attitudes are a central part of learning and moral development. There are clear values that underpin SRE including:

- mutual respect,
- the value of family life and of loving and stable relationships in bringing up children
- rights and responsibilities, for self and others
- commitment to safety and wellbeing
- gender equality
- acceptance of diversity, and
- that violence and coercion in relationships are unacceptable

#### **5.2 Knowledge and understanding**

SRE should also increase children's knowledge and understanding at appropriate stages by:

- learning and understanding emotional and physical development
- understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- learning how to resist unwelcome pressures to be sexually active
- understanding the legal aspects of sexual behaviour
- understanding the positive benefits of loving, rewarding and responsible relationships
- learning about the impact of coercion and violence and understanding that consent is critical.

#### **5.3 Personal and social skills**

As well as knowing facts, it is important that children develop personal and social skills to make informed decisions and choices, including:

- learning to identify their own emotions and those of others

- managing emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- developing self-respect and empathy for others
- communicating openly and respectfully about sex and relationships
- making and carrying out decisions
- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made
- coping with and resisting unwelcome peer pressure
- managing conflict
- learning how to identify risk,
- recognising and avoiding exploitation and abuse, and
- asking for help and accessing advice and services.

## **6. Content and Organisation**

Wix aims to provide a programme of sex and relationship education predominantly through the PSCHE and science curriculum.

We focus on teaching children about relationships using a variety of formal and informal opportunities and strategies. This all helps children to develop their self-esteem and emotional well-being and to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, which are based on respect for themselves and for others.

SRE is taught gradually, so that learning can be built up year-by-year in a way that is appropriate to the age and maturity of each child; responds to the needs they have, and enables them to successfully manage the challenges they face as they grow up.

## **7. Meeting individual pupil's needs**

The SRE curriculum needs to have flexibility to address the specific needs of the pupils in any group. All SRE materials should be inclusive and show positive images of children and adults from a range of backgrounds and encourage safe, rewarding, responsible relationships.

Within a class, children will have differing levels of ability and maturity. Teachers should respond to children's questions at their level whilst balancing the needs of the whole class. Sometimes individual children will ask questions and raise issues that are much more advanced than their peers. In this case the teacher can defer the question so that it can be answered in one to one setting. Questions may also be referred back to parents/carers if necessary.

If the question raises cause for concern about safeguarding the teacher should discuss this with the designated safeguarding lead (Rebecca Osuntokun) to agree next steps.

Classroom support from teaching support staff (teaching assistants, learning support assistants and learning mentors) helps ensure that the needs of individual children can be met. See point 9 in this policy.

## **8. SRE for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

SRE should help all children understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives. The Education Act 1996 ensures that children with special educational needs have the same entitlement to sex education as their mainstream peers.

Timing, methods and learning processes will differ according to their needs.

It is important to acknowledge the physical and emotional development of these children and differentiate materials accordingly. Teachers will be expected to liaise with the SENCO/PSCHE leader/relevant outside agencies as necessary to plan a

relevant curriculum to meet the needs of these children.

### **9. Role of teaching support staff**

Teaching support staff play an invaluable role in supporting delivery of SRE but should not be used as a substitute for teachers.

Teaching support staff may run small group/individual SRE sessions outside of full class teaching to meet the needs of particular children. These sessions must comply with the SRE policy and any associated guidance and are fully directed by the teacher/PSCHE leader/SENCO.

### **10. Teaching techniques**

Schools have an important role in helping children develop the vocabulary and confidence to talk, listen to others and think critically about sex and relationships. There are a number of teaching strategies that can help this, for example:

- establishing and maintaining ground rules to create a safe learning environment and to make confidentiality procedures clear
- responding to / being conscious of pupils' existing knowledge and experience
- using 'distancing' techniques;
- using interactive learning methods that support participation and encourage reflection

Additional guidance and training for teachers/teaching support staff will ensure these techniques are used effectively and within the school's SRE policy.

### **11. Assessment**

The elements of SRE that form part of the science curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 must be assessed in accordance with the requirements of the National Curriculum. The learning from the other elements of SRE should be assessed as part of the overall PSCHE education provision.

### **12. Staff Responsibilities**

In order to reassure parents/carers, children and governors that the personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers (including teaching support staff involved in delivery of SRE) will not influence the teaching of SRE, all those contributing to the programme are expected to work within the aims listed at point 3 in this policy, follow this policy and any other guidance provided by the school.

Teachers and all staff working in school have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of their pupils. They are in a particular position of trust. Sexual relationships involving children under 16 constitute a criminal offence. A sexual relationship between a member of staff and any pupil is a breach of that trust. Such behaviour will be regarded as gross professional misconduct on the part of the teacher and will result in disciplinary action. If a decision is made to dismiss, this may also lead to a teacher being barred from further employment service by the Secretary of State.

Teachers and support staff who are concerned in any way that a child is at risk of sexual or any other kind of abuse must follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures. They cannot, therefore, offer unconditional confidentiality to children.

### **13. The role of governors**

Governors have a key strategic role in ensuring that SRE is of a high quality and meets the needs of children and the communities the school serves. It is the responsibility of the school governors to ensure that the SRE policy is up-to-date and fit for purpose.

### **14. Diversity Issues**

SRE promotes awareness, respect and understanding for the wide range of practices

and beliefs relating to sex and relationships within our society even if the beliefs are not shared by all.

#### **14.1 Family/home life**

The DfEE's *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance* stresses the need for the value of family life to be emphasised in SRE. SRE teaching must consider and be sensitive to the broad range of experiences of family life for children, including: single parent families; unmarried parents; divorced/separated parents; parents who have non-monogamous relationships; lesbian, gay and bisexual parents; children living between two homes; foster homes; young people in residential homes; children living with relations other than biological parents.

#### **14.2 Sexual orientation**

The Equality Act 2010 and Department for Education guidance (DfE2014b) covers the way SRE should be delivered. As such, issues are taught in a way that pupils are not subject to discrimination. Wix Primary School has a duty to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Inclusive SRE at Wix Primary School fosters good relations between pupils and tackles all types of prejudice, including homophobia, and promotes understanding and respect.

#### **14.3 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

FGM is comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reason (World Health Organisation). The practice of FGM is more prevalent in some communities than others. FGM constitutes a form of child abuse and violence against

women and girls, and has severe short-term and long-term physical and psychological consequences.

Although there is no specific teaching of FGM issues in the curriculum, the issues may arise given the nature of SRE content and lessons. All staff, as part of their Safeguarding and Child Protection training must have knowledge of three key issues:

- Specific factors that may heighten a girl's or woman's risk of being affected by FGM
- Indications that FGM may be about to take place soon
- Indications that FGM may have already taken place

All staff should follow Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures if they have concerns about a child and FGM.

## **15. Working with parents/carers**

Parents have a unique emotional relationship with their child, knowledge of their maturity and can respond to their questions about sex and relationships more spontaneously as they arise. However, the amount of SRE provided at home is variable and schools have a duty to ensure all children have quality SRE.

It is essential that Wix Primary School helps parents to understand what topics are taught and when, the style of teaching and the values that underpin SRE. This information needs to be provided in good time to allow for discussions with individual parents/carers to take place before the lessons and to provide additional support as necessary.

## **16. Procedures for Pupil Withdrawal from SRE**

Surveys have shown that the majority of parents and carers want schools to teach SRE. Section 405 of the Education Act 1996 provides the right of parental withdrawal from all or part of SRE provided at school except for those parts included in the National Curriculum.

A pupil cannot be withdrawn from sex education where this is taught in the Science National Curriculum. Hence, children who are withdrawn from PSCHÉ lessons will still receive biological information but not taught in the context of relationships.

Parents/carers have a legal right to withdraw their children from SRE taught outside the Science National Curriculum – but if they choose to withdraw their children from school provision they have a responsibility to provide alternative SRE.

The school will send a letter detailing what is to be covered and informing parents/carers of the procedures should they wish to withdraw their child from all or some of the SRE content before the lessons take place.

If a parent/carer is considering withdrawing their child, a discussion must take place to make sure they are aware of:

- what will be taught and how
- how the school will support them in fulfilling their responsibility to provide SRE at home, and
- that aspects of SRE could arise naturally from class discussion outside of the designated lessons.

## **17. Addressing sexual, sexist and transphobic bullying through a whole school approach to SRE**

Sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying occurs when a pupil (or group), usually repeatedly, harms another pupil or intentionally makes them unhappy because of their sex or because they may not be perceived to conform to normative gender roles.

These types of bullying are commonly underpinned by sexist or transphobic attitudes.

By working to prevent this type of bullying from taking place, schools can safeguard the welfare of their pupils, while at the same time playing their part to create a society

in which people have positive attitudes to difference and treat each other with respect.

Any incidents of sexual, sexist and transphobic bullying should be addressed using the school's behaviour management, anti-bullying, safeguarding and child protection policies as appropriate.

## **18. Media and communication technologies**

### **18.1 In the media**

Children gain much information about sex and relationships from a wide range of sources. This information is often confusing, contradictory or inaccurate.

The school therefore has a responsibility to prepare children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life by educating them in sex and relationships in a balanced, objective and accurate way. This will also include consideration of how the media influences attitudes and stereotypes.

### **18.2 Communication technologies**

The use of mobile phones, email, instant messaging or websites to transmit rumours or circulate inappropriate or explicit images to a wide audience has been found to be a particular concern in terms of sexual bullying or exploitation. Children are taught safe use of communication technologies as part of SRE when appropriate and through the PSCHE curriculum focus on e-safety. Incidents of misuse of communication technologies will be handled using the school's behaviour management, anti-bullying, safeguarding and child protection policies as appropriate.

### **19. The role of visitors**

All visitors to the classroom should work within Wix School's SRE policy. The teacher should ensure that the contribution of visitors fits within the scheme of work for SRE and enhances learning. Responsibility for SRE lies with the school, and the input from a visitor should never be a substitute for a planned and coordinated school SRE curriculum.

### **20. Availability of the SRE policy**

All parents/carers should be made aware of the policy and be able to access it.

**Next review due:** June 2018