

RED ROSE SCHOOL SEX & RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION POLICY

Updated: October 2017

Sec2 Chapter

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This policy is subject to annual review. It reflects [‘Sex and relationships education \(SRE\) for the 21st century: 2014’](#)¹ (Published by PSHE Association) which supplements [existing statutory Department for Education guidance for schools](#) (DfES 0116/2000) with information that better recognises the needs of our members when addressing 21st century challenges such as online pornography and staying safe online. (extracts from SRE for 21st Century will be in text boxes)

WHY SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT

High quality SRE helps create safe school communities in which pupils can grow, learn, and develop 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’. Ofsted reinforced this in their 2013 Not Yet Good Enough report.
- SRE plays a vital part in meeting schools’ safeguarding obligations. Ofsted is clear 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.

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, to be informed, comfortable with the changes during puberty and emotionally supported. Parents play a vital role in providing the building blocks for healthy and fulfilling social and personal relationships while protecting their children and young people from harm. They should lead on instilling values, but schools have a clear role in giving young people accurate

information and helping them to develop the skills they need to make safe and responsible choices.

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. When cases of sexual abuse have come to light years after the event parents, teachers and young people have spoken of their regret that SRE was started so late and that they/the child was unable to report it because they did not have the language and did not know that what was happening to them was wrong. There is now anecdotal evidence where parents acknowledge their gratitude to SRE in school because their child had had the confidence and language to tell when they have been approached inappropriately rather than after abuse has taken place.

In the 21st Century, 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, pop songs, TV and magazines. These media often present a distorted and inaccurate view of sex and relationships, and provide increasingly explicit images of sex and sexuality. In addition some children and young people will use the new technology to bully and intimidate others or to place themselves in compromising positions e.g send revealing photos of themselves to girl or boy friends. Far from “destroying their innocence” SRE equips children and young people with the values, skills and knowledge to understand and deal appropriately with these social and cultural pressures.

School provides a safe place for children and young people to make sense of the information they have picked up from the media and also playground myths. Guided by a skilled teacher, children and young people are able to separate facts from fiction and clarify and strengthen their own values.

Some children start puberty as young as eight years old. SRE prepares children for the physical and emotional changes of puberty. Many parents do talk to their children about growing up before puberty starts – but where this is absent some girls describe their fear to see that they were bleeding when their periods started. Boys talk about feeling isolated from discussions which only seem relevant to girls and might turn to other sources of information such as the internet and pornography.

As children approach adolescence so the nature of their relationships with parents, carers and their peers begins to change. They want new experiences and want to form new friendships and relationships. SRE is critical in that it provides accurate information about social norms to correct the myth that “everyone is doing it” and can support young people in resisting pressure. While it is only the minority of young people who first have sex before the age of 16 and, while remaining sensitive to the ethos of the school, it is vital that all young people have information about contraception. Currently

approximately half of teenage conceptions end in abortion, indicating that they were unwanted or unintended. Many early sexual encounters are associated with alcohol consumption and coercion and these topics also need to be addressed.

In addition, the school curriculum has a role to play in reducing the likelihood of sexist, sexual, homophobic and transphobic bullying occurring in part through addressing some of the underlying attitudes and values that underpin it. SRE within PSHE education is the most obvious location for specific coverage of issues relating to bullying, gender equality and sexuality..

SRE within PSHE education is an important part of a whole-school approach to pupil well-being. Pupils who are happy in their relationships with peers and adults at school are likely to be better able to learn. By addressing a range of personal and social issues and providing information about where and how to get help, SRE supports pupils who face difficulties to get help and thus helps them to stay on track with learning.

What is the status of sex and relationships education in schools?

There are a number of requirements that all schools must adhere to when providing sex and relationships education, alongside the statutory guidance and this supplementary advice. There is no statutory requirement for SRE in independent schools. (**Red Rose School undertakes SRE**) SRE plays an important part in fulfilling the statutory duties all schools have to meet. As section 2.1 of the National Curriculum framework (DfE, 2013) states:

‘Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.’

These duties are set out in the 2002 Education Act and the 2010 Academies Act. Whole school (Section 5) Ofsted inspections consider the extent to which a school provides such a curriculum.

In the recent review of the National Curriculum, the Government has made it clear that all state schools ‘should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), drawing on good practice’. (National Curriculum in England, DfE, 2013) and that ‘sex and relationship education (SRE) is an important part of PSHE education’ (Guidance – PSHE education, DfE, 2013). In any school that provides SRE, parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of SRE (excluding withdrawal from sex education in National Curriculum science) although very few choose to exercise that right.

DEFINITION

Sex and Relationship Education (S.R.E.) is lifelong learning about physical, moral, and emotional development. It is about learning about the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is about learning to be tolerant of others, whose relationships and sexuality may be different. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It provides knowledge and the organization of skills and attitudes which will allow children to manage their lives in a healthy and reasonable way.

What is high quality sex and relationships education?

The principles of high quality SRE in all schools – including those with a religious character – are set out below.

Sex and relationships education:

- It is a partnership between home and school
- ensures children and young people's views are actively sought to influence lesson planning and teaching
- starts early and is relevant to pupils at each stage in their development and maturity
- is taught by people who are trained and confident in talking about issues such as healthy and unhealthy relationships, equality, pleasure, respect, abuse, sexuality, gender identity, sex and consent
- includes the acquisition of knowledge, the development of life skills and respectful attitudes and values
- has sufficient time to cover a wide range of topics, with a strong emphasis on relationships, consent, rights, responsibilities to others, negotiation and communication skills, and accessing services
- helps pupils understand on and offline safety, consent, violence and exploitation
- is both medically and factually correct and treats sex as a normal and pleasurable fact of life
- is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief, or other life experience
- uses active learning methods, and is rigorously planned, assessed and evaluated
- helps pupils understand a range of views and beliefs about relationships and sex in society including some of the mixed messages about gender, sex and sexuality from different sources including the media
- teaches pupils about the law and their rights to confidentiality even if they are under 16, and is linked to school-based and community health services and organisations.
- promotes equality in relationships, recognises and challenges gender inequality and reflects girls' and boys' different experiences and needs

It contributes to:

- a positive ethos and environment for learning
- safeguarding pupils (Children Act 2004), promoting their emotional wellbeing, and improving their ability to achieve in school
- a better understanding of diversity and inclusion, a reduction in gender-based and homophobic prejudice, bullying and violence and an understanding of the difference between consenting and exploitative relationships
- helping pupils keep themselves safe from harm, both on and offline, enjoy their relationships and build confidence in accessing services if they need help and advice
- reducing early sexual activity, teenage conceptions, sexually transmitted infections, sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence and bullying

What does the evidence from children, young people and research tell us?

- The National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (NATSAL) 2013 confirmed that the age at which people in Britain first have sex is mostly 16 and above, and that this has changed very little over the past decade.
- Teenage pregnancy rates in England and Wales are the lowest they have been for over 40 years.¹ More than half (53%) of lesbian, gay and bisexual young people are never taught anything about lesbian, gay and bisexual issues at school.
- In a ChildLine survey of 13 to 18-year-olds, 60% said they had been asked for a sexual image or video of themselves.
- More than four in five young people (85%) are never taught anything about the biological or physical aspects of same-sex relationships.
- One in three 16 to 18-year-old girls experience unwanted sexual touching/'groping' at school.
- In a NSPCC study, one in three girls and 16 percent of boys reported that they had experienced sexual violence from a partner.

Why do children, young people and parents think SRE is important?

Children and young people

- want to learn about issues such as body confidence, love and sexual attraction, how to respond to peer pressure, and how to behave in a relationship
- have a right to feel safe and healthy, and a right to education that helps them learn and achieve
- want parents and carers to talk to them about growing up and sex, and to learn about other people's views and opinions in school

need help to understand the way their bodies and feelings change as they grow and develop, and to develop skills and confidence

Parents and carers

- A 2013 NAHT survey found that 88% of the parents of school-aged pupils want SRE to be taught in all schools.
- A YouGov Poll (2013) found that 86% of UK adults believe SRE that addresses sexual consent and respectful relationships should be taught in all secondary schools.
- 83% of the parents of secondary aged pupils want to see issues around pornography addressed in school SRE (NAHT 2013)
- Most parents (84%) want both school and home to have a role in SRE.¹²

Teaching SRE: your questions answered

Annex A provides answers to 10 of the key questions teachers and others working in schools ask. These cover issues that are not addressed by the Secretary of State's 2000 guidance.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES - ATTITUDES AND VALUES

- ✓ Recognition of the understanding of the value of family life, marriage, and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of both children and adults
- ✓ Encouraging respect for moral and spiritual values which reflect the Christian foundation of the school
- ✓ Respect for oneself and others, loving and being loved, and caring for oneself and others
- ✓ Tolerance of different values and attitudes and lifestyles of others
- ✓ Exploring, considering, and understanding moral dilemmas
- ✓ Development of critical thinking skills as part of decision making

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES - PERSONAL AND SOCIAL SKILLS

- ✓ Strengthening self-esteem and self-confidence through learning to understand and manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively and how to make choices based on understanding of difference and without prejudice
- ✓ Development of skills of choice and an understanding of the consequences of such choices are fundamental to decision making, assertiveness, managing conflict, and communication. All of these enable pupils to exercise personal responsibility to help avoid exploitation and abuse. Sensitivity is important, as there may be pupils in the group who have been abused, or are carrying out abuse and do not recognize it as such

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- ✓ Learning and understanding about physical development at appropriate stages and dealing with issues of gender and stereotyping
- ✓ Transmission of knowledge about sexuality, reproduction, disability, inherited disorders, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- ✓ Acquisition of information about local and national services including sexual health advice, sexuality, contraception, and how to assess them
- ✓ Learning about the reasons for delaying sexual activity prior to marriage, the benefits to be gained from such a delay, and the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy/parenthood

IMPLEMENTATION

S.R.E. will take the form of formal teaching using video films, slides, and other audio-visual aids, small group and class discussion and role-playing, with the opportunity for questions raised to be answered. Teachers will reserve the right to refuse to answer questions where answers may be thought to be inappropriate for the majority of pupils in the group, bearing in mind that much explicit information is available in teen magazines and that informal learning can be a powerful source of confusion and mis-information. The local School Nurses Team will deliver SRE on a regular year appropriate basis and Class Teachers must be present during their delivery of the SRE lessons.

We aim to dispel myths and reduce fear and anxiety, clarify understanding and counteract prejudice by providing accurate teaching about sex and related matters. This will be done while preparing students to cope with their developing sexuality, the changes of puberty and adolescence, and the responsibilities of both personal health care and mature physical relationships. Students should develop confidence in the moral basis of their values so that they can develop a pattern of behaviour which takes account of the need for respect for others and their responsibilities to others and themselves. This matches the ideas of tolerance seen in the School Equal Opportunities Policy.

Delivery will be in the context of the P.S.H..E., R.E., and Science curricula. It may involve addressing moral and ethical issues which may arise from apparently unrelated topics in all Curriculum Subjects, where there will not be a parental right of withdrawal.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff may not offer or guarantee to students confidentiality in any matters due to the need to take action in issues related to abuse, under-age sexual intercourse or pregnancy. At the same time, students will be offered sensitive and appropriate support.

In the case of a student disclosing possible abuse, the school's Child Protection Procedures will be used.

In the case of a student making a disclosure of possible pregnancy, or seeking individual advice on contraception, students should be encouraged to know that they can talk to an adult in the school. The school will encourage any student of statutory school age to talk to their parents first:

- ✓ The child should be asked if they can tell their parents and asked if they need help
- ✓ Staff will need to check how they have progressed the issue
- ✓ If the child refuses to tell their parents, staff should refer them to a health professional

- ✓ Staff should report the incident to the Head Teacher who will consult with health professionals prior to informing parents
- ✓ The student will always be told that school staff are having to act in this way before their confidentiality is compromised

PARENTAL RIGHTS

We would prefer parents to play a part in this sensitive area by being informed in the School Programme so that they can continue discussions at home. However, parents of all students have the right to withdraw their child from non-National Curriculum sex education: parents will be able to state annually whether or not they wish their child to be withdrawn.

We feel that this is inadvisable since it is inevitable that students will discuss the content of lessons and there is a danger that mis-information and half-truths will be passed on. The Class Teacher will seek clarifications from parents regarding their reservations and a will, as far as is realistic, set appropriate alternative work when the student is not in the lesson.

Full copies of the policy will be given to the parents of all students new to the school; a summary will be included in the school prospectus and circulated to all parents annually.

Please return the form below only if you do not want your child to receive non-statutory sex education.

You will be given the opportunity to re-affirm/reconsider your decision annually.

Non-statutory sex education is defined as the work relating to attitudes, sexuality, and HIV/AIDS. Although this is non-statutory, the school is obliged to teach it and feels it is important that these aspects are dealt with sympathetically.

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PARENTAL REQUEST FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM SEX EDUCATION LESSONS

Name _____ of
student _____

I/We do not want our child to receive non-statutory sex education.

I/We understand that he/she will be given written work when this subject matter is covered in lessons.

I/We understand that his/her teachers may contact us to find out exactly what our reservations are.

Parent's _____ Date _____
signature _____

Please return this slip to the Class Teacher in a sealed envelope

Teaching SRE: your questions answered

This section provides answers to 10 of the key questions teachers and others working in schools ask. These cover issues that are not addressed by the Secretary of State's 2000 guidance.

How do I ensure SRE is fully integrated into my school's PSHE programme and linked to other subjects?

The school's commitment to promoting the personal and social development, health and wellbeing of its pupils should be evident in its statement of aims and values. This underpins the ethos of the school, and should be reflected in its policies and in the breadth of the curriculum – including the teaching of PSHE and SRE.

High quality SRE should be part of a broader developmental PSHE education programme, as set out, for example, in the PSHE Association's programme of study (www.pshe-association.org.uk/programmeofstudy) and its guidance on developing your school's SRE policy and PSHE policy. This learning should be linked to broader school policies and the curriculum in relevant subjects, as well as the school's pastoral policy.

Science teaches about the biological facts relating to human growth, puberty and reproduction. It may also include teaching about contraception and STIs. PSHE helps pupils to think about the different social contexts, influences and beliefs that affect personal behaviour. PSHE also develops a positive vocabulary and the strategies and skills children and young people need to stay healthy and safe.

It is important to link to the ICT/computing curriculum, which teaches about online safety. It is vital for SRE to teach that the internet and social media are important resources for learning and information, and a great opportunity to build social networks, as well as teaching about the risks and how to stay safe online.

There will also be relevant learning in other subjects, such as citizenship or religious education, about the law and the views of religious and secular groups on different issues.

Does sex and relationships education sexualise children?

No. SRE is part of the solution to concerns about sexualisation. The evidence, as summarised here: http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/494585/sef_doessrework_2010.pdf shows that comprehensive SRE delays sexual activity for young people, and increases the likelihood of using

contraception. The National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (NATSAL, 2013) showed a link between school-based SRE and reductions in teenage pregnancy.

Children are naturally curious about growing up, how their bodies work and how humans reproduce. Their questions need to be answered honestly, using language and explanations appropriate for their age and maturity, thus avoiding unnecessary mystery, confusion, embarrassment and shame.

Sex and relationships education addresses the questions and concerns raised by the biological facts – for example, exploring the feelings a new baby can bring, or the effect of puberty on friendships. It provides balance to sometimes distorted messages about sex and gender roles in the media, and helps protect children by explaining boundaries and safety, and developing the language and understanding needed to recognise abusive behaviour and seek help. It also helps pupils to develop respectful and consensual attitudes and behaviours.

How do I teach about healthy relationships, sexual consent, exploitation and abuse?

The importance of teaching young people about consent is central to learning about healthy, equal and safe relationships and choices. In November 2013, the Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) completed an inquiry into child sexual exploitation (CSE) which has raised awareness of the prevalence of this issue and the urgent need to tackle it. The OCC inquiry showed that young people do not always recognise non-consensual sexual situations including rape.

The inquiry confirmed the importance of good quality SRE, which addresses gender-based and power inequalities, how these can lead to coercion and sexual violence, and the need for this to be taught in all schools as part of universal prevention. A Sex Education Forum survey of young people in 2013 found that the majority of young people knew basic legal facts about consent to sex but were much less sure about how to deal with the complexity of real-life relationship situations and where and how to get help if they needed it.

Pupils should be taught about all aspects of the law and sexual consent - notably that, in the law on sexual offences, the onus is on getting rather than giving consent. As a principle, SRE should promote equality in relationships and emphasise the importance of seeking and gaining mutual consent through positive and active communication, and go beyond teaching how to say 'no'.

Pupils should be taught how to identify behaviour in a relationship which is positive and supportive and that which is exploitative and controlling.

Pupils should understand the impact of a pernicious culture that reinforces stereotyped and gendered expectations for both boys and girls, including blaming victims for the abuse they experience and other cultural norms and negative stereotypes that they experience and observe.

Pupils should also develop the skills for negotiating consent and managing the feelings associated with their experiences, and how to seek help and support if they need it. Crucially, learning should open up discussion about real-life situations.

Younger pupils should learn that their body belongs to them and that they can say who has access to it. This is a key element in a school's approach to safeguarding. Learning to respect boundaries – their own and other people's – helps children to understand the need to obtain consent and that everyone has the right to offer or withhold their consent for any activity, sexual or otherwise.

Children need to learn the correct biological/medical names for the genitalia and reproductive organs. Having the right language to describe the private parts of their body – and knowing how to seek help if they are being abused – are vital for safeguarding. Being open and honest about the words for genitalia will support girls at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM). The summer holiday between leaving primary and starting secondary school is a risk period for girls at risk of FGM so this knowledge must come in good time. Further information about FGM can be found at: www.forwarduk.org.uk

A number of resources have been produced to help teachers develop lessons that will teach young people to recognise the signs of exploitation or abuse, and to seek help if it happens to them or someone they know. Some useful resources are included below:

- As part of the government's commitment to improving the teaching of consent, the PSHE Association has combined good practice examples with its own guidance. This can be found at: www.pshe-association.org.uk/consent. This guidance draws heavily on Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) guidance on The Sexual Offences Act 2003: http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/p_to_r/rape_and_sexual_offences/soa_2003_and_soa_1956/
- CPS guidance on the Statutory Definition of Consent, and the CPS Sexual Offences, Factsheet: http://www.cps.gov.uk/news/fact_sheets/sexual_offences/
- The Home Office has produced a resource, This is abuse, which is available at: <http://thisisabuse.direct.gov.uk/>
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) has produced a series of resources which are available at: www.ceop.police.uk and www.thinkuknow.co.uk. Thinkuknow for 14+: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/14_plus Thinkuknow for 11-13s: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11_13
- The Sex Education Forum has produced a briefing addressing healthy relationships and sexual exploitation within PSHE in schools (http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/media/3101/pshe_ff37.pdf) and an e-magazine to help teachers teach about consent, available free to members: <http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/resources/sex-educational-supplement.aspx>

- Brook has produced a Traffic Light Tool to help professionals assess whether children and young people's sexual behaviours are healthy or unhealthy: www.brook.org.uk/traffic-lights. This information is also available in a pocket-sized booklet: www.brook.org.uk/shop
- Brook has also produced a booklet for young people dealing with these issue, Ask Brook about relationships, safety and risks, available at: www.brook.org.uk/shop

How do I help address violence in relationships?

Schools must be a safe place for all pupils, and efforts to address violence require a whole school approach. SRE provides an ideal space to address sexual and relationship violence. Pupils should be encouraged to consider the importance of equality and respect within relationships, and to develop positive, non-violent behaviour. SRE lays the foundations for developing empathy and understanding between girls and boys, young men and young women. It gives pupils the chance to challenge gender stereotypes and expectations, and to introduce positive, diverse perspectives on gender roles, hopes and aspirations.

Most schools highlight respect for others as one of their key values – it will be reflected in the school's behaviour policy but should also be reinforced through the curriculum. Learning how to show respect through listening and sharing is all part of sex and relationships education, and starts when children begin school. Pupils can also learn how to challenge one another's ideas and behaviour in non-confrontational ways, recognising the difference between aggressive and assertive responses. They should learn to recognise physical, sexual and emotional violence and how to get help if they need it.

It is important to remember that some children will have witnessed violence in their homes, and may see this as acceptable behaviour. While men and women can be both victims and perpetrators, evidence shows that girls are disproportionately likely to experience pressure, coercion or violence from boys and men.¹³ This is a real-life issue that SRE should address, looking at the different experiences and influences on the behaviour of children and young people of different genders, in order to better support those who hold negative attitudes or behave unacceptably to change.

SRE provides a clear message that violence and exploitation are always wrong, that everyone is responsible for their own behaviour and for creating safe school communities, and that no one is ever responsible for the violence or abuse they experience. Teachers should ensure they understand how to link young people into wider support services where necessary. Ending violence against girls and women is an urgent global rights and public health concern, and is treated as a cross-government issue in the United Kingdom.

- The Against Violence and Abuse Project provides further information, advice and guidance: www.avaproject.org.uk

- Rape Crisis provides help and advice to those affected by rape, sexual violence and child sexual abuse: www.rapecrisis.org.uk
- Brook has worked with Fink to produce a set of conversation cards that focus on exploitation, violence and consent. These are available at: www.brook.org.uk/shop

Should I teach about the impact of pornography?

Yes. It is helpful to address the issues surrounding pornography and there is widespread support from parents who recognise the need for this. Teaching should emphasise that pornography is not the best way to learn about sex because it does not reflect real life, and can therefore be worrying, confusing and frightening for young people. Some young people may be concerned that their use of pornography is becoming compulsive – teachers should recommend talking about this to a trusted, non-judgmental adult. Pupils must also learn that some pornography – child abuse images, for example – is illegal for any age.

At secondary level, discussion about pornography can be included in lessons that focus on negotiation and assertiveness skills, the importance of communication in relationships, and analysing the stereotyping in some media images. Teaching can focus on the role of peer influence in young people's lives, the importance of not pressuring or coercing a partner to look at pornography or imitate behaviours in it, and the skills required to resist unwanted pressure.

Reports indicate that young people's interactions with pornography are distinctly gendered and that it can have negative effects on young people's attitudes to each other.¹⁴ SRE should enable all young people to understand pornography's influence on gender expectations of sex. It should build on earlier learning about relationships, body image, consent and gender, which begins in primary school with discussions about the importance of loving and respectful relationships. Pupils should understand that pornography shows a distorted image of sex and relationships, including 'perfect' bodies and exaggerated sexual prowess. SRE provides opportunities to discuss body image and understand how pornographic pictures and videos are routinely edited and 'photoshopped'. Pornographic images must never be shown to pupils, and there is no need for teachers to look at pornography to plan their teaching.

Pornography can depict a lack of communication about choices, sexual consent and contraception, and often shows violent and oppressive behaviours towards women, which can be frightening and confusing, and make young people feel pressured to behave in particular ways.

Useful resources include:

- Sex Education Forum e-magazine on teaching about pornography: <http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/resources/sex-educational-supplement.aspx>

- Growing Up Safe, from Big Talk Education, for primary schools: <http://www.bigtalkeducation.co.uk/resources-for-primaries.html>
- Planet Porn, from BISH, for secondary schools: <http://bishtraining.com/index.php/planet-porn/>
- Fantasy Versus Reality, from fpa: <http://www.fpa.org.uk/product/fantasy-vs-reality>

How should I teach about ‘sexting’?

Children and young people are growing up in a culture where technology and social media are important and have created more opportunity for sharing personal information. SRE should encourage pupils to think about what they want others to know and see about them – whether on or offline.

Language and technology change fast, but that shouldn’t prevent teachers from addressing the core issues of safety, privacy, peer influence and personal responsibility. Internet safety is included in the new computing curriculum, but doesn’t cover the important relationship aspects, so it is vital to coordinate with colleagues responsible for the computing curriculum to ensure there is no unhelpful duplication or contradictory messages.

‘Sexting’ and other self-made images and messages of a sexual nature, raise particular issues of safety, privacy, peer influence and personal responsibility. ‘Sexting’ is a term used by adults, referring to sexual content and images sent by mobile phone (though other digital communication raises similar concerns). Young people may use their own terms, including ‘selfies’, ‘nudes’ or ‘fanpics’.

Research shows that sexting is of most concern to young people in their early teens. Schools should address privacy and boundaries from a very early age in the context of personal safety and abuse. Specific work about ‘sexting’ should be addressed in SRE as soon as it is identified as a potential issue. Teaching should cover communication skills, attitudes and values, the law, acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and how to seek help.

Pupils should learn that it is illegal to produce, possess or distribute an indecent image of a person under the age of 18 – even if it’s a picture of themselves. These laws have been created to protect children and young people. It is therefore unlikely that the police would prosecute a young person unless they were concerned that images were being used to harass or coerce, or shared with intent to harm.

For further information see advice from the Association of Chief Police Officers:

http://ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/externaldocs/ACPO_Lead_position_on_Self_Taken_Images.pdf

- The NSPCC has produced resources to make it easier for children and young people to get help about sexting: <http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/onlinesafety/pages/sexting.aspx>
- Big Talk has produced resources to help primary school teachers discuss a range of difficult issues – including sexting and explicit images – with children: <http://www.bigtalkeducation.co.uk/resources-for-primaries.html>
- CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) has developed www.thinkuknow.co.uk, which contains a number of resources exploring the risks children and young people face online, including two films that address sexting issues: Exposed and First to a Million.
- Brook has produced a leaflet for young people called Ask Brook about relationships, safety and risk, which addresses on and offline safety and is supported by CEOP: <http://www.brook.org.uk/shop>

How do I make sex and relationships education inclusive?

Schools have a clear duty under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Inclusive SRE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promote understanding and respect, enabling schools to meet the requirements, and live the intended spirit, of the Equality Act 2010.

Too often, groups of young people say they feel excluded in SRE lessons. For example, lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils (who make up approximately 10% of any school population) often report that their SRE is solely about heterosexual relationships, or that non heterosexual identities were addressed negatively and that it fails to address sexual health issues linked to the range of sexual behaviours and activities that people encounter whatever their sexual orientation. Young people with physical or learning disabilities often report that SRE does not meet their needs, while boys tell us they feel excluded because SRE seems to be aimed more at girls – and they are often anxious about being shown up as being ignorant about sexual matters.

All children and young people – whatever their experience, background and identity – are entitled to quality sex and relationships education that helps them build confidence and a positive sense of self, and to stay healthy. All classes include pupils with different abilities and disabilities, experiences and backgrounds, gender and sexual identities. To encourage pupils to participate in lessons, teachers should ensure content, approach, and use of inclusive language reflect the diversity of the school community, and help each and every pupil to feel valued and included in the classroom.

Teachers should never assume that all intimate relationships are between opposite sexes. All sexual health information should be inclusive and should include LGBT people in case studies, scenarios and role-plays. Boys and girls can explore topics from a different gender's point of view, and a variety of

activities – including practical tasks, discussions, group activities and competitions – can provide something for everyone.

What are the best resources for SRE?

A trained, confident and competent teacher is better than any video, card pack or other teaching material. Ofsted has said repeatedly that teacher training is a vital part of raising standards in SRE because training allows teachers to develop the confidence and skills needed to deliver SRE as part of a planned PSHE curriculum. Good resources such as picture cards, games, puppets and 3D models, where they have been selected to meet particular needs, can enhance learning. Resources – especially those that are freely available on the internet – should be checked to make sure they support inclusion, contain accurate information from authoritative medical sources, and clearly separate opinions, beliefs and facts.

Parents and carers can be invited to see the resources that the school has selected, and shown how they are used. Some resources will have particular cultural sensitivities. Parents often welcome the opportunity to borrow resources to use at home, and some schools produce a book list for parents and put samples on display.

- The Sex Education Forum has produced a guide for choosing and using resources, and lists of SRE resources for primary, secondary and special schools:
<http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/resources/resources-for-sre.aspx>
- The Sex Education Forum publishes a diary of SRE training events offered by a range of national and local organisations at:
<http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/resources/events-and-training-diary.aspx>

Should I involve outside visitors in SRE?

Yes, as long as the visitor is intended to enhance rather than replace teacher-led sex and relationships education, and provides a specific contribution to the programme. Their input will be more effective if it is planned with the teacher who provides the context and follow-up. Teachers should always be present when classes have visitors.

Children and young people often say that visitors enrich their learning because their visits are memorable. Visitors must be carefully selected and their input should contribute to the overall SRE programme, as well as working within the school's values framework and confidentiality policy. It is vital to establish that visitors' values are in line with the school's ethos and values, and that they use facts and evidence to inform their teaching. It is never acceptable for pupils to be provided with inaccurate or misleading information about any issue, including contraception or abortion.

Pupils benefit from having accessible information at school about local support services available - for example, in student diaries. This should include information about local young people's health services, LGBT youth groups and specialist domestic violence, Rape Crisis Centres and support for black and minority ethnicity (BME) women who experience abuse. Having visitors from local services can be invaluable to increase confidence and know-how to access help and support if and when needed.

Confidentiality and safeguarding work in the context of SRE lessons

The classroom is never a confidential place to talk, and that remains true in sex and relationships education. Pupils must be reminded that lessons are not a place to discuss their personal experiences and issues – or to ask others to do so – through the establishment of ground rules or a working agreement. Any visitor to the classroom is bound by the school's policy on confidentiality, regardless of whether they have – or their organisation has – a different policy. It is vital to make sure visitors are aware of this, and to make sure there are enough opportunities for pupils to access confidential support after the lesson if they need it.

If a pupil tells you something personal on a one-to-one basis outside of the classroom, your school's confidentiality policy will help you decide whether you can keep that information confidential, or whether you need to seek help, advice, or refer to someone else.

Young people should be kept informed about how any information they have disclosed will be treated by the school, and who will have access to it. They should also be encouraged to involve their parents/carers if appropriate.

Confidentiality policies should be designed to enable you to act in the best interests of young people. If you believe there is a safeguarding or child protection issue, your school policy will state who within the school you should talk to and the routes for dealing with concerns. All schools should actively promote on and offline community, health and counselling services so pupils know where to go for confidential help and advice.

- The Sex Education Forum has produced a factsheet on confidentiality and a set of key questions about providing one-to-one support for pupils: <http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/schools/one-to-one-help-available.aspx>