

# PHOENIX COLLEGE



## **SEX & RELATIONSHIPS POLICY**

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<b>Date:</b>	<b>January 2018</b>
<b>Next review due by:</b>	<b>January 2019</b>

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## Definition

*It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about promoting sexual activity.(DfE)*

## Aims

Based on the above definition the aims of SRE at Phoenix College are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- To prepare students for the changes which occur to their bodies, minds and emotions as a consequence of growth from childhood to adulthood.

At Phoenix College there are three main elements of SRE, all of which are important for a balanced SRE programme:

1. attitudes and values
  - learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations;
  - learning the value of family life, marriage, and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children;
  - learning the value of respect, love and care;
  - exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas; and
  - developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.
2. personal and social skills
  - learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
  - developing self-respect and empathy for others;
  - learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice;
  - developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made;
  - managing conflict; and
  - learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

3. knowledge and understanding
  - learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages;
  - understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships;
  - learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services;
  - learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay; and
  - the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

Phoenix College recognises that it is a moral body in its own right. As part of the whole curriculum the school seeks to explore issues of right and wrong. We recognise that SRE is fraught with certain difficulties and whilst it acknowledges different life style choices it promotes a view that stable loving relationships are the best context for sexual relationships and the bringing-up of children.

### **Parents' right to withdraw**

Whilst sex and relationships education is the right and responsibility of the parent, Phoenix College provides sex and relationships education to support parents in fulfilling their responsibility. If parents are not happy with what the school provides in its basic curriculum with regard to sex and relationships education they have a right to withdraw their child/children from those aspects of sex and relationships education not covered by the National Curriculum Science Order.

They do so in writing to the Headteacher. When the Headteacher receives such a letter she will invite the parents to a meeting, at which the Headteacher will explain clearly what the school's policy is and seek to accommodate the wishes and/or concerns of the parents.

If that is not possible the student will be withdrawn from SRE and placed in another class where suitable work and supervision will be provided. A copy of this policy will be made available to all parents who request it.

### **Content of Phoenix College's SRE programme**

#### *Key Stage 3 Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle*

1. Students should be taught:
  - a) to recognise the physical and emotional changes that take place at puberty and how to manage these changes in a positive way
  - b) how to keep healthy and what influences health, including the media
  - c) that good relationships and an appropriate balance between work, leisure and exercise can promote physical and mental health

- d) in a context of the importance of relationships, about human reproduction, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, HIV and high-risk behaviours including early sexual activity
- e) to recognise and manage risk and make safer choices about healthy lifestyles, different environments and travel
- f) to recognise when pressure from others threatens their personal safety and well-being, and to develop effective ways of resisting pressures, including knowing when and where to get help

Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people

2. Students should be taught:

- a) about the nature of friendship and how to make and keep friends
- b) to recognise some of the cultural norms in society, including the range of lifestyles and relationships
- c) the changing nature of, and pressure on, relationships with friends and family, and when and how to seek help
- d) about the role and importance of marriage in family relationships
- e) about the role and feelings of parents and carers and the value of family life
- f) to recognise that goodwill is essential to positive and constructive relationships
- g) to negotiate within relationships, recognising that actions have consequences, and when and how to make compromises
- h) to resist pressure to do wrong, to recognise when others need help and how to support them
- i) to communicate confidently with their peers and adults.

#### *Key stage 4 PHSE*

Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle

1. Students should be taught:

- a) to think about the alternatives and long- and short-term consequences when making decisions about personal health
- b) to use assertiveness skills to resist unhelpful pressure
- c) about the health risks ... early sexual activity and pregnancy, ... and about safer choices they can make
- d) in the context of the importance of relationships, how different forms of contraception work, and where to get advice, in order to inform future choices
- e) to seek professional advice confidently and find information about health

Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people

2. Students should be taught:

- a) to be aware of exploitation in relationships
- b) to be able to talk about relationships and feelings
- c) to deal with changing relationships in a positive way, showing goodwill to others and using strategies to resolve disagreements peacefully

- d) about the nature and importance of marriage for family life and bringing up children
- e) about the role and responsibilities of a parent, and the qualities of good parenting and its value to family life
- f) about the impact of separation, divorce and bereavement on families and how to adapt to changing circumstances
- g) to know about the statutory and voluntary organisations that support relationships in crisis

### *Science Key Stage 3*

- 1. that fertilisation in humans is the fusion of a male and a female cell
- 2.
  - a) about the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence
  - b) about the human reproductive system, including the menstrual cycle and fertilisation
  - c) how the foetus develops in the uterus
  - d) how the growth and reproduction of bacteria and the replication of viruses can affect health

### *Science Key Stage 4*

- 2.
  - a) The way in which hormonal control occurs, including the effects of sex hormones
  - b) some medical uses of hormones, including the control and promotion of fertility
  - c) the defence mechanisms of the body
- 3.
  - a) how sex is determined in humans

The school recognises that SRE must be taught at both Key Stages. Parents wishing to see the SRE programme, the materials used and/or the scheme of work may do so by contacting their child's tutor. Parents will also be informed about SRE at the beginning of year meetings with an invitation to support the work being done in school by discussing issues at home.

The outcomes for SRE in the Secondary phase are clearly set out in DfE guidance and through its curriculum the school seeks to deliver these outcomes:

**3.5** At secondary school level, sex and relationship education should prepare young people for an adult life in which they can:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour;
- be aware of their sexuality and understand human sexuality;
- understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity;

- understand the reasons for having protected sex;
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and personal relationships;
- have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationships they want;
- communicate effectively;
- have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from unintended/unwanted conceptions, and sexually transmitted infections including HIV;
- avoid being exploited or exploiting others;
- avoid being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex;
- access confidential sexual health advice, support and if necessary treatment; and
- know how the law applies to sexual relationships.

### **The delivery of SRE**

Staff will be trained on the delivery of SRE as part of their induction. We will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching SRE.

### **Monitoring and evaluating SRE**

SRE will be monitored by the school's PSHE lead. It is her responsibility to:

- a) Ensure that SRE occurs in the school's curriculum according to the schemes of work for PSHE;
- b) Monitor the use of teaching and learning styles;
- c) Monitor the use of teaching materials;
- d) Evaluate the effectiveness of the school's programme

She will be given time to monitor and evaluate the school's SRE programme for each Key Stage.

### **Dealing with sensitive issues**

Teachers need to be sure that they are aware of issues that may arise out of teaching and learning about SRE. The following are protocols for discussion based lessons with students:

- no one (teacher or student) will have to answer a personal question;
- no one will be forced to take part in a discussion;
- only the correct names for body parts will be used;
- meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way; and
- teachers may use their discretion in responding to questions and may say that the appropriate person to answer that question is the parent.

Where a member of staff is concerned that a child protection issue is arising it is his/her responsibility to follow the school's policy in this matter to the letter, including reporting concerns about girls at risk from FGM or where we know that FGM might already have been performed.

## **Visitors contributing to SRE**

From time to time as part of a planned module of work the school will invite in local experts on issues relating to SRE as well as using health and other professionals associated with the school. All school associate health and other professional visitors will be asked to conform to the following:

- visitors contributing to SRE will do so at the invitation of the school and will be qualified to make an appropriate contribution.
- visitors must agree with the aims of the school in delivering its policy on SRE;
- when in class visitors will be supervised by a teacher, who will be present at all times;
- visitors will follow the school's child protection procedures if a disclosure occurs within the classroom setting;
- visitors will know and understand where their contribution fits into the school's programme for SRE and PSHE.

## **Policy review**

The school's governing body reviewed this policy and readopted it on (date)  
. It will be reviewed again as necessary.

## APPENDIX 1

### **Child Protection**

Teachers will be clear that they cannot be totally confidential and that if a student makes a disclosure that indicates that child abuse is taking place the teacher is bound by law to refer that student to the designated person in school giving a value free report of the disclosure.

### **Sex and Relationships Education**

In cases where a teacher learns from an under 16 year old that they are having, or contemplating having, sexual intercourse the teacher should:

- encourage the student to talk to their parent or carer;
- encourage the student to contact the school nurse or counsellor to access contraceptive and other services in the locality of the school.

Teachers will only have to report such disclosures where child protection issues are involved.

When the teacher who receives the information believes there is a child protection issue to be addressed, they should refer the case to a designated teacher for child protection. They should also make clear to the student that they cannot guarantee confidentiality. The teacher should ensure that the student understands that if confidentiality has to be broken they will be informed first.

The headteacher and governors will monitor the frequency of child protection cases as set out in the relevant policy.

### **Health professionals and others employed by the school**

Health professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct to maintain confidentiality. The school nurse will be bound by the UKCC code of conduct. The school expects that health professionals employed by the school will maintain their professional status and registration

## APPENDIX 2

### Female Genital Mutilation - FGM

#### Definition

*“Female Genital mutilation (FGM) comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or therapeutic reasons.”*

World Health Organisation 1997

*“Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. “*

Department for Education: Keeping Children Safe in Education April 2014

FGM is considered child abuse in the UK and a grave violation of the human rights of girls and women. It is a violation of the child’s right to life and their bodily integrity as well as their right to health. It is illegal in the UK to allow girls to undergo female genital mutilation either in this country or abroad. People guilty of allowing FGM to take place can be punished by fines or up to 14 years in prison.

FGM occurs mainly in Africa and to a lesser extent in the Middle East and Asia. It is not a religious requirement and there are no health benefits. It is a cultural practice.

Communities particularly affected in the UK include girls from: Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea, Yemen, Pakistan, Indonesia and Afghanistan; particularly first generation immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

This procedure often takes place in the summer, using the school holidays to recover (recovery takes 6 – 9 weeks.) It is important to be alert when a girl from a high risk group is absent from school for a long period or when a family request an „authorised absence“ just before a school holiday.

Children might also be talking about a special ceremony or a special holiday abroad.

Signs that FGM may have taken place include:

- difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- spending much longer times in the toilets
- usual behaviour after a long absence
- not wanting to participate in PE or other physical play/activities
- acutely painful menstrual cycles
- asking for help or being anxious but not able to be explicit due to embarrassment or fear

All schools should keep their students safe from harm through safeguarding procedures and educating every pupil about their responsibility to care for their bodies and protect themselves from physical and emotional harm. They have a duty to report concerns about girls at risk from FGM or when they know that FGM might already have been performed.

Lessons in PSHE and sex and relationships education can give students information, learn personal and life skills and explore attitudes and values around protecting themselves and others from abuse, including FGM.

NSPCC FGM helpline: 0800 028 3550

[help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)