

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, LONDON



Sex & Relationships Education (SRE)

POLICY DOCUMENT

Sex & Relationships Education (SRE) Policy *Staff Handbook Ref: 63.*

Background Information

This policy was developed by the SMT through a variety of consultation methods involving girls, parents/carers, staff, Council members and the school nurse. All views were taken into account when developing this policy and the Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) programme.

Policy Statement

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

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

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

Other related policies and documents include the Confidentiality Policy, PSHE Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Drug Education Policy, Child Protection Policy and the Promoting Race Equality document.

Aims and Objectives

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

Moral and Values Framework

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

Content

In key stage 3 (Class 3, Class 2 and Class 1), girls 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 (IJ and IJ) girls 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.

In key stage 5 (IS and IIS) girls are given opportunities to discuss and hear more about sexually transmitted diseases and HIV and about how to make an informed choice when embarking on a sexual relationship and how to best protect themselves. Through outside speakers, they should be prepared to make informed decisions as individuals and understand their choices.

The framework of the 40 minute PSHE sessions, in which the SRE is firmly rooted, was agreed with the consultation process involving girls, parents/carers, staff, Council and the School Nurse using the OfSTED Sex and Relationship Guidance (2002) as a basis for discussion. More detailed timetables for SRE are available on request.

Materials used reflect the needs of all girls. Age and cultural backgrounds of the girls are considered in relation to any material used. The range of material used

is available to parents/carers and informative books are available to girls in the library.

Organisation

SRE is not delivered in isolation; it is firmly embedded in all curriculum areas, including PSHE. At Queen's College, London the *main* content is delivered in PSHE lessons and is also supported in science and Religious Studies.

SRE is normally delivered by external experts in year or form groups.

Sometimes appropriate and suitably experienced and/or knowledgeable visitors from outside school may also be invited to contribute to the delivery of SRE in school. Visitors from outside school are used to support the delivery of PSHE as follows:

- 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 negotiated and agreed with staff in advance;
- All visitors are supervised/supported by a member of staff at all times;
- The input of visitors is monitored and evaluated by staff and girls. This evaluation informs future planning.

Queen's recognises the importance of training for staff for delivering SRE, but also recognises the sensitive nature of delivering SRE using subject teachers. Staff are encouraged to access appropriate training and support to help them deliver effective SRE.

Specific Issues within SRE

Withdrawal

Parents/Carers have the right to withdraw their girls 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 Principal, 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.

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

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 named child protection officer who will confer with the Principal 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. Queen's College has a confidentiality policy which needs to be read in conjunction with this policy.

Child Protection

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

Disclosures

If a member of staff learns that an under 16 year old is sexually active or contemplating sexual activity the 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 counselling and information
- The Principal will monitor the frequency of cases where they handle information without parental knowledge

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 girls are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have a different view.

Dealing with Questions

Both formal and informal SRE arising from girls' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the girl 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 Officer if they are concerned.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

Queen's College believes that SRE should meet the needs of all girls 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.

Dissemination

All staff members, members of the Council and QCPA committee members receive a copy of the policy. Copies are available from the College office on request from parents. This policy is available on the College website.

The Senior Mistress and the Heads of Section facilitate the gathering of policy feedback from parents, staff and girls.

This policy is reviewed each year by the Council of Queen's College at its AGM.