

Priory School Policy on SRE (Sex & Relationship Education)

This Policy is designed to set out Priory School's approach to SRE in light of current law, bearing in mind that new regulations on compulsory RE (Relationship Education) in Primary Schools & compulsory RSE (Relationship & Sex Education) are expected to come into force in 2019.

Priory School's SRE policy is to be understood as part of its pastoral care, and is closely linked to its Safeguarding Policies on Child Protection, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying & Fundamental British Values, Code of Conduct, Use of Internet Policy, and is set in the context of its Christian ethos. The policy recognises that in matters of sexual morality and relationships, three factors in relation to children must always be borne in mind: the values and beliefs of the child and the child's family, the differing developmental aspects of children both physically and psychologically; and the differential aspects that pertain to boys and girls.

Priory School's policy on SRE is also informed by three main legal considerations:

1. Mandatory legal requirements, which for Independent Schools state that the only mandatory part of SRE is that included in the National Curriculum (this is the Science part of the National Curriculum which only specifies matters relating to reproduction in humans at KS3 onwards ie 11 years and older). The school complies fully with this requirement.
2. The Christian ethos of the school and Christian teaching that, along with other major religions, recognises parents as the "primary educators" of their children. The right of parents is enshrined in law as follows:

The primary law is contained in the following Article of the **European Convention on Human Rights of 1950** (following the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948) and incorporated into English Law by the **Human Rights Act 1998: Protocol 1 Article 2**

ARTICLE 2

No person shall be denied the right to education. **In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.**

3. SRE inherently involves issues of values, belief and behaviour. All major religions have clear guidelines in this area. There is currently a right under Section 405 of the Education Act 1996 that provides the right of parental withdrawal from all or part of SRE provided at school except for those parts included in the National Curriculum (as above). This recognises that this area of education is one that is particularly subject to parental control or supervision and Priory School has absolute respect for the moral and legal rights of parents in regard to SRE.

Priory School's policy, in relation to SRE as primarily a responsibility of parents, is to offer support to parents in their wishes and preferences of how to inform or educate their children. Priory School also

views this area of education to be best carried out on an individual basis, that can respect the three factors noted above: values, individual development, and gender differentiation. It therefore sees classroom SRE as itself not able to ensure or protect either these factors or be consonant with the law on parental rights. It sees the teaching of SRE in a generalist, non-individualised context, such as a classroom setting, to incorporate a statement of value as to SRE as being detached from family, from belief, from individual development that is inimical to true individual pastoral care and unable to meet the requirements of the law.

Priory School therefore offers support for SRE on an individual or family basis, either on request, or with advice to children and parents when SRE issues arise in school in an individual instance. Priory School has excellent relations developed over a number of years with Children's Services, CAMHS, the Youth Trust and other medical and counselling services and is able to assist in the provision of advice, therapy and services as appropriate. The school also has:

- A dedicated school listener who can be approached by any pupil
- Pastoral Care staff trained to Level 3 Safeguarding levels
- A Chaplaincy Service

Priory School's SRE Policy is also fully compliant with its duty to actively promote Fundamental British Values (FBV) in accordance with its statutory obligations under the *Education (Independent Schools – England) Regulations 2004*.

The Secretary of State for Education makes the following Regulation in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 157(1) and 210(7) of the Education Act 2002(a):

The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor...actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Priory School's individual, pastoral, family-based SRE Policy ensures that the varying faiths and beliefs of parents can be individually addressed and assured, which cannot be the case with a classroom-based approach to SRE. Its individual approach has led to robust and tested techniques to address general issues that arise from individual instances, including sexting, online pornography, abuse of social media, CSE & FGM. Staff all receive appropriate Safeguarding and Child Protection training every year. There are 5 DSLs or Designated Safeguarding Leads at various levels in the school, trained to Level 3. The Principal & SENCO co-ordinate the work of the DSLs. This underpins and reinforces its SRE policy of individual pastoral focus.

All schools of a religious nature have the right to frame SRE in accordance with their religious ethos, which is the policy of Priory School. It has been stated that this will remain the case in the new RE/RSE Guidance currently under consultation by the Secretary of State.

Edmund Matyjaszek, Principal, Priory School, Whippingham, Isle of Wight October 2017