



Terms of reference *for core members*

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1. Mission Statement

The Sex Education Forum is a **unique collaboration** of member organisations and practitioner networks.

Our **core belief is** that ALL children and young people are entitled to good quality sex and relationships education in a variety of settings

Our main **aim** is to work together with members, practitioners and other stakeholders to achieve quality SRE.

We **identify** ourselves as the leader, authority and trusted voice on SRE.

All our work on SRE is **underpinned** by

- A rights-based approach
- The expressed needs of children and young people
- An evidence base

Our **3 main strategic objectives** include:

- 1- **Advisory, advocacy and policy** – To ensure children and young people's entitlement to SRE is firmly embedded into national and local government policies and public understanding.
- 2- **Practice development, dissemination and knowledge management** – To support professionals to access and share information so they are well informed and competent to commission, plan, deliver and evaluate SRE.
- 3- **Research, innovation and emerging themes** - To identify, explore and respond to new themes emerging in practice, policy and research, nationally and internationally, and provide leadership to facilitate wider discussions about new and sometimes challenging ideas.

2. Statement of principles and values for SRE

The Sex Education Forum (SEF) believes that all children and young people are entitled to quality sex and relationships education (SRE). SRE is the joint responsibility of schools, parents, carers and communities and is an important element of children's and young people's development. The following sets out the SEF's core principles and values that underpin good quality SRE in a variety of settings.

What is sex and relationships education?

Sex and relationships education (SRE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sexⁱ, human sexualityⁱⁱ and sexual healthⁱⁱⁱ. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and values to have safe, fulfilling and enjoyable relationships and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

What are the principles and values which underpin quality SRE?

The Sex Education Forum believes that quality SRE should:

- Be accurate and factual, covering a comprehensive range of information about sex, relationships, the law and sexual health, in order to make informed choices. In schools this should be part of compulsory curriculum provision;
- Be positively inclusive in terms of gender^{iv}, sexual orientation^v, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, religion or belief or other life-experience particularly HIV status and pregnancy;
- Include the development of skills to support healthy and safe relationships and ensure good communication about these issues;
- Promote a critical awareness of the different attitudes and views on sex and relationships within society such as peer norms and those portrayed in the media;
- Provide opportunities for reflection in order to nurture personal values based on mutual respect and care;
- Be part of lifelong learning, starting early in childhood and continuing throughout life. It should reflect the age and level of the learner;
- Ensure children and young people are clearly informed of their rights^{vi} such as how they can access confidential advice and health services within the boundaries of safeguarding;
- Be relevant and meet the needs of children and young people, and actively involve them as participants, advocates and evaluators in developing good quality provision;
- Be delivered by competent and confident educators;
- Be provided within a learning environment which is safe for the children, young people and adults involved and based on the principle that prejudice, discrimination and bullying are harmful and unacceptable.

3. Membership

There are two levels of SEF membership - Core membership and Network+ membership

3.1 Core membership

Core membership is open to **organisations and individuals** including

- Voluntary sector, commercial and statutory organisations
- Local, national and international organisations

Core members will be:

- Working to support SRE with children and young people (either directly or indirectly)
- In agreement with SEF 'principles and values statement'

Core members benefit from:

- Invitations to two annual events (summer meeting focused on SRE practice and autumn meeting focused on SRE policy) in London (free for one representative)
- Voting rights and the opportunity to stand for Chair and the Advisory Group and to be co-opted to the Advisory Group
- Involvement in our policy work, listed on our policy statements and use of SEF policy statements
- Invitation (for one representative) to ad-hoc policy working group meetings
- Networking and information sharing opportunities at meetings and electronically (Network Exchange)
- Clear listing on the Sex Education Forum web-site including description, web-link, logo and email address (optional)
- Advertising your events and training on our web-site 'Events calendar' and the e-bulletin
- Quotes can be requested to support your press releases
- Use of Sex Education Forum logo on your web-site to advertise your membership (coming soon)
- Your relevant SRE resources listed in our free-access lists
- 20% discount on Sex Education Forum publications (currently the discount can only be redeemed when orders are purchased direct from NCB by emailing ncbpublications@ncb.org.uk and not for online orders)

3.3 Network+ membership

This membership option is ideal for SRE teachers and practitioners, but will also be of interest to some national organisations. Network+ members must agree with the Sex Education Forum 'values and principles'. However, network+ members will not be listed as supporting our policy statements. Network+ members do not have voting rights. They may attend Sex Education Forum events at a discounted rate.

3.4 Membership conditions

The success of the Forum is dependent on the active participation of members. Members are able to draw upon the resources and expertise of the Forum and can gain greatly from networking with other members. In return all core members are expected to:

- Adhere to the Values and Principles Statement and these Terms of Reference. If a member's activities or statements are deemed to be contrary to SEF's Values and

Principles, the Chair and Advisory Group reserve the right to withdraw their membership.

- Nominate a named representative to act as the main link between the Forum and the organisation and ensure the coordinator has their correct contact information

Core members are additionally asked to engage in Forum activities by:

- Ensuring the named representative can represent the interests, concerns and relevant knowledge of their organisation to the Forum. Representatives should have the authority to speak and act on behalf of their organisation especially in consultations.
- Reporting back and disseminating information to their organisation and other networks
- Adding a direct link from their website to the SEF website
- Contributing as appropriate to the Forum's activities, such as:
 - Working groups
 - Developing and disseminating resources
 - Information Bulletins
 - Publicising Forum events, publications and activities
 - Discussions at Forum meetings
 - The planning/content of a conference or seminar
 - To consultations and responding to questions

3.4 Membership fee and payment

	Annual price	Three-year offer
Core membership	£100+VAT (£120 inclusive)	£250+VAT (£300 inclusive)
Network+ membership	£37.50+VAT (£45 inclusive)	£99.00+VAT (£118.80 inclusive)

Once a new core membership application has been accepted by the Advisory Group we send an invoice. Members will be invoiced for one year or three years depending on which option is selected. Direct debit payment is available. Fees may rise with inflation. As from April 2013 membership renewal will be on the anniversary of joining.

3.5 New core members

Representatives of new core members will:

- Receive a copy of these Terms of Reference and a list of current core members
- Be welcomed at their first meeting by an Advisory Group member who will ensure they are introduced and understand the procedures of the meeting.

3.6 Replacements of Representatives

If a member organisation changes their representative, it is the organisation's responsibility to ensure that the new representative is briefed, and that the Co-ordinator is informed of the changes. Core members are able to nominate additional representatives (up to 5) to receive email communications. Core members can also nominate a specific policy working group representative and a specific media representative.

3.7 Life members

Life members have the same overall rights and membership conditions as core members; including have voting rights. They will not be expected to pay a membership fee.

Life membership status is decided at the discretion of the Advisory Group, the Chair and Co-ordinator in the light of the proposed Life Member's expertise, contribution to the field and perspective on the work.

3.8 Application process

Applications for membership should be made the application form on-line <http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/membership/core-membership.aspx>

Applications for core membership are considered by the Chair and Advisory Group. Core members will then be updated about new members.

Applications for network+ membership are considered by the Coordinator.

3.9 Complaints and cancellation

Members wishing to complain about any aspect of membership of the Forum should in the first instance contact the Coordinator. If the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the member will be asked to formally write to the Chair setting out details of the complaint. This will be considered by the Advisory Group at their next meeting, and a written response sent within ten working days of that meeting.

An annual evaluation questionnaire also provides opportunities for members to provide feedback. Membership can be cancelled by emailing sefmembership@ncb.org.uk

3.10 Data storage

The details of core members will be stored in the NCB database and used only in accordance with data protection regulations. Your organisation / individual details will be promoted on our web-site (free public access). Your email address will only be shared with your consent. Members receive communications from the Sex Education Forum by email and occasionally by post. If you participate in the Network Exchange your name, job role, organisation and location will be displayed.

3.11 Sharing your membership benefits and copyright

Core membership can be taken out by an individual or an organisation for the same price. All we ask is that you don't share the resources you receive within your membership outside of your organisation. Please always respect the copyright of the materials we produce, and if in doubt just ask!

4. Method of Working

4.1 Forum Working Ethos

The present structure of the Sex Education Forum is formal. The ethos of working together is informal and is based on principles of openness and participation. **The Sex Education Forum seeks to maximise trust between members and to facilitate full discussion of the complex and potentially sensitive issues with which it is concerned.** We also seek to facilitate joint working and the sharing of expertise in the interests of good practice. **We endeavour only to undertake work that could not be better done by a member organisation.**

Sex Education Forum members may be asked to work in partnership on project work and we actively seek opportunities to make joint funding proposals. .

4.2 Forum Meetings

There are two Sex Education Forum meetings per year. One focused on policy (autumn) and one focused on practice (summer). Core members have a free place for one representative. Tickets can be purchased for additional colleagues to attend. Guests and observers may contribute at the invitation of the Chair.

4.3 Guests

Individuals or organisations that are not members of the Forum may be invited to specific meetings. Organisations that fulfil the membership criteria and are considering full membership may also attend at meetings. Both are by invitation only.

4.4 Observers

Individuals from relevant Government departments, funding agencies and other organisations associated with the Forum through projects or consultancy work may be invited to attend meetings or sit on working groups and receive regular mailings.

4.5 The Advisory Group

The Advisory Group which represents the interests of the Forum membership, is an elected body of 8 individuals and 1 representative of NCB. Individuals representing core members and Life members are eligible to stand for election, and can be co-opted, for example if particular expertise is needed or if there is a vacancy between elections. The role of the Advisory group is to support the work of the co-ordinator and has delegated authority from the main Forum for:

- Using professional expertise to develop policy and communicate this to the Forum membership
- Identifying priorities, steering the Forum strategically, building and maintaining consensus and agreeing the annual Strategic Plan.
- Identifying funding priorities and opportunities
- Agreeing and monitoring the yearly programme of work, including liaison with the National Children's Bureau
- Considering applications for membership
- Developing agendas for Forum meetings
- Monitoring and reviewing on a regular basis the letter of agreement between the Forum and the National Children's Bureau

- Promoting the interests of the Forum through communicating with and considering the views of members, and speaking on behalf of the Forum, with permission.
- Annual review of members and membership

Minutes are taken at all Advisory Group meetings which remain confidential to the group. Additional confidentiality may be requested if particularly sensitive topics are discussed. Following the meetings the Forum members will receive a brief summary of what has been discussed at the meetings.

All members of the advisory group are expected to bring their individual expertise to the group and to contribute to the discussions in meetings and over email.

Members of the advisory group may be invited to represent the Forum in the media or at public occasions. This must be prearranged with the Coordinator and Chair. Any requests received directly must be approved by the Coordinator and Chair.

The Advisory Group meets 4 times per year including an annual review 'away day' at the beginning of the year. More meetings can be called if necessary. The Co-ordinator will attend and service the meetings. There must be a quorum of two thirds for decision making. Travel and subsistence expenses to attend the advisory group meetings cannot be paid for by the Sex Education Forum and should be covered by the individual or core member organisation. Facilities to join meetings using skype technology are available.

Elected members of the Advisory Group sit on the group for two years at which point they must stand for re-election or stand down. The Advisory Group has the power to co-opt onto the group if it can justify that it needs broader representation.

The representatives on the Advisory Group aim to reflect the following themes: health, education, disability, parenting and family, youth, faith and values, advocacy.

Representatives are asked to release their representative from other work duties, and are expected to pay the expenses of their representatives to attend Advisory Group meetings. This includes travel expenses. Where travel cannot be paid by member organisations Skype or telephone conferencing facilities will be used. In exceptional circumstances the Sex Education Forum will consider contributing to costs.

4.6 The Chair

The Chair will be expected to:

- Chair 2 full Forum meetings per year
- Chair a minimum of 4 Advisory Group meetings per year
- Attend a minimum of 4 meetings with the SEF Coordinator per year
- Work with the Coordinator and Advisory Group to develop the strategic plan
- Provide leadership and represent the Forum e.g. in the media
- Provide support to the Coordinator
- Be involved in recruitment of Coordinator if necessary

The Chair is expected to have:

- A good understanding of the work of the Sex Education Forum
- A good understanding of current Education Policy and developments within the National Curriculum, SRE/PSHE Education and the well-being agenda
- Understanding of other national policy including health

- Hold a senior position within their organization/ or have experience of working at a senior level
- Experience of chairing
- Excellent communication & interpersonal skills
- Good influencing skills

The Chair is appointed by election, usually at the same time as the Advisory Group election. Individuals can stand for Chair only, or for Advisory Group and Chair. Once appointed the Chair fills one of the 8 places on the Advisory Group. This position is voluntary and only travel expenses will be reimbursed. .

The Vice Chair is expected to deputise for the Chair in times of absence.

4.7 NCB and Sex Education Forum Staff

The strategic direction for Forum staff is, in general terms, steered by the Forum Advisory Group and funding obligations. The Forum is hosted by the National Children's Bureau. It operates under the charitable aims and objectives of the National Children's Bureau as described in the 'Letter of Agreement' between the Forum and the National Children's Bureau. The National Children's Bureau is responsible for their programme of work and their operational day-to-day management including line-management of the Coordinator.

4.8 Funding

The Forum is funded from diverse sources including member fees, donations, publications sales income and projects and grants.

4.9 Working Groups

The Forum will from time to time establish working groups, which are drawn from the Forum's membership although non-members and observers may be invited to join these groups. The Working group focuses on a specific theme and reports to the Advisory Group.

4.10 Policy Statements

New policy statements are discussed with core members via email and a period of consultation is given for major policy activities. **Policy statements are always in-line with the Sex Education Forum values and principles for good quality SRE.** The Advisory Group agrees the final statement. Once agreed, each member is asked to share the statement with relevant colleagues within their organisation. Policy statements are published on the website (see policy and campaigns section).

The Chair and Coordinator convene policy working groups as required. Attendance is open to any representative of a core member organisation (not exclusive to the Advisory Group).

There may be occasions when the Chair /Advisory Group need to agree policy on behalf of Forum members to ensure a prompt response. They will do so within the context of the established agreed policy position of the Forum.

Reports of work undertaken by the Forum, which may contain recommendations but are not overall statements of policy, are circulated to Advisory Group members and/or Forum members if appropriate.

4.11 Media statements

Media statements are drafted by the Co-ordinator with support from Advisory Group members as appropriate. If any new issues arise the Chair and/or Advisory Group will be consulted and will sign off the response; if however the response is based on existing policy this is not necessary.

The Chair and the Co-ordinator are authorised to make public statements on behalf of the Forum. The Advisory Group may be asked to endorse the issuing of public statements if the Chair and the Co-ordinator consider it appropriate. Member organisations and their representatives can only speak on behalf of the Forum if invited to do so. This includes public events, conferences and in the media.

5. Election Procedures

Election of Chair, Vice Chair and Advisory Group takes place every two years. **The next election is due in Winter 2013.** A representative from NCB is delegated by the NCB board of trustees to have a permanent position on the Advisory Group and does not stand for re-election. Detailed election papers are sent to members 3 months prior to the elections.

Individuals from all core member organisations (and Life members) can stand for the position of Chair, Vice Chair and Advisory Group. Both the nominated Forum representative and other individuals within member organisations are eligible for election. However during their 'period in office' they will be unable to undertake paid employment on behalf of the Forum.

To protect the need for balanced representation, the Advisory Group will have the right to co-opt 2 or 3 members to the Advisory Group. The Forum has identified seven broad themes across membership that describe the core focus of member organisations. These are:

- Advocacy
- Children and youth
- Disability
- Education
- Faith and values
- Health
- Parenting and family

The Advisory Group should aim to represent these core themes of Forum membership.

5.1 The Election Process

All core member organisations will be sent a Nomination Form. Those wishing to stand should fill in the application form which:

- Confirms which position (or positions) they are standing for
- Provides a short biography and lists the skills and experience they can offer the Advisory Group
- Provides the name of the Forum member supporting their application
- Confirms they have their organisation's consent to stand for election.

A ballot of the full core membership will take place to elect the Chair and Advisory Group. Those standing for election can choose to stand for either the position of Chair or the Advisory Group or both.

6. Dissolution or Change of Status

In the event of the Forum formally deciding to dissolve, the Chair will notify NCB and its Board of Management of its intentions and comply with its advice on a range of issues including personnel and finance matters. On completion of all the necessary negotiations and implementation of the agreed procedures, NCB will pass all outstanding assets and resources to a charitable organisation, which works towards similar aims as the Sex Education Forum.

Revised June 2013 – Lucy Emmerson - Coordinator

Appendix 1 – Working Definitions for SRE

These working definitions are designed for use in relation to the Sex Education Forum values and principles and definition of SRE. They have been developed using a variety of sources including: WHO's work definitions

http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/gender_rights/sexual_health/en/index.html

They are also available from the Sex Education Forum web-site:

<http://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/about-us/values-principles.aspx>

Working Definitions

ⁱ Sex- Sex is the process of reproduction found in living organisms in which male and female sex cells are combined to form offspring that inherit features of both parents. This is the source of the diversity which gives organisms the potential to adapt to changing circumstances. A plant's or animal's sex is defined by the type of sex cell it produces and this often leads to specialisation into male and female reproductive roles. Sex also refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women (i.e. what is male and female) and is determined by individual's chromosomes.

Sex is commonly used to refer to sexual intercourse. In SRE the term 'sex' can be used to describe a whole range of sexual activities, including non-penetrative sex such as kissing, masturbating etc.

ⁱⁱ Sexuality- Sexuality is how people express themselves as sexual beings. It is a component of personal identity and is a rich and complex area of human experience. It has biological, physical and emotional aspects and is influenced by the interaction between these and social, economic, political, cultural, ethical, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors.

ⁱⁱⁱ Sexual health-Sexual health is a state of physical, emotional and social well-being in relation to sex, sexuality and sexual relationships; it is not merely the absence of infection, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health is promoted when people are able to have pleasurable and safer sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, have freedom to choose their sexual and reproductive behaviour, and have accurate information and access to good, confidential health services to enable them to make informed choices. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled.

^{iv} Gender- Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society maintains a norm for men and women (i.e. what is considered 'masculine and feminine'). Transgender refers to individuals who are assigned a particular sex/gender at birth but who do not identify themselves with that gender.

^v Sexual orientation - Sexual orientation describes who a person is physically and emotionally attracted to. Heterosexual orientation refers to attraction to members of the opposite sex; homosexual orientation refers to attraction to members of one's own sex; and bisexual orientation refers to attraction to both sexes.

^{vi} Sexual rights- Sexual rights embrace human rights, recognized in international human rights documents, other consensus statements and some national laws. They include the right of all persons, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, to:

- the highest attainable standard of sexual health, including access to confidential sexual and reproductive health care services;
- seek, receive and impart accurate information related to sexuality;
- sex and relationships education;
- exercise care and control of their own body and other people's access to it;
- choose their partner;
- decide to be sexually active or not;
- consensual sexual relations;
- consensual marriage;
- decide whether or not, and when, to have children; and
- pursue a satisfying, safer and pleasurable sexual life, without infringing other people's rights.

These definitions have been developed using a variety of sources including: WHO's work definitions http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/gender_rights/sexual_health/en/index.html