



Sex and Relationships Education Policy

Policy:	RSHE Policy
Approved by:	FGB
Date:	Summer 2024
Review cycle:	Annually

Through a positive caring, Christian environment, we provide the opportunity for every child to reach their full potential.

We embrace British Values and ensure all children are ready for their next steps.

Definition of Relationship and Sex education

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality, sexual health, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity within the Christian principles and values. When we use the term 'relationships' in this policy we refer to both online and offline relationships. It involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

Some aspects are taught in science, and others are taught as part of Wellbeing (PSHE).

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding and Child Protection, Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies.

The Department of Health set out its ambition for all children and young people to receive high quality relationship and sex education in its statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019). This policy also reflects guidance given under the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Statutory guidance

From the Summer Term 2021, it was a legal requirement to provide relationship and health education (RHE) to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

Relationships and sex education is now statutory in all secondary schools in England.

Relationships education is statutory in all primary schools. In line with statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education it is recommended that age-appropriate sex education is also taught in all primary schools.

In accordance with the Children and Social Work Act 2017, relationships and sex education should have regard to the age and religious background of the pupils and must include: i safety in forming and maintaining relationships, ii the characteristics of healthy relationships, and iii how relationships may affect physical and mental health and well-being.

Documents that inform the school's RSHE policy include:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2021)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)

At St Mary's C of E Primary School we teach RSHE as set out in this policy.

Department for Education guidance states that from September 2020, all primary schools must teach Relationships and Health Education. The teaching of Sex Education in primary schools remains non-statutory, with the exception of the elements of sex education contained in the science national curriculum including the main external body parts, the human life cycle (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. Other related topics that fall within the statutory requirements for Health Education, such as puberty and menstrual wellbeing, will be included within PSHE education lessons.

Within the statutory guidance document for RSE and Health Education, the DfE also

encourages schools to deliver age-appropriate sex education if they feel their pupils need this information:

“It will be for primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education to meet the needs of their pupils. Many primary schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so, although it is not a requirement.

“It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils’ ongoing emotional and physical development effectively.

The Department continues to recommend therefore that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born.

Within this policy, as in the DfE guidance, Relationships Education is defined as teaching about the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

RSE is lifelong learning about personal, physical, moral and emotional development. It is set in the context of clear values about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care, for family life. It should teach children and young people to develop and form positive values, attitudes, personal and social skills, and increase their knowledge and understanding of how to make informed decisions and life choices.

At St Mary’s Church of England School we aim to:

Provide a framework in which sensitive discussion can take place.

- Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide the pupils’ decisions, judgements and behaviour, ensure that pupils have the confidence and self esteem to value themselves and others, to respect individual conscience and to develop the skills required to judge what kind of relationship is appropriate.
- Help pupils to understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships.
- Develop the pupils’ knowledge to avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into sexual interactions.
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of relationships and sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, foster LGBT and gender equality and consider issues surrounding gender identity.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies and to develop the appropriate terminology for relationship and sex issues.

RSHE in the Curriculum

At St Mary’s Church of England School we believe that RSHE should be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life.

RSHE lessons are set within the wider context of the PSHE curriculum and address the emotional aspects of development and relationships and the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction. The biological aspects of RSHE are taught within the Science curriculum. These lessons are focussed on the physical aspects of development and reproduction.

In each Year Group (Rec-Y6) the children discuss key safeguarding issues linked to personal space and privacy. The school utilises the NSPCC resources to promote children's awareness of these issues in an age appropriate manner. The teachers sensitively ensure children are aware of and understand the boundaries that should exist linked to the private areas of their body.

Teaching

Teachers ensure that RSHE lessons are taught within a framework of Christian values and the Christian understanding, in an environment where questions and discussions on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment. We recognise that parents are key in teaching their children about relationships, sex and growing up. As such, we aim to work in partnership with pupils and parents. Prior to any lessons on puberty or reproduction taking place, for example, parents are written to with an outline of the content of the lessons. Homosexuality is discussed at a level appropriate to the age of the children. Children are reminded that 'loving relationships' can be between a man and a woman or people of the same sex and teaching is sensitive to the circumstances of all pupils and mindful of the variety of expressions of family life in our school. Teachers again use their own discretion in these situations when responding to children's questioning. Children are taught to respect the life choices of others (including their sexuality).

At Year 6 teachers may, where appropriate, split the group according to gender to discuss issues relating to puberty and sex; however, this is not always the case.

RSHE has three main elements:

Attitudes and Values

- Learning about the values of family life and stable relationships.
- Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.
- Learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices.
- Challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about 'normal' behaviour.

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 the understanding of differences and with the absence of prejudice.
- Providing opportunities for young people to develop the ability to understand the consequences of their decisions and actions and to manage conflict.
- Empowering pupils with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter).

Knowledge and Understanding

- Information about healthier, safer lifestyles
- Understanding the importance of appropriate, respectful and consensual relationships
- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- Understanding human emotions, relationships, reproduction and sexuality.
- Learning about and understanding the importance of staying safe online and of developing healthy, consensual online relationships.

Curriculum Content:

Key Stage 1 (school years 1 and 2 - normally between the ages of 5 and 7)

Maintaining personal hygiene

- The process of growing from young to old and how people's needs change
- The names of the main parts of the body
- To identify and respect the differences and similarities between people
- That family and friends should care for each other
- Notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults

Key Stage 2 (school years 3, 4, 5 and 6 - normally between the ages of 7 and 11)

To recognise their worth as individuals

- To recognise and challenge stereotypes
- To recognise the different risks in different situations and then decide how to behave responsibly, including sensible road use and judging what kind of physical contact is acceptable or unacceptable
- Be aware of different types of relationship, including marriage and those between friends and families, and to develop the skills to be effective in relationships
- Where individuals, families and groups can get help and support
- To recognise, as they approach puberty, how people's emotions change at that time and how to deal positively with their feelings towards themselves, their families and others
- Learn about how the body changes as children approach puberty

That pressure to behave in an unacceptable or risky way can come from a variety of sources, including people they know and how to ask for help and the skills and language for resisting pressure to do wrong

- To understand the human life cycle from conception to old age
- To understand human reproduction (how a baby is made and how it grows)

The curriculum is a graduated, age appropriate programme which will be delivered by the school staff with support and advice from health professionals. Parents will be informed of when lessons on puberty and human reproduction will take place and the resources and teaching materials to be used will be shared with parents.

Children with SEND

Teaching and resources will be differentiated as appropriate to address the needs of all children in order for them to have full access to the content relationship and sex education.

Equal opportunities

The provision of RSHE complies with relevant requirements of The Equality Act 2010. All pupils aged three and above are entitled to RSHE regardless of ability, gender, race, or religious belief.

It is our intention for pupils to have the opportunity to experience a programme of RSHE at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development, with differentiated provision if required. We will provide equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The relevant protected characteristics are: sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment and age.

Both boys and girls receive the same input and understand the changes that occur in their own gender as well as that of the opposite sex.

Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective relationship and sex education, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, may lead to a disclosure of a safeguarding nature. Under common law, young people are entitled to the same duty of confidentiality as adults. Personal information about them should not be shared without their permission except for the purposes of child protection as detailed in the Safeguarding Policy.

Right to withdraw

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw pupils from relationships education. However, parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from some or all sex education within RSHE and should in the first instance contact the Headteacher in writing to request withdrawal. This does not include what is taught as part of the science curriculum. Parents/carers who elect to withdraw their child from sex education lessons will be advised that they have an obligation to provide the information at home using information available from the DfE. Parents/carers are encouraged to discuss such a decision with staff at the earliest opportunity and are welcome to view any RSHE resources the school uses. Resources used are made available for parents to view prior to the Year 5/6 lessons.

Monitoring and review

The Accountability Panel 1 of the governing body monitors our sex education policy on a regular basis. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the Full Governing Body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification. The Accountability Panel 1 gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the sex education programme, and makes a record of all such comments. Governors require the Headteacher to keep a written record, giving details of the content and delivery of the sex education programme that we teach in our school.