

St Mary's Church of England Primary School and Little Oaks Nursery



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Relationship, Sex & Education Policy

Status	Statutory
Responsible Person	PSHE Lead
Responsible Governor	Chair of Governors
Ratified by Headteacher	June 2023
Date approved by the GB	June 2023
Review Period	Triennially
Review Date	June 2026

Rationale

At St Mary's CEVC Primary School, we believe that effective Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is essential if our pupils, as they grow, are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. It contributes to promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, emotional, mental, and physical development of our pupils, preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life. We understand that there is a statutory requirement for us to have in place such a policy compiled by the school Governors.

We believe RSE should not be delivered in isolation, but be firmly rooted in our Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship programme, supplemented by science and other subjects of our taught curriculum.

Statutory requirements and documents used to inform our RSE policy

The Health Education and Relationships Education aspects of PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education) are now compulsory in all primary schools.

As a maintained primary school, we must provide relationships education to all pupils under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

We are not required to provide sex education, but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

Definition of Relationship and Sex Education

RSE is about the emotional, social, and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

It is about respect, love, care, and the benefits of making and maintaining a stable relationship.

RSE seeks to enable young people to feel positive about themselves, manage relationships and access the infrastructure of support available.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

RSE is **not** about the promotion of sexual activity.

Aims

The aims of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at St Mary's are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- To understand what a healthy relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who are the people who can support them.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Help pupils to learn to take responsibility for their actions in all situations
- Help pupils to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

The Curriculum and its delivery

The overview and co-ordination of the taught curriculum is the responsibility of the PSHE Co-ordinator in the school. Continuous professional development and training will always be provided to ensure a high level of expertise for teachers involved in delivering the RSE programme in the school. The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence their teaching of RSE.

RSE is taught within the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the Science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Please follow this link to view our [curriculum](#) pages on our website.

We use the scheme KAPOW as an aid to planning and delivering our PSHE and RSE curriculum. It supports consistency and progression of skills and knowledge throughout the school.

RSE focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

At St Mary's, our RSE curriculum covers some aspects of sex education that otherwise would not be covered in the Science curriculum:

- How a baby is conceived, pregnancy and birth (Year 6)
- Contraception (Year 6)

Normally, male and female pupils will be taught together, however some single-sex grouping will take place.

Dealing with difficult questions

We have a variety of strategies for dealing with difficult questions. For example:

- if a question is too explicit or is inappropriate, the teacher will attend to it later, on an individual basis and a decision will be taken whether or not to inform the child's parents/carers
- If a child makes a disclosure that causes the teacher concern, then they should follow child protection procedures established within the county. See Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2018)
- Both formal and informal RSE arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the *age and maturity* of the pupil(s) concerned. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the Child Protection Coordinator if they are concerned.
- RSE should meet the needs of all pupils regardless of their developing sexuality and it should be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support.

Language and Ground Rules in Lessons

All staff teaching RSE will set ground rules in their classes. Students will be involved in the negotiation/setting of these rules. For example:

- No one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.
- The only language used will be easily understood and acceptable to everyone in the class.
- Only the correct names for body parts will be used.
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

Working with Parents and Carers

The school is committed to working in close partnership with parents and carers who are the key people in teaching their children about sex and relationships.

A parent or carer, who is unhappy about their child's participation in Sex Education, should discuss their feelings with the class teacher. Sex education is not a compulsory part of the primary RSE curriculum, although Relationship education is. The national curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of those aspects of the RSE programme, which are NOT part of the statutory Science curriculum or part of the statutory RSE programme.

If parents do decide, after speaking to the class teacher, that they want to withdraw from the non-statutory parts of our RSE curriculum, they should then discuss this with the Headteacher, who will document the process.

Inclusivity

RSE is inclusive of all students; they have an equal entitlement to good quality RSE. The programme will be delivered in line with the school's Equal Opportunities policy within an atmosphere of mutual respect. The whole school community will support an approach which ensures that no individual will be discriminated against on grounds of gender, race, disability, religion, or sexual orientation.

Areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to recognise different home setups, for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers. We will also show sensitivity to the fact that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children or young carers).

Pupils with special educational needs and learning difficulties are included in RSE. Where appropriate, the contents and delivery of the curriculum will be modified to meet individual needs.

Resources

We **will** consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils
- are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- fit into our curriculum plan
- are from credible sources
- are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

Confidentiality

Teachers may be party to sensitive information about pupils, some of this perhaps relating to illegal activity. All staff need to be clear about the rules of confidentiality and reporting. The points below clarify matters:

- guidance about who needs to know in particular instances - information about pupils should not be passed on indiscriminately

- that teachers should not offer pupils unconditional confidentiality
- that information about behaviour that is likely to cause harm to pupils or to others must be dealt with in line with the schools Safeguarding procedure and passed on to the appropriate agency
- that teachers should make it clear to pupils that some information needs to be passed on in the pupil's best interest and that they will be informed when this is a necessity
- in the case of illegal activity, action should be taken in the best interests of the pupil - this does not necessarily involve informing the police in every instance
- teachers are not obliged to pass on information about pupils to their parents
- Teachers should explain and reinforce the need for ground rules in lessons to protect pupils from making inappropriate personal disclosures

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board

The governing board will approve the RSE policy and hold the headteacher and PHSE lead to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher and PHSE lead

The headteacher and PHSE lead are responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE.

Staff

Teachers delivering RSE will use a variety of teaching methods including establishing ground rules, being able to answer unexpected questions, using appropriate materials and encouraging reflection. Teachers are responsible for:

Delivering RSE in a sensitive way

- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect, inclusivity and sensitivity in line with our school ethos.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Elements of the sex education in the science curriculum are assessed formally. Assessment and evaluation of the RSE programme outside the science order is conducted using a variety of informal activities which have been built into the programme. This could include peer assessment and self assessment.

The RSE policy will be monitored and evaluated through a review process involving pupils, parents, teachers, PSHE Co-ordinator, SLT and the Governing Board.