



Maryport Church of England Primary School

Camp Road, MARYPORT, Cumbria, CA15 6JN

Telephone: 01900 812299

Email: admin@maryport.cumbria.sch.uk

Headteacher Mrs J Ormond

'Learn, achieve, shine'

11/6/2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Department of Education (DfE) statutory requirements for Relationships Education

From September 2020 Relationships Education schools will have to teach Relationships and Health Education.

To gain more information about these changes see the DfE guide for parents here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-sex-and-health-education-guides-for-schools> The DfE also strongly encourages primary schools to deliver sex education to help prepare children their transition to secondary school.

Most schools, including Maryport C of E Primary School, are already delivering very effective Relationships and Sex Education and the new guidance is simply about ensuring that **all** children get the information they need and want. The lessons will help children to learn about their bodies including the changes that take place at puberty, and will help keep them safe, so they can form healthy relationships (friendships) with others, now and in the future.

At our school we are using the leading children's health and wellbeing charity, Coram Life Education (CLE) <https://www.coramlifeeducation.org.uk/> to support us in meeting these legal requirements. We do this in a number of ways:

- A visit from a mobile classroom and educator to deliver aspects of the Relationships Education and Health Education programme
- A trained educator from CLE to deliver some of the Relationships Education aspects of the programme
- Using their online SCARF teaching resources.
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We know from research that if we don't deliver this vital education we leave our children at greater risk of poor mental health. We know this because as many as 24% of girls start their periods before the subject is covered in lessons at school, leaving them to agonise over why they are bleeding and how serious the cause might be. We know 38% of boys experience wet dreams before having learnt about them, leaving them to develop shame and stigma over a natural bodily function that can lead to problems later in life. Current government Sex and Relationships Education guidance states that children should learn about puberty before they experience it, but clearly this isn't happening in some schools, illustrating the importance of making this subject statutory in all schools.

We also know that RSE has a protective factor when it comes to safeguarding children. 1 in 20 children are sexually abused and 1 in 3 did not tell an adult. Sexual abuse can happen to any child; the best way to safeguard children is to ensure that they receive information on naming parts of their body, knowing the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch, and having the skills and



confidence to find and talk to a trusted adult to report such abuse.

We also know that pupils with better health (including mental health) and wellbeing are likely to achieve better academically. By learning about positive relationships, respect for themselves and others, and behaving appropriately and safely online, they are better able to enjoy their friendships and therefore focus more at school.

There is sometimes concern that RSE in school might promote sexual experimentation or cause confusion about an individual's sexuality. Research on quality Relationships and Sex education in the UK by the National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles team consistently shows that men and women who reported that *lessons at school were their main source of information about sex* were more likely to have started having sex at a **later age** than those for whom parents or other sources were their main source.

We have drafted a policy and year group overviews which show how we intend to teach Relationships Education in our school. There will be a consultation period of 2 weeks to allow parents/carers to review the proposed programme of work and make written comments or ask questions if they wish. Please submit all responses to head@maryport.cumbria.sch.uk by Friday 26th June 2020.

We recognise that parents play a vital part in their child's RSE, and we encourage you to discuss these themes with your child at home as well. If further advice or support is required or if you have any questions about the programme or would like to view the resources, please do not hesitate to speak to your child's class teacher or the Head teacher.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs Ormond

Headteacher

