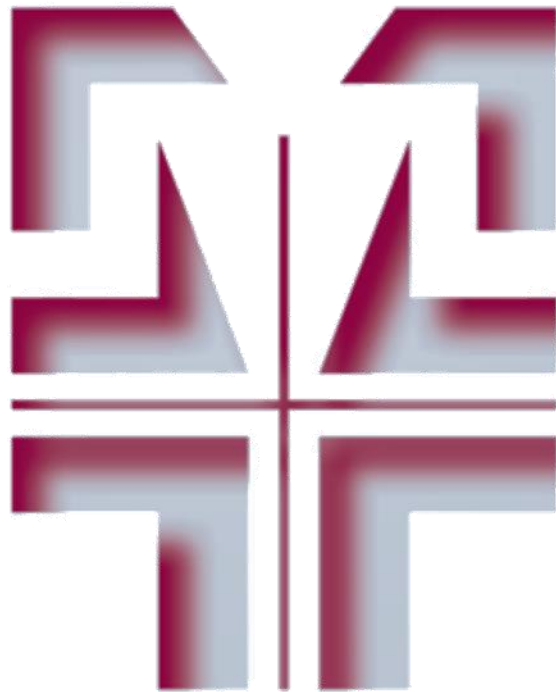


# Saint Michael's CE High School

*A Church of England Academy*



**Therefore, choose**

## Relationship and Sex Education Policy

<b>Responsibility to present to Headteacher</b>	Deputy Head – Caroline Hooley
<b>Approved</b>	Ethos, Staffing & Wellbeing Committee May 2022
<b>Next Review</b>	Ethos, Staffing & Wellbeing Committee May 2023
<b>Statutory</b>	Yes
<b>Required on school website</b>	No

## ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

### A BRIEF SUMMARY OF OUR CHRISTIAN VISION

Our motto is **'Therefore choose [life]'** from Deuteronomy.



We understand this to mean growing in **body, mind and spirit**, so that all who learn and work here may flourish, experiencing the joy and hope of **'Life in all its fullness'**.

**This is further explained in our Mission Statement,**

*'As a vibrant learning community  
we choose to serve God,  
pursue excellence  
and celebrate the uniqueness of each individual.'*

### **St Michael's Church of England High School – Relationships and Sex Education Policy**

This policy covers our school's approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). It was produced by Mrs D Brotherton, Curriculum Leader for Living Education, through

consultation with the Governors, the Senior Leadership Team and a group of parents/carers. The policy is available to parents/carers via the school website and if preferred, a printed copy is available from the front office at school. This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Christian principles and values are at the heart of our Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) programme at St Michael's Church of England High School. The Governors have determined that RSE will be appropriate to the pupil's age and will be presented with reference to our Christian values and ethos whilst ensuring that our statutory duties are met under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Equalities Act 2010. It fits within the context of our planned programme of PSHE, known within school as 'Living Education'. The programme will be led, managed and regularly reviewed by the Curriculum Leader for Living Education, and taught by tutors with the support of Teaching Assistants where appropriate.

### ***Philosophy and Values***

This Governing Body supports the foundation statement of the School in its overall philosophy of Relationships and Sex Education. Our school's overarching aims are: *'To provide a distinctly Christian education which is relevant to young people in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'* and *'To provide an outstanding education for our young people'*.

With this in mind, we define 'Relationships and Sex Education' (RSE) as learning about positive and negative relationships, emotions, families, consent, conflict, sexuality, sexual health, and ourselves. We believe that RSE should be accessible and relevant for all of our pupils, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation, including those with physical, mental or emotional difficulties and those with or without a religious or faith tradition – everyone, whatever their background, community, experience or circumstance.

We consider that RSE includes information about the things young people need to know to stay safe and to form and maintain healthy relationships. These include the emotional, biological, legal, social and cultural aspects of growing up and being part of a family or community as well as sexual development, sexual behaviour, sexuality and sexual health. Pupils must be made aware of the potential consequences of harmful relationships, unprotected sex and poor maintenance of emotional wellbeing as well as understanding the effects of manipulation or abuse within relationships. Pupils also learn about the potential harms of ignorance, prejudice, discrimination and stigma on both communities and their own worldview. Both during lessons and via the Wellbeing pages on our school Moodle, pupils are signposted to websites (e.g. Childline, NSPCC, NHS websites, Young Minds, Rise Above etc – a full list can be found on the Wellbeing pages of Moodle) as well as helplines (e.g. TalkZone, Samaritans, Childline), local services and relevant people within school so that they can seek further advice and support should they require it.

We believe it is important for this area of the curriculum to give pupils help in developing a positive attitude to sexual health and personal wellbeing through their relationships to and with others. Sexual desire and activity is not only a given fact of

human existence but in Christian belief, a gift of God as part of Creation. It is important that, as they grow up, children come to an understanding of their stewardship of their own bodies, instincts and feelings. In this way they will be better prepared for the opportunities, joys, risks and responsibilities of adult relationships.

Children need to glimpse something of the wonder and security of family relationships and consider safe contexts for their own sexual expression. They should be able to see the relevance of the Christian values of acceptance, stewardship, respect and forgiveness through a deepening understanding of what it is to love another "as yourself".

A responsible attitude towards sexual activity and an understanding of our own roles in relationships can lead to a positive sense of personal identity and value, and greater personal fulfilment. Young people should be taught to recognise that lasting successful relationships require maturity, good self-esteem, self-discipline, a will to work for the other person and being resistant to negative influences. Marriage as a context for family life and bringing up children is discussed as the 'gold standard' for Christians in relationship, whilst the pros and cons of other family setups in modern Britain, including those without children are also considered. Equally, that Christian thinking recognizes the existence of failure and the need for forgiveness and reconciliation.

As pupils mature, our school can make a distinctive and unique contribution to their education by placing RSE within a context of Christian love, faithfulness and compassion as well as allowing pupils to explore an increasing awareness of their individual and social responsibilities before God. In this way they will become more aware of their responsibility not only for themselves but also for those whom they love as well as the people with whom they live and work.

### ***Aims of Relationships and Sex Education***

In considering the aims for RSE, due regard will be given to the special needs and learning difficulties of some of our children and to the age/maturity of the children, which is why the learning is stepped in line with the latest PSHE Association guidance, and follows their spiral curriculum model. It is also recognised that the broader issue of Health Education does not begin and end in the classroom. The subtle messages that pupils receive about healthy relationships from the daily life of a school are as important as those given during lessons. RSE is concerned with questions of attitudes, values, relationships, emotions and self-awareness. It is concerned with fostering a child's positive self-image and self-esteem and promoting positive attitudes towards relationships, love and sexuality whilst giving them the confidence and understanding which will allow them to recognize and avoid risky behaviours and influences later in life.

The aims of RSE are much more than teaching the biological facts of life, though we must ensure that children acquire accurate factual knowledge regarding sexual development and health in order to mitigate possible misunderstandings and irrational fears. Having the skills of reasoning and self-regulation along with this knowledge is vital if our young people are to make responsible and informed choices about their relationships and sexual health.

The RSE programme includes:

1. Information about puberty, personal hygiene, menstruation and sexual organs.
2. Self-regulation: how to be your best self in relationships, understanding your rights and responsibilities and how to recognise manipulation or abuse
3. Social 'norms' and an awareness of the variety of different lifestyles and families in Britain today
4. Recognising the influence of media portrayals and commercialisation of relationships and sex, including pornography
5. Understanding the importance of ongoing and informed consent and 'readiness' for sex
6. Reproduction and the many forms of contraception
7. STIs including Chlamydia and HIV
8. The choices available in the case of unplanned pregnancy (the moral issues surrounding abortion and religious attitudes towards it are also dealt with in RE).

RSE forms an essential part of our PSHE programme, and is one of the contexts through which our pupils are given the opportunity to become more aware of the consequences of their actions; to develop an awareness of and respect for themselves and others; to explore approaches to resisting media and peer pressure and to understand the importance of self-regulation and managing risk.

Christian Values are central to the RSE programme. The value of Christian wisdom enables pupils to consider the God who made them and how this will affect their speech, thoughts and actions. Compassion and forgiveness are considered in the context of a healthy relationship - human beings fall short of the ideal but the admission of failure can bring forgiveness and reconciliation and people can learn to change their behaviour.

In addition, the RSE programme aims to provide a framework for the child: to become more aware of the consequences of their actions; to develop an awareness of and respect for themselves and others; to understand and evaluate reasons for delaying first sex (including Church teaching); to acquire approaches to resisting media and peer influence and to make links to other risk taking activities, such as taking alcohol and drugs.

## **Legislation**

Under the Education Act 2002/ Academies Act 2010 all schools are required to provide a balanced and broadly based curriculum which:

- *Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical developments of pupils at the school and of society, and*
- *Prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.*

SRE is set within a wider legislative context. The 2006 Education and Inspections Act laid a duty on Governing Bodies '*to promote the wellbeing of pupils at the school*'. The

duty came into effect in September 2007. Since that date, an equivalent requirement has been placed on new academies through their funding agreements.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 makes relationships and sex education statutory in all secondary schools, including academies. All secondary schools are now required to have relationships and sex education (RSE) in place and a relationships and sex education policy by 2020, to coincide with the new statutory status of Health Education.

## **Organisation**

RSE is taught primarily by the form tutor, with some individuals being taught elements of PSHE on occasion by the SENCO as part of their provision in the Personalised Learning Centre. Each tutor has access to the Living Education long-term plans and interactive lesson resources. At the beginning of each academic year every group is involved in creating a set of 'ground rules' for effective discussion – these are then written onto a class agreement poster which is displayed in each tutorial room and referred to during discussions as necessary. The Curriculum Leader delivers whole-school or pastoral team training to staff as required. All tutor teams have been trained since 2016 in the delivery of lessons regarding FGM, and each year the Curriculum leader provides training for new tutors as part of the school's induction programme. Some Pupil Managers and the Curriculum leader are trained to step in as needed to support with the delivery of condom workshop sessions.

## **General Issues**

Sometimes a pupil will, in the classroom, ask an explicit question which may lead into sensitive, difficult or controversial areas. It is important that children feel able to ask any questions that they wish and that their questions are valued. It is the policy of the school that such questions do not have to be answered directly or immediately. If necessary teachers also need to feel able to ask the child to wait for an answer to give them time to consult with the senior leadership team. *(For instance: 'That is a really interesting question and I need a little time to think because I want to give you a really good answer.')* Teachers answer questions on behalf of the school and should feel able to work with colleagues to construct an appropriate answer. The teacher may use an anonymous 'questions box' in their classroom where pupils who are not comfortable raising questions in an open setting may ask questions to be responded to at a later date. The school expects teachers to use their professional skills and discretion in such cases, and always to keep in mind the age and maturity of the pupil, as well as the aims, values and procedures set out in this document. If he/or she is in doubt, he/she will first consult the Curriculum Leader for Living Education. Guidance on the teaching of sensitive issues including pornography and more general guidance on the use of ground rules and distancing techniques has been made available to staff alongside the subject resources on the shared area.

**Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. If we have any reason to believe a pupil is at risk, we are required to take appropriate action in accordance with the school's**

**written policy and procedure for Child Protection. This also means that if a pupil puts a private question to a teacher or other member of staff and requests secrecy, no promise of secrecy or confidentiality will be given, but with the reassurance that any steps taken will always be in the pupil's best interests. Any critical incidents or disclosures should be reported to the Pupil Manager or the DSL using the school's CPOMs system, as per school protocol. In addition, all staff are made aware of their duty to report to the Police any suspicion that they might have of FGM potentially taking or having taken place.**

### **Guidelines on Sensitive areas**

In the light of their policy the Governors have identified and considered several areas which may be described as sensitive but believe they should not be avoided. These are examples of two such areas and how they would like them to be treated.

#### ***Sexuality***

All teaching should recognise the value of the unique worth of each individual and for this reason: prejudice, victimization, bullying and the use of homosexual slang are contrary to the school's Christian values and policies and will not be tolerated. The school's views are in line with those expressed by The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby in the Church of England 2017 Guidance, entitled 'Valuing All God's Children' when he says:

*'Central to Christian theology is the truth that every single one of us is made in the image of God. Every one of us is loved unconditionally by God. We must avoid, at all costs, diminishing the dignity of any individual to a stereotype or a problem. Church of England schools offer a community where everyone is a person known and loved by God, supported to know their intrinsic value.'*

*'This guidance helps schools to offer the Christian message of love, joy and the celebration of our humanity without exception or exclusion.'*

Children will be aware that some people seek sexual relationships with people of the same sex. The existence of a range of Christian views about this is recognised. In 'Valuing All God's Children', further guidance is given that, *'the curriculum should offer opportunities for pupils to learn to value themselves and their bodies. Relationships and sex education should take LGBT people into account. Sexual orientation should be included within RSE in the secondary phase. The Church of England's teaching on human sexuality and a range of Christian views should be taught, as well as a range of perspectives from other faiths and world views'*.

Homosexuality is a fact within our human family, and it is statistically very likely that a number of our pupils will live their lives with that particular sexual orientation. Our education programme at St. Michael's would be failing all our children if it simply pretended that homosexuality (or transsexuality) did not exist, either by hindering understanding on the part of those who are heterosexual or by denying self-

understanding to those who are not. Playground gossip plays an important role in the spread of misinformation; we believe that our school has a genuine educative and human role to play here. It is the school's responsibility to deal with questions about sexual orientation, gender identity and relationships in a sensitive, balanced, factual and honest way, taking account of children's age, maturity and background and paying due regard to our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. Tutors are in the best position to know their tutorial's needs and adapt their teaching to suit specific requirements.

### **'Right of Withdrawal'**

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools.

This guidance also sets out both the rights of parents/carers to withdraw pupils from Sex Education (but not Relationships or Health Education) and the process that Headteachers should follow in considering a request from a parent. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of Sex Education delivered as part of statutory RSE. This right extends only up to and until three terms before the child turns 16.

The guidance states that the Headteacher will make the decision on whether a child can be excused from Sex Education, and that there is an expectation that this will be granted in most cases. However, any parent wishing to make this decision will first be invited to discuss their concerns with the Curriculum Leader, who will seek to listen and respond to these concerns, whilst articulating the benefits of participation and potential disadvantages to a pupil who might miss this work.

Broad areas of content will be covered in PSHE and RE lessons. The Governors recognise that relevant discussion may also take place in other curriculum areas. The Governors also recognise that the Science curriculum also refers to human reproduction. The right of withdrawal does not extend to any content within the Science curriculum.

We inform parents that RSE is being delivered by sending letters to parents before the unit is taught. It is their responsibility to opt out if they so wish. The School will generally grant such requests, however the Governors do believe that a well-planned programme of RSE embedded within the school's offer is of vital importance for every child at this school.

If a parent does request that their child be removed from Sex Education, the school will make arrangements for their child to work elsewhere in school during these lessons. In such cases, the 2019 statutory guidance allows any affected pupil in the last three terms



before they turn 16 who wishes to receive Sex Education to request this, and school will make arrangements to provide such education during one of those terms.

### **Resources and teaching methods**

The programme will be taught through a range of teaching methods, including small group and class discussions, role-play, effective questioning and Kagan activities (cooperative learning strategies designed to ensure all pupils engage with the lesson) to foster inclusion. The Curriculum Leader will ensure that, if requested, resources are available to parents to view before the lessons. Parents will be informed of any major changes in the RSE programme.

The school programme is also supported by local services. The 'Wize Up' clinic is open Mondays 6-8pm at Collison Avenue, Chorley, whilst the Leyland clinic takes place at the Youth Centre on West Paddock between 3-5pm on a Thursday. Lancashire County Council offer 'Youth Zone' services including advice and support regarding sexual health and access to contraception through their website, facebook and twitter accounts. They also offer advice through the 'Talk Zone' by telephone, text or online chat. These are all signposted during PSHE lessons and on the school Moodle (via the Wellbeing Hub). Pupils are also signposted to the school nurse for any health concerns.

### **Assessment**

Learning is informally assessed by tutors during lessons, through the use of baseline and assessment activities including mindmaps, write and draw activities, debates and discussions. Progress is monitored by tutors and any concerns discussed with the Curriculum Leader.

### **The involvement of parents and carers**

The most effective RSE is a collaboration between school and home. We are committed to working with parents and carers. We will offer support to parents and carers by offering those interested an opportunity to come into school to view the resources and discuss the programme with the Curriculum leader prior to the teaching of these units.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating the Scheme**

The school has procedures for monitoring and evaluating all curriculum areas regularly and systematically. Day to day monitoring is the responsibility of the Curriculum Leader for Living Education. Feedback is gathered from pupils through the use of a pupil voice meeting, and issues raised through school council where appropriate. School also gathers data through the use of online questionnaires.

Lessons within the scheme are updated on an ongoing basis by the Curriculum Leader to be responsive to school, local and wider community events (for example in response to the Covid-19 pandemic).

Delivery of the programme is monitored as part of the 'open classrooms' initiative, and good practice is shared at Pupil Managers' meetings. The curriculum leader attends PM meetings as appropriate to disseminate information, ensure compliance and gather feedback. Training is provided as needed to tutor teams or individuals, and the Curriculum Leader attends training events with the PSHE Association throughout the year. She is also a member of the local PSHE Network which meets regularly.