

St. Mary's Church of England Primary Academy

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy



Learning through faith

We aim to provide a learning environment in which everyone feels happy, safe and supported, where the evidence of God's love is ever present.

**Last reviewed on:
22nd May 2023**

Next review due by: P Nightingale and G Hacking

Vision

The greatest commandment Jesus taught was to love God and to love your neighbour. Within this commandment is the foundation of the Christian view of relationships. At St. Mary's Church of England Academy our relationship education seeks to live out this command and explore how we can 'love our neighbour' through what we say and do. Our school focuses on the importance of relationships and the qualities and character needed to sustain the best relationships that honour each other whether within a friendship, family relationship or romantic relationship.

Each child is a unique being, a child of God, loved and accepted. As such, our school seeks to enable children to develop through an inclusive programme of teaching that is based on Christian principles, which both respects the human body and seeks to ensure health and well-being.

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1. Aims

We believe that our pupils have a right to the highest quality relationship and sex education (RSE). This education should be incorporated into the entire curriculum, so that “it may be given within a spiritual, moral, family-orientated and Christian framework.” (General Synod Board of Education). We believe we should help our pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, independent and healthy lives. This policy is in line with RSE Guidance DCSF, Sex Education Forum related guidance, The National Curriculum 2000 KS1 and 2 and advice to Schools and Governors (Sept. 2000) from Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education and North Lancashire Methodist District.

The aims of sex and relationship education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- 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 sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Teach children alongside our school’s ethos, values and mission statement.

2. Statutory requirements

RSE is not compulsory in primary schools. Academies do not have to follow the National Curriculum and are therefore not required to teach the elements of sex education in the science curriculum.

If primary academies do teach RSE, they are required by their funding agreements to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

At St. Mary’s CE Primary Academy, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff and pupils. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
4. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

4. Definition

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.

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

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Relationships Education is the programme of work that forms part of the basic curriculum. We aim for children to appreciate what healthy, respectful relationships are. It covers all types of relationships including online, peer to peer, family and carer relationships. It also covers respect for others and staying safe.

Sex Education is a programme of work that builds on our science curriculum in Key Stage 2 and covers how a baby is conceived and born.

Health Education is a programme of teaching about puberty and our changing adolescent body, physical health and fitness, healthy eating, mental wellbeing, drugs, alcohol and tobacco, internet safety and harms, healthcare and basic first aid.

The Science curriculum covers human reproduction (see Science Policy).

5. Delivery of RSE

SRE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of SRE are taught within the science curriculum, and aspects are included in religious education (RE). Some aspects will be taught in collective worship.

Pupils also receive stand-alone sex education sessions.

Across all Key Stages, pupils will be supported with developing the following skills:

- Communication, including how to manage changing relationships and emotions
- Recognising and assessing potential risks

- Assertiveness
- Seeking help and support when required
- Informed decision-making
- Self-respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and maximising a healthy lifestyle
- Managing conflict
- Discussion and group work

Difficult questions & sensitive issues in relation to sex education

Our school's Relationship and Sex Education programme will provide opportunities for children to 'talk honestly and openly'. At the same time, we have to respect the pace of children's maturation. We feel that some topics are best postponed until the secondary school years. There are also sensitive or controversial topics (see below) over which some staff, parents and governors may have reasonable concerns.

Our school has decided not to teach about or answer questions on...

- Different forms of sexual intercourse including homosexual practices or foreplay
- Rape
- Exploitative or violent sexual practices
- Incest
- Abortion
- Prostitution
- Contraception
- Masturbation
- Male circumcision / Female Genital Mutilation
- AIDS/HIV issues will be discussed in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner as and when they are encountered

If a child asks a question on any topic listed in the above list, teachers will explain that this is a matter not dealt with in school, that the child should consult his/her parent for an answer. The school will normally seek to inform parents when such a question is asked.

In some cases, a question or request for advice may indicate the pupil to be at risk or in danger, in which case appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the school's written policy and procedure for Safeguarding and 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 interest.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The governing board

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

6.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from components of RSE (see section 7).

6.3 Staff

Staff 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 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.

6.4 Pupils

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

7. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents' have the right to withdraw their children from components of RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from RSE.

8. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

9. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of SRE is monitored by Helen Whittaker (PSHE lead) through:

- Lesson observations, planning, work scrutiny, discussions with pupils/staff and learning walks

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the PSHE lead biannually or as new statutory developments are implemented. At every review, the policy will be approved by the headteacher and the governing body.