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For review – Spring 2028

St Andrew's CE Primary School Much Hadham



'Life in All Its Fullness' – Come and See John 10:10



Relationships & Health Education (including Sex Education) Policy

Introduction

A key aim of the school is to enable each pupil to develop the skills, knowledge and critical thinking empowering them to grow up happy, healthy and safe. 'Children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships'. (DfE RSE and Health Guidance July 2025)

At St Andrew's school, the Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) programme is fully integrated as part of the Personal, Health Social and Economic (PSHE) curriculum and has planned, timetabled lessons across all Key Stages.

We recognise that this is not a task for the school in isolation, and this policy has been written in consultation with staff, governors, parents, carers and pupils so that we can ensure that the teaching of RHSE reflects the expectations and the changing needs of the children in our school.

All primary schools have a statutory duty to deliver Relationships Education as well as Health Education.

Our school defines Relationships Education as learning about safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships, in their families, their communities and online, appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils.

Our school defines Health Education as learning about what constitutes good physical and mental health and that the two are interlinked. Health education will seek to help children develop skills and strategies to support physical and mental wellbeing for life.

Our school defines Sex Education as learning and understanding in an age appropriate manner, the place of sexual intercourse in a relationship and how it can lead to conception, pregnancy and birth. While Sex Education in our school means that we give children this information, we do this with an awareness of the moral code and values, which underpin all our work in school

We teach Relationships, Health and Sex Education in the context of the school's aims and values framework. In particular, we teach RHSE in the belief that:

- it is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect taking account of diversity and equality;
- children should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of their actions as well as discussing relationships both safe and harmful including online abuse and exploitation;
- it is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education programme including friendships, consent and safe relationships online;
- it should be taught in the context of marriage or committed relationships and family life;

- children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies;
- children need to learn the importance of self-regulation.

Equality

At our school, it is important that our curriculum is inclusive and that all pupils see themselves and their families represented in the curriculum.

Lessons make children aware of 'protected characteristics' as outlined in the Equality Act. These are explored in ways that are appropriate to their age and maturity. In line with the Equality Act 2010, the curriculum, ensures that children understand the law.

Within our teaching, we seek to foster gender equality and LGBT+ equality by challenging discrimination in all its forms.

Children with Special Educational Needs

It is important that RHSE is accessible for all our children. We will ensure this by:

- providing accessibility through high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised to meet their specific needs.
- providing additional steps and scaffolding to ensure learning and progress is made, for example through pre-teaching and or over teaching.

Curriculum Organisation

Our programme of study for Relationships and Health Education is an integral part of our PHSE curriculum which demonstrates: progression that will extend language, concepts and content increasing in depth and complexity as the pupils mature physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

It gives pupils the opportunity to reflect on values and influences, from peers, media, faith and culture, that may shape their attitudes to relationships and nurture respect for different views.

Our programme uses a spiral curriculum approach with key themes taught across the school, building upon children's previous learning according to their age and maturity.

As a school, we have invested in a comprehensive PHSE curriculum package –*Jigsaw*– which integrates all the statutory requirements of Relationships and Health Education, along with the non-statutory recommendations of Sex Education, Other resources may also be used to supplement teaching within PHSE.

Statutory curriculum requirements

Key themes in Relationships Education:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful, kind relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe

Key themes in Health Education:

- General wellbeing
- Wellbeing online
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- Health protection and prevention
- Personal safety
- Basic First Aid
- Developing bodies

Non-statutory curriculum requirements

Sex Education

The Department of Education continues to recommend that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and physical and emotional maturity of the pupil. As a school, we have always taught human conception in our science curriculum, and this will continue. Sex Education lessons will complement the factual approach in science to support pupils to explore and manage their feelings about this and to understand the law.

In addition, lessons will look at the following:

- the way humans reproduce;
- respect for their own bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed long term, and loving relationship;
- the importance of family life, and that families of all kinds are represented within the curriculum;
- Online relationship safety and conversely, abuse and what they should do if they are worried about any sexual matters.

By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are born, how their bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children.

We arrange an annual meeting for all parents and carers of children in Years 4-6 to discuss this particular programme of lessons, to explain what the issues are and how they are taught, and to see the materials the school uses in its teaching.

School leaders are actively involved in the delivery of this programme.

Staff receive guidance and support from the PHSE co-ordinator with regard to appropriate teaching and learning approaches, resources, tackling sensitive issues and questions and the safeguarding of children.

Other Curriculum Content

In Key Stage 1 we teach children that animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body using correct terminology.

In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth. The subject of puberty is introduced in Years 3 and 4 as part of Health Education. Conception is introduced age appropriately in Year 4 in the context of why female bodies change during puberty.

In addition, we also teach some aspects of Relationships and Health Education through other subject areas (for example, Science, Computing and PE), where we feel that they contribute specifically to a child's knowledge and understanding of their physical, social and emotional development.

Our curriculum and policy also takes significant guidance from the PHSE Association, Church of England, Protective Behaviours programme and recommendations from Herts for Learning.

The role of parents

Parent and carers are partners in this important area of education which helps us to keep children safe and support them so that they thrive.

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's Relationships and Sex Education lies with parents and carers. We aim to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation.

In promoting this objective we:

- seek to consult parents about the school's Relationships and Sex Education policy and practice through discussion .
- answer any questions that parents may have about Relationships and Sex Education;
- take seriously and reassure parents regarding any issue they raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for Relationships and Sex Education in the school;
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to Relationships Health and Sex Education, so that the teaching in school is supported by parents and carers at home and children gain the knowledge, skills and confidence to make their own positive healthy and safe choices.

We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing body and their increasing responsibilities.

The status of Sex Education in Primary Schools

In light of the new guidance from the Department of Education, parents **do not** have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education and health education, but they **do** have the right to request their child be excused from additional sex education (except mandatory national curriculum science). We conclude that sex education refers to human reproduction, and therefore inform parents of their right to request their child be withdrawn from the lessons that explicitly teach this.

If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from Sex Education lessons, they should discuss their concerns initially with the Headteacher, and then confirm this in writing if they still do not wish their child to participate. The school always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard.

Safeguarding

Teachers conduct Relationships and Sex Education lessons in such a manner, as to create an environment with shared agreement and objectives, setting the scene for learning about sensitive issues.

However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. In these circumstances the teacher will listen to the child as a matter of urgency.

If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the school Designated Safeguarding Personnel Lead (DSL) who will then deal with the matter. (See also Child Protection Policy).

Managing Difficult Questions

Pupils may ask questions about topics which go beyond that agreed to be covered by the school. In such cases, the child will be referred to ask the question to a trusted adult outside school. Parents or carers may be informed so that they can be prepared if necessary. All parents and carers will have access to support such as 'How can I talk to my child about relationships, puberty and human reproduction?'

The role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our Relationships, Health and Sex Education policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

The Headteacher, supported by the curriculum lead, may liaise with external agencies regarding the school Relationships and Sex Education programme, and ensures that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy, and that they work within this framework.

The Headteacher, supported by the curriculum lead, monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

Monitoring and review

The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors our Relationships Health and Sex Education programme and will seek to ensure that it meets the needs of the children of St Andrew's. This will be done by:

- Enabling teachers to critically reflect on their work in delivering RHSE through lesson evaluation and through discussion with RHSE curriculum lead.
- Pupils will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning during lessons.
- Through Pupil Voice which may then help planning, adapting and amending learning activities.
- Updating parents and carers

This Committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body for approval.

This policy has been written in accordance with current government and Church of England guidance.