

St John's Church of England Primary School

Relationships, Health and Sex Education Policy



"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future." - Jeremiah 29:11

Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body: January 2022

Date of next review: January 2024

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures.

Contents

Section	Subject	Page
1	Rational and ethos	3
2	Roles and responsibilities	4
3	Legislation	5
4	Curriculum design	5
5	Safe and Effective Practice	6
6	Engaging Stakeholders	7
7	Monitoring	8
8	Useful Documents	8
9	RSE policy review date	9
	Appendix 1a	10
	Appendix 1b	11
	Appendix 2	12
	Appendix 3	12

1. Rationale and Ethos

Christian Context

Effective Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain relationships. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being and has a positive impact on academic attainment. Sensitivity and respect should be shown to all children when teaching about personal relationships and sex education. RSE should be taught in a way that ensures there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home/personal circumstances.

All RSE should be set in a context that is consistent with the school's Christian ethos and values.

- RSE should be based on inclusive Christian principles and values, emphasising respect, compassion, loving care and forgiveness.
- RSE should be taught in the light of the belief in the absolute worth of all people and the unconditional infinite love of God.
- RSE should be sensitive to the circumstances of all children and be mindful of the variety of expressions of family life in our culture, yet it should also uphold the Christian values regarding relationships and marriage as recognised by the Church of England (i.e. Marriage is a gift of God in creation and encompasses consent, public witness, permanence and lifelong fidelity) ¹

1 Please see Appendix 1 a, 1 b and 2

- Issues regarding human sexuality should be addressed sensitively
- The exploration of reproduction and sexual behaviour within the Science curriculum should stand alongside the exploration of relationships, values and morals and Christian belief

Whilst children are given the opportunity to explore their own attitudes, values and beliefs and to develop an individual moral code that will guide their actions, this is exercised within an understanding of the right of people to hold their own views within a framework of respect for others.

Sex education must be an integral part of the personal, social and health education curriculum in all Church Schools. Each school must teach within a framework of Christian values and the Christian understanding that sex is a gift of God as part of creation. Whilst schools may use sex education to inform children about sexual issues, each must do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions.

The delivery of RSE in church schools should encompass the teachings of the Church of England, including the Christian understanding of marriage as the context for sexual relationships and the importance of trust, loyalty, fidelity and choice, as well as the understanding of abstinence and celibacy as positive life choices, whilst being sensitive to the community it serves.

Definition

Relationships and Sex Education is a lifelong learning process. It is about respect, love and care and the benefits of making and maintaining stable relationships. We recognise that to be human is to experience feelings, seek connections with other people and develop relationships that may be physical or non-physical. RSE seeks to enable young people to feel positive about themselves, manage relationships and access the infrastructure of support to empower them to investigate all possible options available to them.

Each school's approach to RSE should be sensitive to the age and aptitude of the children, but be straightforward and factual in line with the law and good pedagogy. To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Therefore, RSE should reflect the reality of young people's lives today, especially the persuasive influences of television, video, the internet, social media, peer pressure and young people's literature. Where controversial topics arise, schools and academies are asked to use agreed collective judgement, with due regard to this policy.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing boards or management committee should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes;
- the subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn; and,
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations

Lead Teacher

The RSE programme will be led by the PSHE education subject lead teacher. The lead teacher will need to work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education programmes complement, and do not duplicate, content covered in national curriculum subjects such as citizenship, science, computing and PE. It is important to check prior knowledge and build this into the planning process to ensure a smooth transition between primary and secondary.

Teachers

RSE is delivered through planned programmes within Science, RE and PSHE.

Teaching will be assessed and assessments used to identify where pupils need extra support or intervention. Whilst there is no formal examined assessment for these subjects, there are some areas to consider in strengthening quality of provision, and which demonstrate how teachers can assess outcomes. For example, tests, written assignments or self-evaluations, to capture progress.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring that Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education is accessible for all pupils. This is particularly important when planning teaching for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities who represent a large minority of pupils. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility.

3. Legislation

Legal Requirements

This policy covers our school's approach to Relationship and Sex Education (RSE). 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 (DfE, 2019).

Documents that inform the school's RSE policy include:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010),
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2016)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
-

4. Curriculum Design

Aims and Objectives

Our RSE programme will be planned and delivered through our PSHE Association curriculum. The focus in primary school should be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults within the Christian context of our school.

Through Relationships Education (and RSE), schools should teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. In primary schools, this can be delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy,

ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This should also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online. Pupils should know how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages it will be important to balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement Health Education and as part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge can support safeguarding of children.

We aim to provide all pupils with an age appropriate RSE programme that is tailored to their physical and emotional maturity. Our RSE programme is an integral part of our whole school PSHE education provision and will ensure that pupils cover

- Families and the people that care for them
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe (including E-Safety)

The aim is that through RSE, pupils:

- Develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships.
- Are able to correctly name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work
- Understand the concept of personal privacy and boundaries
- Are able to protect themselves and ask for help and support
- Are prepared for their development into adulthood
- To know the Christian definition of love in its different forms and contexts 2
- To acquire information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex, sexuality, relationships and feelings.

Learning about relationships and sex education in PSHE education lessons will complement learning in other lessons across the curriculum including RE and Science. In doing this, we acknowledge the value of contributing to a spiral curriculum. This curriculum should enable children to make positive choices about their sexual and emotional health, both now and in the future.

2 See Appendix 3

5. Safe and Effective Practice

RSE will be delivered in line with the school's equal opportunities policy within an atmosphere of mutual respect. Resources selected to support the programme will be free from cultural bias wherever possible and will avoid gender stereotyping. RSE will be available to all pupils regardless of gender, culture or disability.

Personal beliefs

Beliefs and attitudes of teachers should not influence their teaching of RSE. All RSE teaching will take into account beliefs of pupils. The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments wherever possible to promote accessibility and inclusivity of the curriculum. All RSE teaching will take into account beliefs of pupils and their family circumstances and will reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them.

Language and Ground Rules in RSE Lessons

Teachers and pupils will agree ground rules which will include:

- No one will feel forced to answer a personal question
- No one will be forced to take part in discussions
- Language used should be easily understood by all
- Correct names for body parts will be used
- Meanings of words will be explained in a simple, factual way

Managing Difficult Questions

It is inevitable that controversial issues and difficult questions which extend beyond the RSE curriculum will occur in lessons. At all times, students will be offered sensitive and appropriate support. Consideration will be given to the potential for small group or 1-1 discussion to approach the discussion of specific issues. The issue will be addressed with sensitivity and at a level appropriate to the age group and developmental stage, taking into account any additional SEND in an objective manner free from personal bias. Account must be taken of different viewpoints such as different religious beliefs. Discussion should be set within the legal framework and students made aware of the law when it relates to these issues. Students will be made aware that some information cannot be held confidential and should understand that if certain disclosures are made, certain actions will ensue- in this situation, refer to the school's safeguarding policy.

RSE can be a sensitive issue and teachers may welcome support and training. Provision will be made available for teaching staff to clarify legislation, curriculum requirements and to consider appropriate teaching approaches and materials. The school will support the use of visitors from outside, such as health professionals, police and voluntary sector, and other organisations to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

Safeguarding

At the heart of these subjects there is a focus on keeping children safe, and schools can play an important role in preventative education. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) sets out that all schools and colleges should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. The knowledge taught from our PSHE programme and whole school approach to RSE will support the safeguarding of children. LGBT+ bullying is dealt with strongly and sensitively.

See Safeguarding Policy (With reference to Abuse, Forced Marriages and Female Genital Mutilation where appropriate). School staff will always discuss concerns with the designated member of staff.

In regards to external agencies and visitors, it is important to agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with school policy

6. Engaging Stakeholders

Parents

In developing this policy, parents have been consulted in line with the statutory guidance. Through consulting with parents, the school has provided examples of the resources that they plan to use as this can be reassuring for parents and enables them to continue the conversations started in class at home.

Occasionally, issues about RSE may arise spontaneously in other lessons (e.g. while studying a text in literacy) where it is not the main focus of the lesson. This is not considered to be part of the planned RSE curriculum and consideration must be given as parents or carers cannot withdraw their children in these circumstances.

The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships. Therefore, we are committed to working with parents and carers by working closely with them to ensure that they are fully aware of what is being taught. We will provide opportunities for parents to access additional resources and support during parent consultation sessions.

The science national curriculum in key stage 1 and 2 includes teaching about the main external body parts and changes to the human body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty. Parents cannot withdraw their children from the national curriculum.

Parents/carers withhold the right to withdraw their child from non-statutory parts of RSE contents. Sex education is not compulsory at primary school. The school will teach sex education tailored to the age, physical and emotional maturity of our pupils. Parents will be informed before a sex education lesson and will be given the opportunity to withdraw their child from the learning.

7. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

Teachers will critically reflect on their work in delivering RSE through pupil voice and parent consultations. Pupil voice will be influential in adapting and amending planned learning activities. Pupils will have the opportunities to review and reflect on their learning during planned activities in lessons and an E-Safety questionnaire at the beginning of the year.

The PSHE lead teacher will ensure that RSE is taught according to the statutory guidance.

8. Useful Documents and Resources

Key references can be found below. These have been taken from “Valuing All God’s Children, Guidance for Church of England Schools in Challenging Homophobic Bullying” May 2014 pages 60-62

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1988293/valuing%20all%20god's%20children%20web%20final.pdf>

http://www.stonewall.org.uk/at_school/education_for_all/quick_links/education_resources/primary_school_resources/default.asp

Key Stage 1: Love and Sex Matters by Kate Guthrie, Verity Holloway, Katy Staples

(www.salisbury.anglican.org). This includes lessons about how wonderful our bodies are and "My family - those who care for me". These are inclusive materials that affirm all children and help to raise self-esteem.

Key Stage 2: Love and Sex Matters by Kate Guthrie, Verity Holloway, Katy Staples (www.salisbury.anglican.org). This includes a lesson on Christian marriage that might be taught in PSHE or RE. It also includes a lesson called 'Firm Foundations' which allows pupils to focus on the question of "What makes people compatible?" This is explored with reference to long-term committed relationships and friendships. There is the possibility that children can raise for themselves the issue of gay relationships - but the focus for this lesson is compatibility and how we make sensible choices. The summary activity asks which behaviours make for life giving relationships and what makes life-limiting or destructive relationships. It is an inclusive activity that allows pupils to begin to form safe guidelines for healthy behaviours within loving and nurturing, non-exploitative relationships.

9. RSE policy review date

As part of effective RSE provision, the RSE policy should be reviewed at least every 18 months / 2 years to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of pupils, staff and parents and that it is in line with current Department for Education advice and guidance.

Appendices - Preface and Declarations

Appendix 1a

Common Worship Marriage Preface

In the presence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
we have come together
to witness the marriage of N and N, **Public Witness**
to pray for God's blessing on them,
to share their joy
and to celebrate their love.

Marriage is a gift of God in creation
through which husband and wife may know the grace of God.
It is given

that as man and woman grow together in love and trust,
they shall be united with one another in heart, body and mind,
as Christ is united with his bride, the Church.

The gift of marriage brings husband and wife together
in the delight and tenderness of sexual union **Sexual Union**
and joyful commitment to the end of their lives. **Permanence**

It is given as the foundation of family life
in which children are [born and] nurtured
and in which each member of the family in good times and in bad,
may find strength, companionship and comfort,
and grow to maturity in love.

Marriage is a way of life made holy by God,
and blessed by the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ
with those celebrating a wedding at Cana in Galilee.

Marriage is a sign of unity and loyalty
which all should uphold and honour.

It enriches society and strengthens community.

No one should enter into it lightly or selfishly
but reverently and responsibly in the sight of almighty God.

N and N are now to enter this way of life.

They will each give their consent to the other **Consent**
and make solemn vows,

and in token of this they will [each] give and receive a ring.

We pray with them that the Holy Spirit will guide
and strengthen them,

that they may fulfil God's purposes
for the whole of their earthly life together. **Permanence**

Appendix 1b

Common Worship Declarations

The minister says to the bridegroom

N, will you take N to be your wife? **Consent**

Will you love her, comfort her, honour and protect her,
and, forsaking all others,

be faithful to her as long as you both shall live? **Permanence**

He answers

I will.

The minister says to the bride

N, will you take N to be your husband? **Consent**

Will you love him, comfort him, honour and protect him,
and, forsaking all others,

be faithful to her as long as you both shall live? **Permanence**

She answers

I will.

Appendix 2

Characteristics of Marriage

1) **Consent.** Both parties must express the intention and willingness to enter into a binding marital union (Gen 24:5-8,57). It is a 'leaving' of parents and a 'cleaving' to the new spouse (Gen 2:24).

2) **Permanence.** 'Marriage in the Bible is first and foremost a binding covenant'.⁵ The Lord will not release a person from vows (Num 30), even vows made rashly (Ecc 5:4-7). Therefore marriage should not be entered into 'lightly or selfishly but reverently and responsibly'. The marriage ordinance also implies exclusivity (a man... his wife) and the 'exclusive nature of marriage is affirmed in the NT'.

3) **Public Witness.** Although, in the Old Testament, marriage was a family rather than 'priestly' matter, both family and public witness were and remain important constituents of this new social relationship (Gen 34:11ff; Deut 22:13-19).

4) **Sexual Union.** The 'one-flesh union' clearly refers to the bodily union of man and wife (Gen 2:24), male and female with the possibility of pro-creation. However, sexual intercourse does not, of itself, create a marriage bond, since marriage is still required after intercourse (Ex 22:16). This aspect of marriage is why it is prohibited between men and women within a certain degree of affinity – e.g. brother and sister, mother and son. All four of these elements are reflected in the Preface and Declarations of the Marriage Service which also makes clear the purposes for which God ordained marriage, namely, procreation (Gen 1:28), mutual help/comfort (Gen 2:18) and the reciprocal commitment of self-giving love which finds its expression in sexual union (Gen 2:24). Stott notes that all three needs have been strengthened by the Fall. Finally, because it is a creation ordinance, 'instituted by God himself in the time of man's innocency' it is given to all humanity.

Divorce and subsequent remarriage whilst a previous partner is still living is a complex and sensitive issue. The decision not only affects the couple but also the wider community. It is permitted by the Church of England, but Bishops' Guidelines must be followed and ultimately the decision is left to the conscience and judgement of the individual minister. Similarly, issues of gender reassignment are pastorally sensitive. Church of England ministers are permitted to marry those who have had gender legally reassigned but they can also exercise a conscientious objection not to do so.

Appendix 3

Aspects of Love

C. S. Lewis in his book, *The Four Loves* (1960) using four Greek words for love, describes four basic kinds of human love – affection (storge), friendship (philia), erotic (eros) love and the love of God (agape). Lewis states that just as Lucifer a former archangel – perverted himself by pride and fell into depravity, so too can love – commonly held to be the arch-emotion – become corrupt by presuming itself to be what it is not.

Affection, – defined as 'affection especially of parents to offspring'. It is described as a humble quiet love, found between those who are 'thrown together' by circumstance. It is the most natural love because it is present without coercion and is the result of fondness by virtue of familiarity. It pays least attention to those attributes that are often deemed

valuable, e.g. physical beauty or giftedness, and is therefore able to transcend most discriminating factors.

The word is not used in Scripture although there are many examples of it, e.g. the command to 'honour father and mother'. The negative form is used twice

Romans 1:31 – they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy.

2 Timothy 3:3 – without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good,

Romans 12:20 uses a compound of phileo and storge.

Friendship – This is the love of friendship, best friends, and the fellowship of being with those people you enjoy usually because of shared interests or activities. It was exalted as a virtue in ancient cultures whereas contemporary society rather ignores it. Lewis recognises that it is not a 'biological love'. By contrast, without erotic love we would not have been begotten, without affection we would not have been reared, whereas we can live and breed without friendship. Friendship is 'a relation between men at their highest level of individuality'.

John 21:15-17, describes Jesus' restoral of Peter, where the different words used seem to convey some import:

Jesus asked, 'do you agapao me?'

Peter replied, 'I phileo you.'

Jesus asked, 'do you agapao me?'

Peter replied, 'I phileo you.'

Jesus asked, 'do you phileo me?'

Peter replied, 'I phileo you.'

We are not commanded to phileo anyone because this form of love depends on feelings.

Examples of use are: John 5:20, 11:3, 36, 12:25, 16:27, 20:2; Ac 28:2; Ro 12:10; 1Ti 6:10; 2Ti 3:4; Tit 2:4, 3:4; Heb 13:1; 3Jo 9; and Re 3:19. Page 10 of 10

Eros – This type of love covers everything from queasy stomachs and warm fuzzy feelings to strong sensual passion. It can be selfish – one person ‘wants’ another’ (cf. Marriage Service, ‘all that I am I give to you’, i.e. reciprocated, consensual yielding of oneself to another). In order to exist eros is dependent upon the situation and circumstances. It is also held captive to each person's perception. For example, if someone perceives a particular quiet evening dinner with candles to be romantic, eros will thrive. However, passion becomes squashed for someone whenever he or she interprets the current situation to be undesirable. Eros thus grows strong and then wastes away based upon our perceptions. Whilst the word does not appear in Scripture, the Song of Solomon is a highly passionate love poem expressing erotic love between a man and a woman.

Agape - The Greek word that refers to the love of God, one of the kinds of love we are to have for people, is agape. Lewis recognises it as the highest form of love and a specifically Christian virtue. Agape is the very nature of God, for God is love (1 John 4:7-12, 16b). The big key to understanding agape is to realize that it can be known from the action it prompts. People today are accustomed to thinking of love as a feeling, but that is not necessarily the case with agape love. Agape is love because of what it does, not because of how it feels.

God so ‘loved’ (agape) that He gave His Son. It did not feel good to God to do that, but it was the loving thing to do. Christ so loved (agape) that he gave his life. He did not want to die, but he loved, so he did what God required. A mother who loves a sick baby will stay up all night long caring for it, which is not something she wants to do, but is a true act of agape love.

The point is that agape love is not simply an impulse generated from feelings. Rather, agape love is an exercise of the will, a deliberate choice. This is why God can command us to love our enemies (Matt. 5:44; Exod. 23:1-5). The Marriage Service does not ask ‘Do you love’ (present), but ‘Will you love’ (future), Future feelings cannot be predicted but a commitment can be made to future actions.

Love is the distinctive character of the Christian life in relation to other Christians and to all humanity. The ‘loving’ thing to do may not always be easy, and true love is not ‘mushy sentimentalism.’ There is often a cost to genuine love.