



Relationships and sex education Policy

Approval date: April 2022

Review date: April 2024

Our Christian Vision

Learning, Loving, Living in God's Family.

“But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God; I trust in God's unfailing love for ever and ever.” Psalm 52:8

Our Christian Vision is that as part of God's faithful and fruitful family, we start as seeds, and from our roots in learning, loving and living we branch out and grow into flourishing trees.

Our vision mirrors that of the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-13). In the story the seed is God's word. The seed takes root and grows in the fertile soil. We are like the seeds flourishing in our rich learning at St Nicholas School.

At St Nicholas we strive to unlock the hidden treasures within each child in a happy, safe and caring Christian environment. Through nurturing and motivation, we strive to
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shape confident, creative and independent learners, who embrace Christian values, and who will become responsible, compassionate and inspirational members of society.



What is Relationship and Sex Education?

The Government's definition is this:

"It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching." (Department for Education and Employment, SRE Guidance, 2000)

Under the guidance issued by the DfE, from September 2020, Relationships Education at primary school is compulsory. We believe that to be effective, RSE should always be taught within a broader PSHE education programme. RSE enhances and is enhanced by learning related to topics including anti-bullying; keeping safe on and offline; keeping physically and mentally healthy, learning about drugs, alcohol and tobacco; and the development of skills and attributes such as communication skills, managing peer pressure, risk management, resilience and decision making.

What are the aims of RSE?

There are four main aims for teaching RSE within the context of Primary School PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education):

- To enable young people to understand and respect their bodies, and be able to cope with the changes puberty brings, without fear or confusion

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- To help young people develop positive and healthy relationships appropriate to their age, development etc. (respect for self and others)
- To support young people to have positive self-esteem and body image, and to understand the influences and pressures around them
- To empower them to be safe and safeguarded

Why is RSE needed?

- More than ever before, children are exposed to representations of sex and sexuality through the media / social media and the social culture around them, so we need to present a balanced view of RSE and help them to be discerning and stay safe.
- Research shows that most parents say they want the support of schools in providing RSE for their children.
- Research consistently shows that effective RSE delays first sexual experience and reduces risk-taking.
- Surveys of children and young people, as well as Ofsted, have repeatedly told us that RSE tends to be “too little, too late and too biological”.

Organisation

The school's programme of relationships and sex education will be embedded within the school's PSHE curriculum and will use materials from the One Decision scheme of work used for PSHE teaching. 'Love and Sex matters' may supplement these resources, which is a series of lessons about relationships produced by the Diocese of Salisbury.

Class teachers, who understand the importance of being positive role models and displaying the qualities essential to good relationships, teach sex and relationships education. Teachers have the flexibility to teach older pupils in single sex classes if the teacher deems this necessary, allowing children to share their anxieties more freely, but other than this all teaching will be in mixed gender classes.

A range of teaching methods, which involve the children's full participation, are used to explore these areas. Teachers will endeavour to answer questions as honestly as possible, but if faced with a question they do not feel comfortable answering within the classroom, provision would be made to meet the individual child's needs, such as the chance to talk privately or a dialogue with the child's parents.

Children who are able may also write questions and place them in the school “worries” box. We see it as essential that we help children develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about sex and relationships. Teachers need to generate an atmosphere where questions of a sexual nature can be asked and answered openly without embarrassment.

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We teach RSE through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main RSE teaching in our PSHE curriculum, we also teach some RSE through other subject areas such as science and P.E where we believe that they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body and how it is changing and developing. It also develops a positive vocabulary, and the strategies and skills children need to stay healthy and safe. In PSHE we teach children about relationships, and we encourage children to discuss issues. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it.

In science lessons in both key stages, teachers inform children about puberty and how a baby is born. For this aspect of the school's teaching, we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for science. In Key Stage 2, we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

The content covered within Relationship and Sex Education

Foundation Stage

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities. (Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum)

Years 1-3

Pupils will be exploring friendships and bullying. They will also learn about body language and the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch and who and how to ask for help. We teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other.

Years 4- 6

Each year group will be taught appropriate to their age and developmental stage. Please note at no point will a child be taught something that is inappropriate; and if a question from a child arises and the teacher feels it would be inappropriate to answer, (for example, because of its mature or explicit nature), the child will be encouraged to ask his/her parents or carers at home, and the question will not be answered to the child or class if it is outside the remit of that year group's programme. In these years, we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age.

By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know about:

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- Changes in the body related to puberty, such as periods and voice breaking.
- What menstruation is - (Girls should be prepared for menstruation before their periods start. Class teachers will ensure all girls are clear of the arrangements in school to help them cope with menstruation and from whom sanitary protection is available)
- When these changes are likely to happen and what issues may cause young people anxiety and how they deal with these.
- How a baby is conceived and born. (We arrange a meeting for all parents and carers of children in Year 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.)
- the different kinds of relationships that we can have and how these change as we grow, identify how relationships can be healthy or unhealthy and how to ask for help if a relationship makes us feel uncomfortable.

The role of parents

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's RSE lies with parents and carers. We wish 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:

- inform parents about the school's RSE policy and practice.
- answer any questions that parents may have about the RSE of their child.
- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSE in the school.
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy and making modifications to it as necessary.
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to RSE, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home.

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

Marriage and Family Life

We live in a society that includes an increasing number of cohabiting partners and families in which the parents have divorced or separated. Teachers do not assume that each child in their class lives with both parents and when discussing marriage, handle this with sensitivity. Divorce and separation of parents can have a profound effect on young people. Ignoring marriage and marriage breakdown for fear of causing pain will not help children process what they may be going through. Teaching is focussed on stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society. Our practice is equally inclusive of civil partnerships and same-sex relationships.

Confidentiality

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Teachers conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child refers to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it under the school's safeguarding procedures with the Designated Safeguarding Lead informed. Teachers will respond in the same way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse.

Monitoring and Evaluating

Day to day monitoring is the responsibility of the PSHE co-ordinator. Continuous monitoring and reporting to the governing body will be the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team. All staff and governors will regularly monitor to determine the effectiveness of the Policy and its impact upon children.

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