



# *St. Mary's C. of E. Primary School*

## *Sex and Relationship Education Policy*

### **RATIONALE**

Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) is lifelong learning about sex, sexuality, emotions, relationships and sexual health. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. SRE has a key part to play in the personal, social, moral and spiritual development of young people. It begins informally in the home with parents and carers long before any formal education takes place at school. Young people's entitlement to SRE is enshrined in the terms of the Education Act (1996).

We have based our school's SRE Policy on the DfE guidance document 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' (ref DfES 01116/2000). In this document, sex and relationship education is defined as 'learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of marriage for family life as well as stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health.'

Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive Sex and Relationship Education does not make young people more likely to become sexually active at a younger age. Indeed it can help them learn the reasons for, and the benefits to be gained from, delaying such activity (DfE guidance 2000).

### **LEGAL NOTES**

The 2014 National Curriculum states that SRE is statutory from year 7, however, the DfE (2000) and PSHE association still advise that SRE is taught in primary school and that by the end of their primary education children are aware of:

- changes in the body related to puberty, such as periods and voice breaking;
- when these changes are likely to happen and what issues may cause young people anxiety and how they can deal with these;
- how a baby is conceived and born.

**The DfE Guidance (2000) was recently updated and becomes statutory in September 2020. From that date, all schools will be required to teach these subjects; and the recommendation is that schools adopt this position from September 2019.**

Reference:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/781150/Draft\\_guidance\\_Relationships\\_Education\\_Relationships\\_and\\_Sex\\_Education\\_RSE\\_and\\_Health\\_Education2.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/781150/Draft_guidance_Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education2.pdf)

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES FOR SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION**

The aim of SRE is to provide children with age appropriate information, explore attitudes and values and develop skills in order to empower them to make positive decisions about their health related behaviour. This should take place with consideration of the qualities of relationships within families.

*The objectives of Sex and Relationship Education are:*

- To provide the knowledge and information to which all pupils are entitled.
- To raise pupils' self esteem and confidence, especially in their relationships with others.
- To help pupils understand their sexual feelings and behaviour, so they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives.
- To help pupils' develop skills (language, decision making, choice, assertiveness) and make the most of their abilities.
- To provide the confidence to be participating members of society and to value themselves and others.
- To help gain access to information and support.
- To develop skills for a healthier, safer lifestyle.
- To develop and use communication skills and assertiveness skills to cope with the influences of their peers and the media.
- To respect and care for their bodies.
- To be prepared for puberty and adulthood.
- to understand about the range of relationships, including the importance of family life, for the care and support of children;
- to be able to name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work;
- to understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships;
- to be able to recognise unsafe situations and be able to protect themselves and ask for help and support;
- to understand how safe practices can reduce the spread of viruses.

### **Content and Organisation**

At St. Mary's C of E Primary School SRE is taught through both the Science and PSHE and Citizenship curriculum. We also teach some aspects through other subjects (for example, Religious Education and PE) where we feel they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of relationships, feelings, their own bodies and how these are growing and developing.

In PSHE and Citizenship we teach children about relationships and we encourage them to discuss issues. In Science we teach about parts of the body and how these work. We also explain how the body changes as children approach puberty. We also discuss how people's emotions can change at this time and how to deal with their feelings towards themselves, their families and others in a positive way. We encourage the children to talk about their feelings and ask for help if they feel they need it.

In Science lessons at both key stages, teachers inform children about how their bodies change as they grow older and about how babies are born. Guidance material in the Science National Curriculum is followed closely, with Key Stage 1 pupils being taught how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce. Key Stage 1 pupils are also taught about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other. In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

National Curriculum Science (2014)

### **Key Stage 1**

- Notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults.

*The non-statutory guidance states 'They should also be introduced to the processes of reproduction and growth in animals. The focus at this stage should be on questions that help pupils to recognise growth; they should not be expected to understand how reproduction occurs.'*)

### **Key Stage 2**

- describe the differences in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird
- describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals.
- describe the changes as humans develop to old age.
- recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents

*The non-statutory guidance states that, 'Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty.'*

### **Specific aspects of SRE are taught in Years 5 and 6:**

#### **Year 5**

In Year 5, as part of the science National Curriculum, pupils are taught about how their bodies will change during puberty. We liaise with 'Virgin Health Care' (School Nurse team) about suitable teaching materials to use with pupils in these lessons. Parents are informed about the content of these lessons and have a chance to view any of the content before it take place.

#### **Year 6**

In Year 6 pupils are taught about sexual relationships and sexual health in the context of an appropriate relationship. 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. 'Virgin Health Care' provides guidance about appropriate teaching materials. Sexual relationships and sexual health (including HIV) are always taught with due regard for the emotional development of children.

We offer a meeting for all parents and carers of children in Year 6 to discuss the content of this particular sequence of lessons, and share the materials the school will be using to support its teaching and learning.

### **The Role of Parents and Carers**

The school expects the primary role in children's SRE to lie with their parents and carers, and through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation, we work to develop a positive and supportive relationship with parents and carers. In promoting this objective we:

- inform parents and carers about the school's SRE policy and practice;
- answer any questions that parents and carers have about the SRE of their child;
- encourage parents and carers to be involved in reviewing the school policy and making modifications as necessary.

### **Procedures for Pupil Withdrawal from SRE**

A pupil cannot be withdrawn from SRE education where this is taught as part of the Science National Curriculum. However, the school recognises that some parents and carers may wish to teach their children about sexual relationships within the context of their family / home setting. For this reason, parents and carers have the right to withdraw their children from the Y6 unit, which specifically teaches about sexual relationships and sexual health (there is no right to withdraw children from relationship education or health education). However, parents and carers are made aware that those children who are withdrawn from these sessions still receive biological information, but not taught in the context of relationships. In the instance that the right to withdrawal is exercised, parents and carers are also reminded that SRE could arise naturally from class discussion and discussions on the playground. It is advised as good practice that this could become more damaging than taking part in the sessions itself.

Children whose parents/carers exact their right to withdraw them from the Year 6 units that form part of our SRE programme, will be temporarily transferred to an alternative class.

### **The Role of Support Services**

The school actively seeks advice about the content of SRE from 'Virgin Health Care' and the DfE. The School Nurse can also provide support to school staff in teaching about puberty, sexual relationships and sexual health.

### **Confidentiality**

Teachers conduct SRE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. 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 the same way if a child indicates that they have been a victim of sexual abuse, notifying the designated safeguarding lead, who will then deal with the matter as detailed in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

### **Headteacher's Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that

- both staff and parents/carers are informed about the school's SRE policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively.
- members of staff are given sufficient training to enable them to teach this area of the curriculum effectively and handle issues with sensitivity and due regard to the age of pupils involved

- parents are provided with the opportunity to see the content of the lessons before they take place.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

The PSHE Leader monitors this policy on a regular basis and liaises with external agencies to ensure that its content meets statutory guidelines and is relevant to the needs of pupils currently attending St. Mary's.

All staff:

- Reassure parents, carers, pupils and governors that the personal beliefs and attitudes of staff will not influence the teaching of SRE; all those contributing to the programme are expected to work within the aims listed in this policy.
- Have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of their pupils. They are in a particular position of trust (*loco parentis*). Sexual relationships involving children under 16 years of age constitute a criminal offence. A sexual relationship between a member of staff and any pupil at the same school is a breach of that trust. Such behaviour will be regarded as gross professional misconduct on the part of the member of staff and will result in disciplinary action. If a decision is made to dismiss, this may also lead to a member of staff being barred from further employment in the education service by the Secretary of State.

### **Dealing with difficult questions**

Primary-age pupils will often ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond what is set out for Relationships Education. Given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information. Children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to differing types of questions or behaviours. Teaching methods will take into account these differences (including when they are due to specific special educational needs or disabilities) and the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Ground rules are essential to provide an agreed structure to answering sensitive or difficult questions. This framework facilitates the use of an anonymous question or feelings box as a distancing technique. 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.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Interim Governing Body and PSHE lead will monitor and review the policy annually.

Document Management	
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