



## St John the Divine Church of England Primary School – Relationships Education and Sex Education Policy

### **Our Vision Statement**

We are a vibrant Community where every person makes their unique contribution to making a better society. At St John the Divine, our vision is of a joyful place where children are empowered to explore their potential through educational excellence within an environment of spiritual growth and well-being.

We are a school where all can flourish and be all they can be.

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*‘Jesus said: I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.’ (John 10:10)*

**Our school motto is: TEAM - Together Everyone Achieves More**

*‘You are the body of Christ, and each one of you is part of it.’ (1 Corinthians 12:27)*

### **A Rationale and Ethos for Relationships Education and Sex Education**

‘A caring and developmental Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) programme needs to be more than just biology and the fundamentals of reproduction. Young People want reassurance about their body image, behaviour, feelings and relationships. They also need knowledge and skills appropriate to their level of maturity and developmental needs.’

They need to be given the opportunity ‘to articulate their thoughts, doubts and anxieties within a safe and trusted environment in order that they can build the skills needed to make responsible decisions, communicate effectively and develop healthy and appropriate relationships.

*‘Central to the RSE programme is the growth of self-esteem and taking responsibility for oneself and one’s own actions. The development of pupils’ self-esteem is essential to an effective health education programme. If young people feel positive and good about themselves, they are more likely to take care of themselves, think positively of other people, and therefore, develop non-exploitative, caring relationships. They are also less likely to be exploited by others.’*

*HMI 433 - Sex and Relationships*

*‘For Church schools, RSE is about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, healthy relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It is also about the spiritual and moral aspects of relationships within a context of a Christian vision for the purpose of life.’*

*Church of England Education Office Response to a Call for Evidence on RSE Curriculum*

At St John the Divine Church of England Primary School, our Relationship Education and Sex Education curriculum will:

- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society
- Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life

### **The Morals and Values Framework**

Relationships Education and Sex Education is to be taught within a moral framework, respecting the cultural diversity of our school community and that of the wider community. Children will learn about moral values through all aspects of school life and all curriculum areas, not just in Relationships Education and Sex Education.

Relationships Education and Sex Education, taught within a framework which gives due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life, will:

- Take account of pupils’ levels of knowledge and awareness of the issues being addressed.
- Develop pupils’ self-respect through the promotion of self-esteem, acknowledging the value of each individual pupil.
- Reflect an understanding of the range of family groups that children live in.

- Develop respect and sensitivity to others through knowledge of difference.

**At St John the Divine we encourage and support pupils to:**

- Take responsibility for their actions and the consequences of actions.
- Develop positive relationships with other pupils and adults within the school community.
- Raise any issues that they may have about growing up.

**The Aims of our Relationship and Sex Education Programme:**

- To acknowledge and complement the role of parents as key educators, to liaise with, and work in partnership with them.
- To generate an atmosphere in which pupils can ask questions and discuss matters without embarrassment, knowing that they will be answered at a level appropriate to their development and understanding, and sensitive to the needs of everyone.
- To counteract misleading myths gained from the playground, peers, adults or media.
- To promote and celebrate loving and caring relationships and the idea of mutual responsibilities within these relationships.
- To appreciate the value of 'family life'
- To help young people understand they have rights and to increase communication skills about keeping safe.
- To enable children to develop feelings of self-respect, self esteem, self-confidence, sympathy and empathy.
- To provide clear and accurate information about the development of the human body in an open and frank way, gradually increasing age appropriate detail.
- To develop skills that will enable children to make informed choices both now and in the future.
- To provide information on agencies that can provide support on health-related issues.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Subject Lead for PSHE is responsible for:**

- Writing and updating the Relationships Education and Sex Education Policy and Scheme of Work in light of statutory guidance for Relationships Education, the national curriculum for Science as well as national and local contextual information.
- Monitoring the development of the subject throughout the school;
- Co-ordinating external agency support for Relationships Education and Sex Education
- Co-ordinating classroom practices and guidelines across the curriculum and ensuring the development of subject skills;
- Auditing and monitoring resources throughout the school to ensure that there are sufficient age and ability-appropriate resources for effective teaching and learning

**The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that the terms and ethos of this policy are followed.**

**The governing body is responsible for authorising the Relationships Education and Sex Education Policy, and any subsequent reviews of the Policy; and ensuring that the terms and ethos of this policy are followed**

**All members of the staff team are responsible for following the terms and ethos of this policy.**

### **Responsibilities of Pupils**

Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds and are entitled to learn in a safe and supportive environment. Negative references to sexuality or harassment associated with sexuality are unacceptable and will be dealt with through the school's anti-bullying and behaviour policy/policies. An understanding of human difference is an important aspect of education and will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.

## **Legislation**

From September 2020, all schools are required to teach Relationships Education as part of the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Statutory Guidance. Current regulations and guidance from the Department for Education state that Relationships Education is statutory in all primary schools and that Sex Education is non-statutory in primary schools, although much of its content is covered in the statutory national curriculum subject, Science.

Documents that inform our Relationships Education and Sex Education policy include:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for 21<sup>st</sup> Century (2014)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Statutory Guidance (2019)

## **Relationships Education**

Relationships Education is statutory in all primary schools. Relationships Education teaches children the knowledge and skills to establish and maintain healthy relationships including friendships and within their families, as well as online. Topics taught include respect for others, turn-taking, permission seeking, personal space as well as the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch. Children are taught that other people's families may differ from theirs, how to respect these differences and that other children's families are characterised by love and care.

All schools are subject to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics).

Valuing God's Children articulates the Church of England's position on the teaching of a range of relationships and families:

*'The hallmark of authentic, life-giving relationships is recognition of the sacredness of the other so that all are welcomed wholeheartedly and with reverence. Each person in all their unique difference should be able to thrive, irrespective of physical appearance, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, socio-economic background, academic ability, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.'*

*Valuing All God's Children, Church of England 2017*

Furthermore, it states,

*'If any school is not educating pupils to understand the rights of all people to live freely within their sexual orientation or gender identity without discrimination they would be failing in their duty to prepare their pupils to live in modern Britain.'*

*Valuing All God's Children, Church of England 2017*

## **Sex Education**

Sex Education is not statutory for primary schools, although the Department for Education 'continues to recommend therefore that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born.'

The Department for Education recognises that there is much overlap between topics schools have previously taught as Relationship, Sex Education, including puberty and naming body parts, and those that are part of statutory subjects such as Science.

Pupils are taught relationship education and sex education as part of the **statutory National Curriculum for Science** as outlined below:

### **Key Stage 1**

- Identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body
- Notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults

### **Key Stage 2**

- Describe the changes as humans develop into old age
- Describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals

### **Curriculum Design**

The foundations of Relationships Education are taught in the Early Years Foundation Stage, starting in Nursery. Relationships Education will be taught through the context of the weekly PSHE lessons that take place in all classes in Key Stage One and Key Stage Two.

Sex Education will be taught in Year Six during the summer term through their weekly PSHE lessons.

The PSHE curriculum is devised as a spiral curriculum so that each year group recaps previous learning on the same theme before moving on to new learning within the same theme. This provides children with the opportunity to revisit learning topics annually. The six PSHE spirals focus on Staying Safe, Rights and Responsibilities, My Community, Valuing Difference, Changes and Healthy Inside and Out.

Relationships Education and Sex Education is taught by class teachers, with the support of Senior Teaching Staff as appropriate.

As with all purposeful teaching, a balanced range of methods is employed, with the emphasis on active learning methods which involve the children's full participation. Approaches will vary with the materials to be used and the objectives of the lessons but will generally be pupil centred, interactive and involve discussion and group work.

Teaching can be in both single gender and mixed gender groups as it is helpful for boys and girls to discuss feelings about growing up and developing an awareness of the development of both sexes, whilst promoting a positive attitude to equal opportunities, anti-sexism and gender issues.

Provision will be made available for single sex groups as appropriate, relevant or requested. There will be sensitivity to individual's special needs, ensuring that resources used will enable equal access to all.

### **Safe and Effective practice**

#### **Ground Rules**

Pupils will be encouraged to discuss their concerns with an appropriate adult during the session. The negotiation of 'Ground Rules' in PSHE sessions is important for this reason. Ground rules will include not asking personal questions and restricting the sharing of personal information in whole-class contexts. Pupils will be introduced to the anonymous questions box during the session about ground rules. Teachers should make it clear to pupils the level of confidentiality that they can offer.

Distancing techniques will be used by the teacher to ensure that the topic is 'distanced' from the pupil. Teachers will use resources such as anonymous question boxes and will remind children one of the ground rules about not sharing personal information with the class.

#### **Dealing with Questions**

As with any topic children will ask questions during Relationships Education and Sex Education to further their understanding. Due to the sensitive nature of the topic, teachers will employ strategies to ensure that questions are asked and answered in an appropriate way. Through the use of ground rules at the start of sessions, children will be reminded that personal questions are not appropriate. They will also be introduced to the 'question box'. Teachers will explain that if a pupil has a question, they are to write it down and put it into the question box. This allows the teacher time to ensure

questions are answered in an appropriate and factual way with reference to the age and maturity of the class. Teachers may feel that it is not appropriate to answer some questions in front of the whole group – the question will then be addressed on an individual basis with the pupil if the child has given their name, and in some cases with parents/carers. All staff will be mindful of their duty to safeguard children and will follow the relevant school procedures if a question raises concerns of this nature.

Teachers will use the following strategies to deal with unexpected questions:

If a question is personal, the teacher will remind pupils of the ground rules and may refer the pupil to other agencies, such as, a counsellor, school nurse, help line etc. If the teacher does not know the answer to a question, the teacher will acknowledge this and may research the question later. If the question is too explicit, is outside set parameters, is inappropriate in a whole class setting or raises concerns about sexual abuse the teacher should acknowledge it and promise to attend to it on an individual basis.

Sometimes children may ask questions about issues that are not part of the planned programme, this may show that the taught curriculum is not meeting their needs. This will be fed back to the subject lead as part of the evaluation and monitoring process.

### **Safeguarding**

Due to the guidelines in the Child Protection Policy, teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality:

*Teachers need to be aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is, and what is not acceptable in a relationship, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. Pupils need to be reassured that their best interests will be maintained. This could lead to child protection action.*

Teachers should consult with the school's designated Child Protection lead for advice on all related matters. All outside agencies working in school, to support the RSE programme, will adhere to the relevant school policies.

### **Engaging Stakeholders**

#### **Parental Involvement**

The school is committed to working in partnership with parents and places the utmost importance on sharing equal and joint responsibility with parents for the children's personal, social, health education. Parents' views and opinions are always welcomed.

Parents and carers will always be informed before Relationships Education and Sex Education lessons are delivered to children and the teaching materials and resources used are available for parents to view upon request to the PSHE subject lead.

This policy is available on the website for parents to view as part of the consultation process.

#### **The Right to Withdraw**

Pupils cannot be withdrawn from any teaching which is part of the national curriculum for Science or the statutory guidance for Relationships Education as both are statutory. Parents and carers may withdraw their child from lessons in Sex Education, where content is not covered in Science or Relationships Education. To withdraw a child, a parent must meet with the Headteacher to identify which lessons they would like their child withdrawn from and follow this up in writing.

### **Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluating**

Elements of the Sex Education programme in the Science National Curriculum are assessed formally.

The PSHE coordinator evaluates the curriculum with the Senior Leadership Team and governors and its contents and reviews and amends as necessary. This process includes consultation with both pupils and parents.

### **Policy Review Date**

The policy will be reviewed every two years. Reviewed 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023 – next review date June 2025.