

St Lawrence Church of England Primary School Policy

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Introduction

Our School Values:

- **Be Responsible;**
- **Encourage Others;**
- **Show Respect;**
- **Try Our Best**

This policy covers our school's approach to Relationship and Sex Education, not only in lessons but through the attitudes of staff and pupils alike; as well as our ethos and approach to equality both within and outside the classroom. The policy has been produced in consultation with our staff, governors and most importantly, our parents and pupils. RSE (Relationships and Sex Education, is delivered at an age-appropriate level and is delivered, ordinarily – but not exclusively – through our Science and PSHE programmes of study. This policy will be reviewed every two years to ensure it reflects the school's values and beliefs, as well as being mindful and adhering to requirements laid out in the 'Education Act 2002 – Section 78' alongside guidance from the 'Church of England' Education Office. In addition, the school recognises that we have a legal responsibility under 'The Relationships Education, Relationship & Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019', made under sections 34 & 35 of the 'Children & Social Work Act 2017', to provide comprehensive Relationship Education and Health Education for all pupils receiving primary education. Finally, the school also acknowledges its responsibility under 'The Equality Act 2010' to ensure the best for all pupils irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, maternity, religion, sexual orientation or whether they are 'looked after' children.

Definition

The Department for Education defines relationships education as:

'Teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships and relationships with other peers and adults'

At St. Lawrence's, we agree whole-heartedly with this definition and also believe that comprehensive relationship education is designed to help children to develop the

skills to recognise and manage healthy relationships online and in the real world. We aim to build self-esteem and encourage exploration of personal identity.

It is about helping children understand and make sense of the world in which they are growing up in; to recognise the differences and similarities between their peers and their families and to understand the fact that every human being is different and has the right to be respected. In addition, we believe comprehensive relationship education helps children to develop their vocabulary and emotional literacy to enable them to talk about and manage their emotions. It helps children build their own support networks and have the confidence to ask for help when they feel unsafe.

Our policy and practice is also based upon good practice, consistent with Shropshire Council recommendations, in particular the county's 'Respect Yourself' programme of study. This policy is also cross-referenced and consistent with other policies such as Safeguarding & Child Protection, Anti-Bullying, Equal Opportunities, SEND Code of Practice.

Defining Sex Education at St Lawrence CE Primary School

Although The Relationships Education, Relationship & Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, makes Relationship Education compulsory in all primary schools from September 2020, Sex Education is currently **not** compulsory. However, the Department for Education continues to recommend that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and maturity of the pupils.

As set out in the guidance it is up to individual schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on Sex Education to meet the needs of their pupils. We, like many other schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so. We recognise that some parents may be uncomfortable with the thought of their children receiving sex education in primary school. Equally, we recognise it is completely natural for children to have questions about sex, their bodies and to be curious about where they came from. Children have easy access to the internet and are able to view so much material online, meaning that they can attempt to self-educate but we believe it is better that they receive age appropriate answers from school staff (and parents); peers and web material could provide distorted or inaccurate information. In our school, sex education provides an opportunity to answer children's questions about where they came from and time to explore their own stories. Children need to understand how a baby is conceived and formed, through being taught about the human life cycle in Science (National Curriculum).

Furthermore, RSE should ensure that all children are prepared for both the physical and emotional changes of puberty including menstruation. Children need to understand how both girls and boys bodies function and change as they grow into adults. We believe that sex education should allow children a safe space to ask the

questions they may have without shame or judgement. Evidence states that a graduated, age-appropriate, spiral curriculum is the best way of preventing discussions on sex, reproduction and private body parts becoming taboo and ensures that children don't become embarrassed unnecessarily. We believe it is essential to give our young people the learning that will enable them to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. This includes ensuring that they have the skills to keep themselves safe from harm and develop positive and healthy relationships, free from exploitation pressure or abuse. To this end, the school fully utilise guidance of RSE delivery through the county's 'Respect Yourself' programme of study.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures as laid down in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE), our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Shropshire L.A.'s guidance will be followed. All referrals, whatever their origin, must be taken seriously and must be considered with an open mind, which does not pre-judge the situation. The procedures adopted for handling cases of potential physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect (including failure to thrive) involving children and young persons, are based on the principle that the interests and welfare of the child or young person are always of paramount importance.

Confidentiality must not prevent action if the child is 'at risk'. Teachers will also listen sympathetically to anything a child tells them in confidence. However, if a teacher feels that a child is at risk (immediate or otherwise) then the school's 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' will be informed, in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures, a copy of which is available for parents in school. In such an event, the child would be fully supported through this process by appropriate staff members.

Moral and Values Framework

The Relationship and Sex Education Policy will be sensitive towards the established morals and values framework of all the major world religions and philosophies. The RSE Policy is complimentary with the Religious Education Policy and the Personal, Social and Health Education Policy.

Whole School Approach

It is our belief that RSE is the responsibility of all staff and is integral to teaching a broad and balanced curriculum, educating the whole child and adhering to the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019' statutory guidance.

Pupils' questions will be responded to by all staff (teaching and non-teaching) as they arise in a straightforward way. Factual, simple and correct information will be provided using correct terminology for body parts and functions appropriate to the age of the child.

We do not want school staff to feel under pressure to answer difficult questions on the spot and will use distancing techniques such as referring the question to a question box. This allows time for reflection about the most appropriate way to respond. Staff have been provided with a process for responding to questions.

Any concerns arising concerning a child or any indications that a child or children are at risk of harm or in danger will be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead, in accordance with the school's safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

The use of sexualised language, swear and slang terms, including homophobic language will be addressed with pupils and as appropriate parents/carers and where necessary logged with L.A. as hate-related.

Access to the RSE Curriculum for Pupils with SEND

Under the 2019 Equalities Act, it is imperative that those pupils who have Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND), must enjoy full and unrestricted access to the RSE curriculum. The school and the teachers must be flexible and mindful of tailoring content and teaching to meet the needs of all SEND children, regardless of their developmental stage. This may require further work to be undertaken with a pupil/group of pupils; consideration given to differentiation and if necessary the school should deliver sessions on a one to one basis. It is worth noting that children with SEND are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues related to their specific need(s).

The NSPCC's 'PANTS' rules are shared with all pupils and can help those with learning difficulties to understand how to stay safe:

- Privates are private;
- Always remember your body belongs to you;
- No means no;
- Talk about secrets that upset you;
- Speak up, someone can help.

These rules are backed up with explanations. Posters are displayed around the school.

Organisation

The main delivery of RSE is through PSHE, but some aspects are also taught through other subject areas such as science and PE. It is taught by the class teacher, and where possible other members of staff to provide a gender balance, whenever possible. Work in single and mixed gender groups and small groups will be used based on learning and developmental need.

As already referenced, we use the '*Shropshire Respect Yourself: Eat Better, Move More*', RSE programme. This teaches children to understand and respect themselves and their bodies as part of a healthy lifestyle approach. The RSE topic has three sections; Choices and Challenges, Changes and Care and Commitment. In year 5 & 6 there is a greater emphasis on the changes that occur in puberty. Year 6 uses the Shropshire RSE Transition Programme.

Pupils are taught about relationships and encouraged to discuss issues. We teach the parts of the body, using the correct terminology, how these work and how we change as we grow. We encourage children to ask for help, providing reassurance that change is part of life's cycle.

Relationships Education begins in the Nursery when children are taught how to make friends, build relationships, manage and communicate their feelings through the Personal, Social and Emotional area of learning in line with the EYFS developmental framework. Children are introduced to characteristics and key concepts using stories, in role play and through sensitive daily interactions with children as they play and learn.

In Science lessons in Key Stage 1 the children are taught about how humans change and grow and how a baby is born. The focus is on changes and growing, keeping our bodies and ourselves healthy and safe. For this aspect 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.

Aims

RSE in our school is part of the personal, social and health education curriculum. This is integrated within the wider school curriculum and complements and overlaps with the general ethos and life of the school.

To provide a planned, age appropriate scheme of work, designed to capitalise on the fascination and interest that children have about themselves, their own growth and development and to offer reassurance that such changes are normal and natural.

In planning and presenting our RSE programme we provide the opportunity for pupils to express themselves within a trusted and safe environment, following agreed

ground rules. We want to reassure children of their value and self-worth including aspects of dignity, self-respect and self-restraint, help them to have a responsible attitude towards personal relationships including mutual respect and care, and to develop sensitivity towards the needs of others, providing knowledge of loving relationships and the human reproductive process.

We aim to inform children on matters of personal hygiene and related health issues, encourage exploration of values and moral issues taking into account physical and moral risks associated with certain behaviour, educate against discrimination and prejudice and help prepare children to make informed choices about relationships.

Our Scheme of Work ('Respect Yourself') aims to:

- Raise and promote positive self-esteem;
- Help pupils develop their skills and confidence in making decisions, communication, assertiveness, self-expression, respect for themselves and others;
- Help pupils communicate and understand their feelings and emotions;
- Provide pupils with skills necessary to keep themselves happy and safe;
- Prepare pupils for the physical and emotional changes of growing up;
- Offer opportunity for pupils to develop and clarify their attitudes and values;
- Counteract myths and misinformation;
- Challenge media stereotypes, oppression and prejudice and promote equal opportunities;
- Explain the meaning of words in a sensible and factual way, using correct names for body parts and functions;
- Provide reassurance that change is part of the life cycle and help pupils accept variations;
- Develop the confidence to seek help, support and advice.

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) includes the following objectives:

- To give accurate and objective information to address any misconceptions that may have arisen when children access information from a wide variety of sources. This

information will be presented in the context of family life, of loving relationships and respect for others as well as their own bodies.

- To build on children's natural curiosity about themselves and the world they live in. Promoting enquiry led learning where children are encouraged to carry out investigation of the human body, documenting patterns of growth and development in the natural world so that they understand that such changes are normal and part of our own human life cycle.
- To work with parents to provide a well balanced viewpoint on all aspects of RSE for children so that their social, emotional and physical health is safeguarded.
- Foster a culture of acceptance and openness where questions and discussion can take place without embarrassment.
- Develop skills in personal relationships, e.g. communication, assertiveness, decision-making, and build and develop self-esteem by helping children to understand their responsibilities, rights, opportunities and choices.
- Help children to understand the value of family life. To appreciate, respect and understand the importance of families locally and globally
- Ensure children are able to understand the information that they acquire and provide them with contexts where they are able to consider and evaluate the information they receive.
- Help children develop the confidence to seek help, support and advice and to know who and where to go to in order to access this.

Home-school Partnership

We believe that parents also, have a key role in delivering relationship and sex education to their child/children. We aim to provide a programme in partnership, ensuring all pupils receive high quality provision in line with national good practice recommendations and statutory requirements.

It is hoped that the school curriculum and ethos of the school complements and enhances home teaching & values, giving regard to the value of family life & loving as well as the importance of stable relationships.

We provide parents with opportunities to discuss the school's policy and practice. Parents will be informed about the timing of the delivery and offered an opportunity to look at resources, **ahead** of these being delivered in school. Parents are encouraged to discuss and ask questions.

Parents should be mindful that from September 2020, they have the right to withdraw their child from 'Sex Education' but **not** 'Relationship Education' nor Science. Any parents with concerns should discuss this directly with the headteacher.

Role of Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that:

- policy and practice is developed in accordance with good practice guidelines and recommendations;
- the policy is reviewed and monitored and approved by governors;
- staff and parents are informed about policy;
- staff receive appropriate training and support.

Complaints

If parents have any cause for concern in relation to this 'RSE Policy' they will be asked to contact the school so as to resolve any potential issues/misunderstandings. In the unlikely event that the concern a formal complaint can be made via the school's Complaints Procedure.

Monitoring and review

This policy has been reviewed and updated with the involvement of all stakeholders, and approved by the school governors.

The Curriculum Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the relationship and sex education programme, and makes a record of all such comments.

Governors require the headteacher to keep a written record, giving details of the content and delivery of the relationship and sex education programme that we teach in our school.

This policy has been reviewed and updated with members of staff and approved by the school governors. It will be reviewed every 2 years.

Policy date: June 2020

Review date: June 2022