



Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

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Our school's vision

I came that they may have life and life in all its fullness. (John 10:10)

We will be a village school which provides an outstanding, rich and broad curriculum in our caring, Christian environment. We aspire for all to reach out to the wider community, and world, as they achieve their full potential academically, socially, culturally and spiritually.

Our school's mission

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love (Corinthians 13:13)

We celebrate all successes in our happy, inclusive and aspirational school. Our mission is underpinned by our Christian values: **forgiveness**, **thankfulness** and **respect**. These values are overarched by **love**.

We have based our school's Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy primarily, but not exclusively, on the following DfE guidance paper (links later in the document):

(III) Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers (2019)

Statutory Guidance Summary (III)

Under the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, the government has made Relationships Education part of the basic curriculum for primary pupils and therefore compulsory at primary schools (including maintained schools and academies). DfE advise that under the Education Act 2002, responsibility for the curriculum in a maintained school is shared between the Head and the board, and that the governing board and headteacher are required to exercise their functions with a view to securing that the curriculum for the school satisfies statutory requirements.

Under the regulations, the Secretary of State is required to give guidance to schools about the provision of Relationships Education and RSE. Schools must have regard to this statutory guidance, and where they depart from those parts of the guidance which state that they should (or should not) do something they will need to have good reasons for doing so. The statutory guidance includes a section on Relationships Education which makes clear that in primary schools the focus 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.

The guidance on Sex Education remains unchanged in that primary schools can decide whether to teach beyond national curriculum science and, if so, what they will teach and when. **The right to be excused now applies to sex education only.** There is further information on the right to be excused from sex education later in this document and also on page 17 of the statutory guidance.

Compliance with the Equality Act

Within relationships education, Turton Edgworth Church of England Methodist Primary School complies with the public sector equality duty to ensure that there is not unlawful discrimination against pupils because of their protected characteristics. The guidance states that "schools should be alive to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive actions to build a culture where these are not tolerated" and that "staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours".

At this school, leaders are aware of the strength of feeling on matters of human sexuality and are clear that the law both protects the rights of some to hold a religious belief but also protects the rights of others to think and behave differently. Both will not be discriminated against directly or indirectly. This has been discussed during staff training and is regularly clarified during policy implementation.

Issues and information for church schools

The guidance categorically states that the religious background of pupils must be taken into account when planning the teaching programme so that topics are appropriately handled. It also states that schools must ensure that they comply with the Equality Act 2010 in which religion and belief are amongst the protected characteristics. Therefore, for church schools there are some clear additional requirements which can be summarised as follows. Schools, at an appropriate time in the curriculum, should:

- Teach what the Church of England teaches on marriage (IV)
- Teach what the Methodist Church teaches on marriage (V)
- Teach that the legal view of marriage is that it represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong (VI)
- Teach that there are different views within the Christian church and the Church of England on same sex and heterosexual relationships
- Allow balanced debate on issues seen as contentious whilst ensuring that all views are respected and that all individuals are valued for who they are
- Always be in line with the law

(III) Department for Education, Relationships education, Relationships and Sex education (RSE) and Health Education, (Department for Education, June 2019)

(IV) The Church of England affirms, according to our Lord's teaching, that marriage is in its nature a union permanent and lifelong, for better for worse, till death them do part, of one man with one woman, to the exclusion of all others on either side, for the procreation and nurture of children, for the hallowing and right direction of the natural instincts and affections, and for the mutual society, help and comfort which the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.

(V) The Methodist Church believes that marriage is given by God to be a particular channel of God's grace, and that it is in accord with God's purpose when a marriage is a life-long union in body, mind and spirit of two people who freely enter it. Within the Methodist Church this is understood in two ways: that marriage can only be between a man and a woman; that marriage can be between any two people. The Methodist Church affirms both understandings and makes provision in its Standing Orders for them.

(VI) Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious.

Statutory requirements

This school complies with the requirements of the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty in addition to complying with the statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education

Policy Delivery in Our School Context

Relationship and Sex education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. Some aspects are taught in science, and others are taught as part of PSHE.

High quality RSE helps create safe school communities in which pupils can grow, learn, and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life. This should ensure children

- grow up able to enjoy the positive benefits of loving, rewarding, healthy and responsible relationships
- are informed and comfortable with the changes during puberty
- understand scientific aspects of our bodies and birth

Schools provide a safe place for children and young people to make sense of the information they may have picked up from the media and playground myths.

RSE also plays a vital part in meeting schools' safeguarding obligations. Ofsted is clear that schools must have a preventative programme that enables pupils to learn about safety and risks in relationships. Schools maintain a statutory obligation under the Children Act (2004) to promote their pupils' wellbeing, and under the Education Act (1996) to prepare children and young people for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life. A comprehensive RSE programme can have a positive impact on pupils' health and wellbeing and their ability to achieve, and can play a crucial part in meeting these obligations.

At Turton and Edgworth we use the 'Kapow' scheme for PHSE and RSE. This is in line with the requirement of the National Curriculum (2014). Children's learning through this scheme significantly contributes to their personal development.

"Safety and the changing body" is the overarching name for all of our school's primary RSE resources. While we use "Safety and the changing body" to inform children about sexual issues, we do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. We do not use "Safety and the changing body" as a means of promoting or discriminating against any form of sexual orientation.

Parents/carers are invited to view the RSE resources on the school website and contact school to discuss the content of their particular year group if they express an interest to do so.

All content is adapted to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities and where specific adaptations are needed, they are detailed in the scheme.

Context

We teach RSE in the context of the school's vision, mission and values: respect, forgiveness, thankfulness and love. We have an awareness of the moral code and values which underpin all our work in school. In particular, we teach RSE in the belief that

- children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies
- the context of a committed, long-term, loving relationship and family life is important
- it is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education
- It is important to build healthy relationships with others, involving trust and respect

Aims

The aims of relationship and sex education at Turton Edgworth CEM Primary School are:

- To ensure Relationship and Sex Education is part of a child's broad, balanced curriculum, integral to the basic curriculum of the school and part of the child's all-round development.
- To enable pupils to understand the qualities of healthy relationships, including the importance of marriage and lifelong commitments as a basis for sexual relationship.
- To understand that just as each person is created unique, each relationship is unique
- To prepare children for healthy relationships in an online world.
- To understand how to stay safe, know the importance of boundaries and how to report abuse or feelings of being unsafe.
- Help pupils develop a positive and secure personal identity, a sense of their own value and feelings of confidence and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationship.
- To ensure that all understand the importance of respecting others and accepting those who differ yet challenging those behaviours and attitudes which exploit others: To know how to 'love your neighbour' even when we might disagree.

Right to be excused from sex education

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from the sex education aspects of the programme only. The relationship aspects of the programme are statutory. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher. A copy of the withdrawal request will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Headteacher may arrange a meeting to discuss the request with parents and, where appropriate the child, and take appropriate action.

Please note, this will opt the child out of sex education lessons for that year only. It is the parent's responsibility annually to make it clear if they do not wish their child to participate in the current year's lessons. The school always complies with the wishes of parents/carers in this regard.

Parents cannot withdraw their child from any part of Relationship Education as this now forms part of the basic curriculum and is a requirement of the government's statutory guidance. Alternative work in another class will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from Sex Education.

Organisation of the RSE curriculum at Turton Edgworth CEM Primary School

We teach RSE using the "Safety and the changing body" resources through discrete PSHE & RSE lessons and through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main "Safety and the changing body" teaching in our personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, we also teach some sex education through other subject areas (for example, science and PE), where we feel that they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body, and how it is changing and developing.

In PSHE we teach children about

- relationships and we encourage children to discuss issues.
- parts of the body and how they work
- explain to them what happens to boys/girls bodies during puberty

In science lessons in both key stages, we follow the guidance material in the national curriculum for science. In Key Stage 1 we teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also 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. In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

In Years 5 and 6 we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. We liaise with the Local Authority about suitable teaching materials to use with our children in these lessons. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. We use a 'Postbox' for children to ask questions confidentially and allow teachers to give well thought out responses, calling on support and advice from their colleagues and parents/carers if required. 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. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children.

Difficult questions & sensitive issues in relation to sex education

Our school's Relationship and Sex Education programme will provide opportunities for children to 'talk honestly and openly'. At the same time, we have to respect the pace of children's maturation. We feel that some topics are best postponed until the secondary school years. There are also sensitive or controversial topics (see below) over which some staff, parents and governors may have reasonable concerns.

Our school has decided not to teach about or answer questions on:

Rape, oral sex, exploitative or violent sexual practices, incest, abortion, prostitution, contraception, masturbation or about forms of sexual intercourse including homosexual practices or foreplay. AIDS/HIV issues will be discussed in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner as and when they are encountered. (Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education Guidance 2019)

We consider parents should be empowered to support their child with some sensitive topics within the family setting. To support this, if a child asks a question on any topic listed in the section above, or anything deemed to be inappropriate for their Key Stage, teachers will explain that this is a matter not dealt with in school, that the child should consult his/her parent/carer for an answer. The school

will normally seek to inform parents when such a question is asked.

In some cases, a question or request for advice may indicate the pupil to be at risk or in danger, in which case appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the school's written policy and procedure for Child Protection. This also means that if a pupil puts a private question to a teacher or other member of staff and requests secrecy, no promise of secrecy or confidentiality will be given, but with the reassurance that any steps taken will always be in the pupil's best interest.

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board

The governing board will approve the RSE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught in a carefully sequenced way within a planned programme, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from sex education. The headteacher may invite visitors, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to assist with the delivery of RSE or to train staff. Any visitors will follow the school policy.

Staff

Staff are responsible for

- delivering the RSE programme in line with this policy and with sensitivity
- modelling positive attitudes to RSE.
- responding to the needs of individual pupils.
- responding appropriately to pupils whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from sex education.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Parents/carers

The school believes that the primary role in children's personal, social, health and emotional education lies with parents/carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents/carers of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective, we

- include parents/carers in the consultation process of this policy
- inform parents/carers about the school's policy and practice
- display the resources for each year group for parents/carers to look through if they so wish
- answer any questions that parents/carers may have about the personal, social, health and emotional education of their child

- take seriously any issue that parents/carers raise with teachers or governors about this policy

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

Further information about confidentiality and safeguarding

Teachers conduct RSE 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 in line with the schools safeguarding policy.

Policy Development and Review

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, governors, pupils and parents/carers. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Drafting - the headteacher gathered all relevant information including relevant national, diocesan and local guidance and wrote a draft version of the policy.
- Staff/Governor consultation - all school staff and governors were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Parent/carers consultation - parents/carers were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Pupil consultation - we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
- Adoption and Ratification - Governors consider all responses; leadership make appropriate changes and policy adopted and published.

Definitions

The **Statutory National Curriculum for Science** covers human reproduction, changes from birth to old age including puberty:

- **Statutory requirements**

Pupils should be taught to *describe the changes as humans develop to old age.*

- **Notes and guidance (non-statutory)**

Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty.

Pupils could work scientifically by researching the gestation periods of other animals and comparing them with humans; by finding out and recording the length and mass of a baby as it grows.

Statutory Relationships Education is the programme of work that forms part of the basic curriculum. It covers all types of relationships including online, peer to peer, family and carer relationships. It also covers respect for others and staying safe.

Sex Education is a programme of work that covers romantic relationships, personal physical and mental

health, preparation and responding to puberty, personal safety.

Health Education is a programme of teaching about puberty, physical health and fitness, healthy eating, mental wellbeing, drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

References

Department for Education, Relationships education, Relationships and Sex education (RSE) and Health Education, (Department for Education, June 2019).
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf

Manchester Diocesan Board of Education, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education including LGBT issues - guidance notes for governing boards and headteachers of Church of England Primary Schools, (Manchester Diocesan Board of Education July 2019)

Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education, Primary School Guidance relating to Relationship and Sex Education (September 2019)
https://blackburndbf.sharepoint.com/BoE/Policies/Primary%20School%20Guidance%20relating%20to%20Relationship%20and%20Sex%20Education%20sept%202019.pdf?&originalPath=aHR0cHM6Ly9ibGFja2J1cm5kYmYuc2hhcmVwb2ludC5jb20vOmI6L2cvQm9FL0VISV9OeEQtR0twR29zbUNEUW9jcGxnQmFzN3VYQ1dSei10RIQ4QVIXTE0wUWc_cnRpbWU9c250ZF9oeVkxMGc

Church of England, Relationships Sex and Health Education
<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/relationships-sex-and-health-education>

The Methodist Church: Marriage and Relationships 2019
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-church/marriage-and-relationships-2019/>