

## **RSE (Relationship and Sex Education) Policy 2024-2027**

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

At St Bartholomew's Primary School, we are committed to providing all of our pupils with the confidence and ability to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, by equipping them with the knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepare pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

The statutory guidance (education-rse-and-health-education) states that as a primary school we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

However, we are not required to provide sex education, but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

At St Bartholomew's we support the view that to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts.

Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives.

By teaching RSE, this knowledge can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

At St Bartholomew's we will be following our school will be following SCARF which provides a comprehensive spiral curriculum for RSE education.

Using SCARF across all age groups will ensure progression in knowledge, attitudes and values, and skills – including the key skills of social and emotional learning, known to improve outcomes for children.

SCARF is also mapped to the new DfE guidance for Relationships Education and Health Education, The RSE Association's Programmes of Study Learning Opportunities, the National Curriculum, Curriculum for Excellence and Ofsted's requirements.

## **WHAT WE TEACH**

RSE is taught through our PSHCE curriculum (SCARF programme) and it is delivered by class teachers.

We focus on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. From the beginning of primary school, building on early education, pupils are taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact – these are the forerunners of teaching about consent, which takes place at secondary.

Respect, one of our school values, is taught in an age-appropriate way, in terms of understanding one's own and others' boundaries in play, in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources and so on.

From the beginning, teachers talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of contexts enables pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This also helps them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them.

The principles of positive relationships also apply online especially as, by the end of primary school, many children will already be using the internet. Teachers address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. Teachers include content on how information and data is shared and used in all contexts, including online; for example, sharing pictures, understanding that many websites are businesses and how sites may use information provided by users in ways they might not expect.

Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents and carers amongst other structures.) We take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, we reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; for example, looked after children or young carers.

A growing ability to form strong and positive relationships with others depends on the deliberate cultivation of character traits and positive personal attributes, (sometimes referred to as 'virtues') in the individual. We encourage the development of resilience and other attributes, including

character traits such as helping pupils to believe they can achieve, persevere with tasks, work towards long-term rewards and continue despite setbacks. Alongside understanding the importance of self-respect and self-worth, pupils are encouraged to develop personal attributes including honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice. We provide opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely, through our PSHCE curriculum and extra-curricular offer.

Relationships Education also creates an opportunity to enable pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing.

Through Relationships Education (and RSE), we teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. This is delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This includes understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online.

Pupils are taught how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong.

At all stages it is important to balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement Health Education and as part of our comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge can support safeguarding of children.

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught about changes which occur during puberty. In Year 6, pupils are taught Sex Education and how a baby is made. Parents are consulted prior to the teaching of these topics and are informed of their right to withdraw their child from this aspect of the PSHCE curriculum; however, not from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction provided under the National Curriculum for science.

Teaching staff receive suitable training, when available, to ensure they are able to deliver sex and relationships lessons effectively. Questions raised by pupils are dealt with sensitively and are answered appropriately if raised. Inappropriate or explicit questions do not have to be answered directly. Teachers use their own discretion in these situations. All pupils have access to the RSE curriculum. Where pupils have specific educational needs, arrangements for support from outside agencies and support staff are made to ensure these pupils have an appropriate, differentiated curriculum.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLE**

We use a range of teaching and learning styles to meet the RSE requirements of the National Curriculum. We emphasise active learning by including the children in discussions, investigations and problem-solving activities. We organise classes in such a way that pupils are able, through discussion, to set agreed classroom rules of behaviour, and resolve any conflicts.

## **RSE CURRICULUM PLANNING**

Our RSE curriculum is founded on the following:

To ensure that all pupils can access RSE and to achieve the goals for the end of the primary phase as outlined in Appendix 2.

- To enable all pupils to receive this learning in the most appropriate way that enables teachers to accurately assess pupils' progress towards the end of phase goals.
- The impact of this curriculum is evident within pupils' attitudes, positive behaviour and increased confidence in managing relationships with others.
- We will collaborate with parents and carers to review and evaluate the effectiveness of this curriculum once per year.

## **THE RIGHT TO WITHDRAW**

We appreciate that some parents/carers may wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from some or all of the sex education that is delivered as part of statutory Relationships Education. When a parent / carer advises the academy that they wish to withdraw their child, our head teacher might meet with the parents/carers and the child to understand the reasons for the withdrawal request. This discussion will also focus on the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. Unless there are exceptional circumstances the head teacher will respect the wishes of the parents/ carers and grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education delivered in primary schools, other than as part of the science curriculum.

For most pupils with SEND, including those with education, health and care plans, their SEND should not be a consideration for the head teacher in deciding whether to grant a parental request. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher will want to take a pupil's SEND into account when making this decision. When a pupil is excused from sex education, we will ensure that this pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

## **INCLUSION**

We teach RSE to all children, regardless of their ability. Our teachers provide learning opportunities matched to the individual needs of children with learning difficulties. Intervention through School Action will lead to the creation of an Individual Education Plan (ADPR). When

teaching RSE teachers consider the targets set for the children in their ADPRs, some of which targets may be directly related to RSE targets (see SEND code of Practice).

For gifted and talented pupils, teachers will provide additional opportunities to take responsibility, develop leadership skills, think creatively and use their talents for the good of the class or the wider community.

We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice as outlined within the provisions of the Equality Act 2010. We ensure that there is no discrimination towards pupils because of their (or that of their parents) age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).

In planning for delivery of Relationship (and Sex) education, we make appropriate adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and adhere to the SEND Code of Practice.

We are also aware that some of our pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Therefore, Relationships education is especially important for those pupils, for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities This is reflected within our planning for this subject.

## **ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING**

Our teachers assess the children's work in RSE both by making informal judgements, as they observe them during lessons, and through formal assessments of the work done, gauging it against the specific learning objectives set out in the National Curriculum. We have clear expectations of what the pupils will know, understand and be able to do at the end of each year. In the Early Years, the focus for assessment is through teacher observation. For the rest of the school, succinct 'I can' statements are provided which summarise learning against the unit's key learning outcomes. This can be recorded in an editable document contains the key learning outcomes for all 6 SCARF half termly units.

## **RESOURCES**

SCARF

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The planning and coordination of the teaching in RSE are the responsibility of the RSE subject leader, who also:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in the subject, and by providing a strategic lead and direction for RSE;

- gives the head teacher an annual summary report in which s/he evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvement;

- uses specially allocated, regular management time to review evidence of the children's work and to observe RSE lessons across the school.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.

## **APPENDIX 1**

Useful document

[Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK](#)

[Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK](#)

[Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#)

[ukpga\\_19880040\\_en.pdf](#)

## **APPENDIX 2**

End of Primary School Expectations

Taken from DFE Guidance 2019

Families and people who care for me Pupils should know:

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability
- the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives
  - that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care
- that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up
- that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong
  - how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed

- 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.

Caring friendships Pupils should know:

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends
- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded
- that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right
- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

Respectful relationships

Pupils should know:

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
  - the conventions of courtesy and manners
  - the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness
  - that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority
    - about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help
  - what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adult.

Online relationships Pupils should know:

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
- that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met

- how information and data is shared and used online.

Being safe Pupils should know:

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
- about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe
- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard,
- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so
- where to get advice, for example family, school or other sources

Managing 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. The school's policy should cover how the school handles such questions. Given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information.
- Meeting these objectives will require a graduated, age-appropriate programme of Relationships Education.

Children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to differing types of questions or behaviours. Teaching methods should take account of 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. Schools should consider what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting, as teachers may require support and training in answering questions that are better not dealt with in front of a whole class.

▪Sex education (Primary)

- The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools and the content set out in this guidance therefore focuses on Relationships Education.
- The content set out in this guidance covers everything that primary schools should teach about relationships and health, including puberty.

The national curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. It will be for primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education to meet the needs of their pupils. Many primary schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so, although it is not a requirement.

- It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The department 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.

- As well as consulting parents more generally about the school's overall policy, primary schools should consult parents before the final year of primary school about the detailed content of what will be taught. This process should include offering parents support in talking to their children about sex education and how to link this with what is being taught in school. Meeting these objectives will require a graduated, age appropriate programme of sex education.

Teaching needs to take account of the developmental differences of children.

- Where a maintained primary school chooses to teach aspects of sex education (which go beyond the national curriculum for science), the school must set this out in their policy and all schools should consult with parents on what is to be covered.

- Primary schools that choose to teach sex education must allow parents a right to withdraw their children.

Unlike sex education in RSE at secondary, in primary schools, headteachers must comply with a parent's wish to withdraw their child from sex education beyond the national curriculum for science.

- Schools will want to draw on the good practice for conversations with parents around the right to withdraw.

- Schools must also ensure that their teaching and materials are appropriate having regard to the age and religious backgrounds of their pupils. Schools will also want to recognise the significance of other factors, such as any special educational needs or disabilities of their pupils.