

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Consultation

What is the Purpose of this Consultation?

- ▶ As a school, we would always want to deliver a curriculum which has the support of the vast majority, if not all, parents.
- ▶ We recognise that children need an increasing level of skill to deal with the modern world and the impact of social networking, advertising and media. Schools and parents have a responsibility to give a positive message which builds children's resilience to the negative messages they may encounter through the easy availability of pornography / photo-shopped body images / TV programmes such as Love Island which portray sex as separate from relationships.
- ▶ We would want all pupils to grow with the knowledge of natural changes before they happen, and pupils can encounter puberty at a relatively young age. For example, while the average age for a girl to begin menstruation in the UK is 12, many begin in Y6 and some in Y5. Less commonly, girls can begin their periods from 8 yrs old.

What is RSE?

- ▶ The Department for Education is introducing compulsory RSE from September 2020 for all primary schools. Due to the impact of Covid-19 this was pushed back to no later than the start of the summer term 2021.
- ▶ The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship.
- ▶ It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviours in relationships.
- ▶ Pupils will understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.
- ▶ The Department for Education recommends that all primary schools 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.

Why is RSE Important?

- ▶ Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.
- ▶ High quality RSE helps create safe school communities in which students can grow, learn, and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life.
- ▶ RSE plays a vital part in schools fulfilling their statutory duties to protect and safeguard their students. Ofsted is clear that schools must have a preventative programme that enables students to learn about safety and risks in relationships.
- ▶ Schools maintain a statutory obligation under the Children Act (2004) to promote their students' wellbeing and under the Education Act (2002) 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 students' health and wellbeing and their ability to achieve, and can play a crucial part in meeting these obligations.
- ▶ Technology is evolving at a tremendous pace. The need to protect children and young people from inappropriate online content, cyberbullying and exploitation is a growing concern. A comprehensive RSE programme can support in addressing these issues.

What are the benefits of teaching RSE?

RSE explains the positive qualities of relationships, such as trust, respect and commitment as well as recognising that there are different types of relationships and families.

It raises the importance of educating children about gender equality, consent, relationships and sex in an age appropriate way.

RSE can provide young people with the knowledge required to resist peer, partner and media pressure and understand issues of consent as well as what is and is not appropriate behaviour.

There is evidence that good quality RSE teaching can help young people to:

- Have consensual relationships
- Delay the age of first sexual encounters
- Prevent underage pregnancy
- Know who to report abuse to
- Have improved sexual health

Extract from DFE Statutory Guidance

- ▶ 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. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.
- ▶ High quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects can help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. They can also enable schools to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, at school and in society. The duties on schools in this area are set out in legislation.

What does the guidance from DFE mean?

- Relationship Education will be **compulsory** in all schools with primary schools being urged to include sex elements where appropriate
- Health Education will be **compulsory** in all schools
- All schools must have a written **policy** for RSE
- ‘All schools may teach about faith perspectives’ and ‘balanced debate may take place about issues that are seen as contentious’. Religious leaders from different faith backgrounds have been involved in developing the RSE curriculum
- ‘At the point at which schools consider it appropriate to teach their pupils about LGBT, they should ensure it is **fully integrated**’.
- ‘Schools should ensure that the **needs of all pupils are appropriately met**’ - must comply with the **Equality Act 2010** and protect individuals from discrimination. There are 9 protected characteristics (aspects of a person’s identity)
- Puberty including **menstruation** should be ‘**addressed before onset**’.

Overview of Teaching Expectations

Relationships Education is introduced at Primary and students explore the following areas:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring Friendships
- Respectful Relationships
- Online Relationships
- Being Safe

Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools. Primary schools that choose to teach sex education should tailor teaching to take account of the age and the physical maturity of their pupils and must allow parents to withdraw their children where requested.

Relationships Education (Primary)	Physical Health and Mental Well Being (Primary)
Families and People who care for me	Mental Wellbeing
Caring Friendships	Internet Safety and Harms
Respectful Relationships	Physical Health and Fitness
Online Relationships	Healthy Eating
Being Safe	Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
	Health and Prevention
	Basic First Aid
	Changing Adolescent Body

Which other subjects does it relate to in the national curriculum?

Science

- ▶ In KS1 - Pupils should be taught to notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults. 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. The following examples might be used: egg, chick, chicken; egg, caterpillar, pupa, butterfly; spawn, tadpole, frog. Growing into adults can include reference to baby, toddler, child, teenager, adult.
- ▶ In Upper KS2 (Y5/6) - Pupils should be taught to describe the differences in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird and describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals. Pupils should find out about different types of reproduction, including sexual and asexual reproduction in plants, and sexual reproduction in animals. They might observe changes in an animal over a period of time (for example, by hatching and rearing chicks), comparing how different animals reproduce and grow.
- ▶ Pupils should be taught to describe the changes as humans develop to old age. Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty.

Why are LGBT issues included?

There has been much mis-information in the media about how LGBT+ issues are to be taught within the Relationships, Health and Sex Education curriculum in primary schools. We believe that all pupils should be taught about the society in which they are growing up. Relationships Education is designed to foster respect for others and for difference and educate pupils about healthy relationships. We also believe that children should receive teaching on LGBT content during their school years. Teaching children about the society that we live in and the different types of loving, healthy relationships that exist is very important.

The DFE have stated:

“Pupils should be able to understand the world in which they are growing up, which means understanding that some people are LGBT, that this should be respected in British society, and that the law affords them and their relationships recognition and protections”

Sexual orientation is a protected characteristic, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and therefore it is illegal to show prejudices against anyone for it.

Throughout our school we show respect for others and celebrating our differences.

Can parents withdraw their child?

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any part of Sex Education aspect of RSE if they wish to do so, but not from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction provided under the National Curriculum for science.

Parents do not have to give reasons for withdrawing their child but must inform the head teacher. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing, making it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in.

The withdrawal form can be found alongside this consultation on our policy page.

Thank you & Feedback

If you have any questions or feedback please send a message to your class teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team via Dojo

Further information can be found on our website.