



ST PETER'S

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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by Mrs Amy Hughes
(Deputy Head, Pastoral)

Approved by Head: *Charlotte P. Jones*

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Rationale and Ethos

Our children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and some are 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. It is, we believe, the right of our children to have access to relationships and sex education through our PSHE curriculum.

We recognise our responsibility to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils. We aim to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adolescence and adult life. We seek to provide a safe and stimulating environment which, in partnership with parents and the wider community, will enable pupils to learn about moral, physical and emotional development. This policy has been written in accordance with the DfE Sex and Relationship Education Guidance.

What is relationships and sex education? (RSE)

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development and involves learning about loving relationships, consent, sexuality, sexual health, diversity and personal identity. It is about the understanding and appreciation of family life, marriage, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of physical and emotional changes to the body, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or activity.

Why should RSE be taught in St Peter's?

RSE begins at a very early age and, while much of it is learnt from parents, it is also received from friends, books, magazines, television, internet, music, films and so on. Some of this information can be incorrect, confusing or frightening. RSE in school provides a secure framework and environment in which pupils can be given the facts using appropriate materials. It also allows them to develop necessary personal skills and a positive attitude to physical and emotional health and well-being and moral development.

Wide-ranging research has shown that children want information about changes and situations they will experience before they happen to them. A safe, supportive and structured programme in school increases the probability of this being achieved. Also, although children want to be able to discuss hormonal changes and relationships with their parents, many parents and children prefer the school to take a lead and provide a springboard for the discussion. A partnership between home and school and open dialogue between parent and child are the ideal.

A successful programme, firmly embedded in the school's personal, social, health, and emotional education (PSHE), will help children learn to respect themselves and others and allow them to move, with confidence, from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of RSE is to provide children with age appropriate information, explore attitudes and values and develop skills in order to empower them to make positive decisions about their health related behaviour. This should take place with consideration of the qualities of relationships within families.

The objectives of RSE are:

- To provide the knowledge and information to which all pupils are entitled
- To clarify/reinforce existing knowledge
- To raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, especially in their relationships with others (including safety online)
- To help pupils understand their feelings and behaviour, so they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives
- To help pupils develop skills (language, decision making, choice, assertiveness) and make the most of their abilities
- To provide the confidence to be participating members of society and to value themselves and others
- To help gain access to information and support
- To develop skills for a healthier, safer lifestyle (including mental health)
- To develop and use communication skills and assertiveness skills to cope with the influences of their peers and the media
- To respect and care for their bodies
- To support children to develop a strong sense of self and skills to buffer unhelpful messages about body image
- To display information and posters that reflect the diversity of students thereby ensuring that the school is welcoming and supportive to all children and families
- To provide information/training for families that looks at how to support children to develop a positive body image and sense of self
- To help pupils learn to recognise the early signs of body dissatisfaction and refer children and families to health professionals if necessary
- To be prepared for puberty and adulthood
- Value and respect themselves
- Value and respect others for who they are, not for what they have or what they can do
- Value healthy sexual relationships which are based on mutual respect, care and goodwill
- Value and respect difference in people's religion, culture, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability and social background
- Value and respect their own and others' rights to make choices in sexual relationships after having accepted responsibility for considering the consequences of those choices
- Value stable and loving relationships for the nurturing of children and as the basis of a society in which people care for one another

The organisation of RSE

There are teachers with responsibility for coordinating RSE. They are Mrs Virginie S n gats-Evans and Mrs Amy Hughes. RSE is taught within the PSHE programme by form tutors and other designated staff. Some aspects will be supported by external agencies. Biological aspects of RSE

are taught within the Science curriculum and some moral aspects are taught within the Religion and Philosophy curriculum.

Teaching

Equality and diversity

We promote the needs and interests of all pupils irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, culture, ability or aptitude by delivering teaching pedagogy that encompasses gender-aware material, uses neutral terminology when describing relationships, is aware of and celebrates cultural differences, and differentiates for learning needs. We are sensitive to parental withdrawal with regard to personal beliefs surrounding SRE. Teaching pedagogy will take into account the ability, age, readiness and cultural backgrounds of our children and those with English as a second language to ensure that all can access fully SRE education provision. We will use SRE education as a vehicle to address diversity issues and to ensure equal opportunities for all, and we will ensure that the curriculum covers age appropriate learning. We promote social learning and expect our students to show a high regard for the needs of others by modeling good behaviour and using discussion and scenarios in our learning.

Inclusion and differentiation

We will identify pupils' different starting points through cultivating an environment of openness and non-judgementality. We will respect pupils' unique starting points by recognising different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances, for example their own sexual orientation, gender identity, faith or culture (which may be decided or emerging), by an awareness and involvement in the school's inclusion policy. In keeping with our inclusion policy no child will be removed from PSHE unless parental wishes are received. We work closely with the Learning Success department and are aware of the learning needs of all the children in our PSHE classes. Differentiation for children with SENDs should be planned for in terms of:

- Learning objectives
- Activities
- Teaching methods
- Resources

Activities should be broken down into small steps, giving children achievable goals and enabling teachers to monitor progress. Teaching assistants should support in ways appropriate to the needs of the individual. They should also be aware of the objectives of the lesson and activity.

Please Refer to our PSHE curriculum to see detailed planned learning outcomes for children across the age phases.

We are committed to championing diversity and celebrating difference.

Methodology

The school is committed to employing active learning methods which involve children's full participation. It is essential that schools can help children develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about sex and relationships. Before starting RSE lessons ground rules are discussed and agreed with the children.

- **Ground rules** help to create a safe environment for both teacher and pupil. They should

be established with each class before SRE lessons commence.

- **Distancing techniques** help to avoid embarrassment and protect privacy. Role play, case studies with invented characters, appropriate videos, etc. can help children to discuss issues in a de-personalised, safe environment.

Dealing with difficult questions

Clear boundaries for questioning are established and ground rules set as to what is appropriate and inappropriate; personal questions are not answered. If a teacher is asked a question that is too explicit, is age-inappropriate for the child or whole class or raises questions about sexual abuse, then it should be acknowledged with a promise to attend to it later on an individual basis. If a question is raised that alerts a member of staff that a child is at risk of sexual abuse, child protection procedures should be followed. As the range of understanding may be considerable, a three level response to questions is advised:

1. Answer in class for all children to hear
2. Answer one-to-one away from other children
3. Refer back to parents/carers, with the child's consent, to establish their willingness to have their child's question answered.

Answering difficult questions

Children are naturally curious and we believe that if a child asks a question they require an honest and factual answer. This is true of questions asked in all curriculum areas and at other times during the school day.

- All staff in the school will answer children's questions around sex and relationships issues in line with the guidance based on that given by the Local Authority:
- Questions will be answered in a factual manner without any personal bias and with reference to the age and understanding of the child / children.
- In some situations staff will sensitively turn the question back on the pupil to establish what they already know, for example "that's a very interesting question, I wonder why you are asking that" or ask the rest of the class whether they know the answer "does anyone else know the answer to that question?"
- All staff have considered questions that may be asked in RSE sessions and discussed suitable answers.
- If it is felt that it is not appropriate to answer a question in a whole class setting the teacher will explain this sensitively and will give an answer to the child individually at the end or refer the child to their parents.
- In all PSHE/RSE sessions an anonymous question box will be available so that all children feel able to ask questions and receive appropriate answers. All questions that are placed in the box will be answered in an age-appropriate, factual manner.

Reflection

Reflecting is crucial for learning as it encourages pupils to consolidate what they have learned and to form new understanding, skills and attitudes. We can provide an opportunity for reflection in the RSE programme and help pupils reflect on their learning by asking questions such as:

- What was it like doing this discussion today?
- What did you learn from the others, especially those who had a different experience or belief from your own?
- What do you think you will be able to do as a result of this discussion?
- What else do you think you need to think or learn about?

Safeguarding Children, Confidentiality and Child Protection

All staff members at St Peter's Preparatory School have a duty to safeguard the well-being of children.

At St Peter's Preparatory School we recognise that the open discussion associated with PSHE/RSE may lead to children making disclosures about things that they are worried about or about abuse. There may also be occasions when a teacher may hear things or observe activity/behaviour that may raise concerns of a child protection issue. In these situations the teacher will consult the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then work in line with the relevant school policies in terms of any further action that may be taken. We use group agreements within PSHE/RSE sessions in order to ensure that children are aware that teachers cannot offer complete confidentiality in all instances. Where a staff member has to disclose information to another party, this will be done following discussion with the pupil if this is possible and appropriate. Sensitive information is only disclosed internally or externally with careful attention to the rights and needs of individuals. For more detailed information on the processes for child protection please consult the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policies which are available on the school website.

Use of outside organisations

Careful consideration is given to the content, co-ordination and consistency of messages presented to children and an outside organisation is only used to enhance the current programme, not to replace teacher led delivery. At this school all organisations and visitors who visit to provide curriculum support, are issued with the following code of conduct:

- Be familiar with the school's aims, ethos and policies and plan their involvement in the light of the aims and curriculum at the school.
- Seek to use engaging teaching and learning methods which involve the children actively and communicate at appropriate levels for the age group concerned.
- Safer recruitment procedures will be followed for all visitors and all will be issued the safeguarding procedures of the school.

Engagement with Parents

As a school we are committed to an open door policy between school and home. Our policy is posted on our website so that it is accessible to the parent body. We acknowledge that parents have the right to withdraw their child/ren from aspects of RSE, and we will notify them of upcoming SRE sessions within our weekly newsletter, so that they may exercise that right should they wish to do so. We will always answer any questions that parents may have about their child and the curriculum, by phone or email or a face to face meeting.

Parents/Carers right to withdraw their child

Parents/carers have a right to withdraw their children from Relationships and Sex Education lessons which fall outside those aspects covered in the compulsory National Curriculum Science programme of study. Parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are asked to contact the Deputy Head Pastoral (Mrs Amy Hughes) They will also discuss the possible impact that withdrawal from the programme could have upon the child, and the possible negative experiences or feelings that the child might encounter and how these can be minimised. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot participate in Relationships and Sex Education until the request of withdrawal has been removed.

Monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the policy and curriculum

The SLT monitors our RSE policy on an annual basis. Staff and pupil voice will be used to review and tailor our RSE programme to match the different needs of pupils. Teacher's will critically reflect on their work on delivering RSE and pupils will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning during lessons. This will be influential in adapting and amending planned learning activities.

Links to other school policies and subjects on the curriculum

This policy complements the following policies: Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), [safeguarding children and child protection](#) and [anti-bullying](#).

Documents and other policies that inform this RSE policy include:

Documents:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- RSE Guidance (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping children safe in education - Statutory safeguarding guidance (2022)
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE statement on relationships education, relationship and sex education and PSHE (2022)
- PSHE Association guidance on writing your school's relationship and sex education policy (2017)