



St Michael's Church of England Primary School
Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Date: July 2025

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Our School Vision

As a school community, we aspire to develop life-long learners who have the confidence to explore the world around them and grow as unique individuals. We provide a safe family environment, inspired by Christian values, in which the flourishing of each enables the flourishing of all.

'This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine!'

'Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.'
Matthew 5:15

Introduction

'The focus (for RSE) in primary school 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.' (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. Department of Education 2019). At St. Michael's we aspire to help every child develop as a whole person and we believe that effective RSE can make a significant contribution to their ability to establish and maintain stable and loving relationships. It also enables young people to respect others, make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing and also promotes the British values of tolerance.

RSE is taught alongside Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) which is a planned programme of learning through which children and young people acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives. (See separate policy)

The Morals and Values Framework

Children will learn about moral values through all aspects of school life and in all curriculum areas, not just in Relationships and Sex Education. The RSE programme at St. Michael's Primary School reflects the school ethos and demonstrates and encourages the four core values: Community, Compassion, Creativity and Courage

Definition

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching. Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, DfEE (now Department for Education / DfE) 2000

The law (Learning and Skills Act, 2000) states that, 'Pupils should learn about the nature and importance of marriage for family life and the bringing up of children'. In 2000, the DfEE Sex and Relationship Education Guidance added 'and stable relationships'. Leaving aside political and faith-based agendas, the key point here is that the guidance recognises the importance of stable relationships.

Key aspects of RSE are:

Community

Creativity

Courage

Compassion

- **physical development** - how our reproductive systems work
- **emotional development** – our feelings and how they might change as we grow older; we consider how to manage feelings, mental health and well being
- **social aspects** – the positive and negative influences from friends
- **healthy relationships** – the different types of relationships we experience, such as those with parents / carers, siblings, friends and – as we get older – with partners; we consider healthy and unhealthy relationships

Context: why Relationships and Sex Education is important in our school

High quality RSE helps create a safe school community in which our pupils can grow, learn and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life. It is essential for the following reasons:

- Children have a right to good quality education, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Children want to be prepared for the physical and emotional changes they undergo at puberty, and young people want to learn about relationships. Older pupils, in English Education, frequently say that RSE was ‘too little, too late and too biological’. Ofsted reinforced this in their 2013 Not Yet Good Enough report.
- RSE plays a vital part in meeting our 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 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.
- The Department of Health set out its ambition for all children to receive high quality RSE in the Sexual Health Improvement Framework (2013), while the Department for Education’s paper, The Importance of Teaching (2010), highlighted that ‘Children need high quality sex and relationships education so they can make wise and informed choices’.

National Curriculum

RSE plays an important part in fulfilling the statutory duties the schools have to meet. Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life Section 2.1, National Curriculum in England (DfE, 2013)

These duties are set out in the 2002 Education Act. Whole school (Section 5) Ofsted inspections consider the extent to which a school provides such a curriculum.

The government has made it clear that all state schools ‘should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), drawing on good practice’. (National Curriculum in England, DfE, 2013) and that ‘SRE is an important part of PSHE education’ (Guidance – PSHE education, DfE, 2013).

Overall school aims for Relationships and Sex Education

Through the provision outlined in this policy, the schools’ overall aims of RSE are to teach and develop the following three main elements -

Attitudes and values:

- learn the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations
- learn the value of family life and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children
- learn the value of respect, love and care
- explore, consider and understand moral dilemmas

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- develop critical thinking as part of decision-making

Personal and social skills:

- learn to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- develop self-respect and empathy for others
- learn to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice
- develop an appreciation of the consequences of choices made
- manage conflict
- learn how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse

Knowledge and understanding:

- learn and understand physical development at appropriate stages
- understand human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- be aware of contraception
- learn the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay, including the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy (based closely on Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, DfEE 2000)

In addition to this, we also aim to:

- raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence
- develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media
- teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them
- support pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teaching them to care for, and respect, their bodies
- provide pupils with the right tools to enable them to seek information or support
- teach pupils about consent and their right to say no, in an age appropriate manner
- teach lessons that are sensitive to a range of views, values and beliefs
- ensure that staff teaching RSE remain neutral in their delivery whilst ensuring that pupils always have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals

It is not the aim of RSE to:

- encourage pupils to become sexually active at a young age
- promote a particular sexual orientation

The wider context of Relationships and Sex Education

The school's RSE programme will:

- be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life
- be an entitlement for all young people, including those with additional learning and language needs
- be set within the wider school context and support family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness
- recognise that family is a broad concept; not just one model such as that of a nuclear family
- encourage pupils and teachers to share and respect each other's views with cultural awareness and sensitivity
- ensure pupils are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure
- recognise that parents/carers are the key people in teaching their children about relationships, sex, growing up
- work in partnership with parents/carers and pupils, consulting them about the content of RSE learning
- work in partnership with other health professionals and the wider community

Aims

At St. Michael's Primary School, taking account of the age, maturity and needs of the pupils, Relationships and Sex Education aims to:

- Help children to develop feelings of self-respect, self-esteem, self-confidence, sympathy and empathy
- Prepare pupils for puberty

Community

Creativity

Courage

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- Give children an understanding of reproduction and sexual development
- Give children an understanding of the importance of health and hygiene, mental health and physical health
- Develop and use communication skills and assertiveness skills to cope with the influences of their peers and the media
- Answer pupils' questions honestly and sensitively – referring the child to parents where appropriate
- Enable children to recognise unsafe situations and are able to protect themselves and ask for help and support
- Help children to understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships

Teaching and Learning including Delivery of the Curriculum

Many relationship aspects are covered through our PSHE programme which helps to equip children with knowledge, understanding and practical skills, appropriate to their age and maturity, in order to live healthy, safe, fulfilled and responsible lives. Relationships and Sex Education may be taught discretely in Years 5 and 6 by the class teacher. However, some biological aspects are covered in Science, while PSHE also enables children and young people to reflect on and clarify their own values and attitudes, and explore the complex and sometimes conflicting range of values and attitudes they encounter now and in the future. Linked with R.E., children reflect on family relationships, different family groups and friendships. They learn about rituals and traditions associated with birth, marriage and death and talk about the emotions involved.

All staff will:

- ensure that they are up to date with this RSE policy and curriculum requirements regarding relationships and sex education
- report back to SMSC Lead/Head Teacher on any areas that they feel are not covered or inadequately provided for in the school's RSE provision
- attend and engage in professional development training around relationships and sex education provision, when appropriate
- encourage pupils to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence and listen to their needs and support them seriously
- follow the school's reporting systems if a pupil comes to a member of staff with an issue that they feel they are not able to deal with alone
- ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced RSE in school tailor their lessons to suit all pupils in their class, across the whole range of abilities, faiths, beliefs and cultures, including those pupils with special educational needs

It is important that all school staff feel comfortable to take RSE classes. We will make available regular professional development training in how to deliver relationships and sex education. The continuing professional development (CPD) needs of staff, including non-teaching staff, are identified and met through the following ways:

- Training and support is organised by the Head teacher and RSE Lead
- Staff will be offered generic RSE guidance; this includes guidance on handling controversial issues, responding to different questions, an introduction to the rationale of why teaching RSE is so important, current law and guidance, learning outcomes and school policy
- Staff involved in the delivery of RSE issues seen as potentially more sensitive will be offered appropriate training to encourage confidence in dealing with matters of confidentiality, child protection, sensitive issues, and with potentially difficult questions

Planning

Class teachers plan for RSE in accordance with the RSE curriculum, as a school we will use the Kapow scheme of work to ensure that all learning objectives are achieved and that progression is seen across the school. Other resources to be used may include:

- SEAL
- Stonewall
- BBC Teach Series

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- Channel 4 Living and Growing Series
- Twinkl

They acknowledge the importance of personalised learning and the need to plan for the range of attainment levels within a class. This is achieved by:

- setting individual targets based on the assessment approach;
- setting different tasks within sessions;
- using resources appropriate to each individual.

Implementation

- RSE is normally delivered by the class teacher in mixed/single gender groups depending on the focus of the lesson.
- All input to RSE lessons is part of a planned programme and negotiated and agreed with staff in advance.
- The range of material used is available to parents/carers at any time and an opportunity to discuss resource content is made available each year.

Evaluation and monitoring

The RSE curriculum and its delivery is monitored by the PSHE lead who will ensure that each year group is adhering to the RSE policy and that there is full coverage of all prescribed topics. Drop-ins and pupil voice will form part of the monitoring process. Elements of the sex education in the Science curriculum are assessed formally. Other elements of the RSE programme are assessed and evaluated using a variety of AFL (Assessment for Learning) activities.

Specific Issues within Sex Education Withdrawal

Parents/Carers have the right to withdraw their children from some or all of sex education delivered as part of the statutory RSE. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the Head teacher who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the sex education programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed. Materials are available to parents/carers who wish to supplement the school's sex education programme or who wish to deliver it to their children at home. Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from statutory Relationships or Health Education.

Confidentiality and Child Protection Issues

As a general rule a child's confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. If this person believes that the child is at risk or in danger, she/he talks to the Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) who takes action as laid down in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. All staff are familiar with the policy and know the identity of the DSL. The child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The child will be supported by the teacher throughout the process.

Answering Difficult Questions

Staff are aware that views around RSE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all RSE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have a different opinion. Both formal and informal RSE arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s) concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly, and can be addressed individually later. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the DSL if they are concerned. In the event that a child asks a question which the class teacher feels they cannot answer in the school environment, they will direct the child to ask their parent/carer. At St. Michael's we believe that RSE should meet the needs of all pupils regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support.

Dissemination

The RSE policy is shared with all teaching staff and governors. Copies of the RSE policy are available from the school office on request from parents and the RSE policy is also available on the school website. The school welcomes feedback from parents and carers

Equal opportunities

At St Michael's we believe that every member of our school community has the right to receive education or employment in an environment which is free from prejudice. Every pupil has the right to receive the best possible education. Within RSE, staff set high expectations. Each individual is ensured access to a full and varied programme of activities, with opportunities for all pupils to participate fully and effectively, including boys and girls, pupils with diverse additional educational needs, and pupils from all social and cultural backgrounds. Pupils are equally respected for who they are and for the contributions they make regardless of their background. Knowledge, skills and understanding are taught in ways that suit pupils' current attainment level, and care is taken that all learning is appropriate so that pupils can make progress and show what they can achieve.

In order to provide access to learning and to meet pupils' diverse needs, specific action will be taken by staff to:

- create effective learning environments, providing for pupils who need additional support with communication, language and literacy
- provide a multi-sensory approach using a variety of media
- provide equality of opportunity through teaching approaches and personalisation of tasks and materials as appropriate
- set targets for learning and behaviour including taking steps to help pupils manage their own emotions

The school is committed to the provision of RSE to all of its pupils. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family backgrounds. Equal time and provision will be allocated for all groups but there may be occasions where children with Special Educational Needs are given extra support.

Computing

Computing should be used in RSE when it has the potential to drive learning and progress. It is useful to record pupils' learning and performances as they develop, using digital cameras and/or camcorders. Children may also use a video camera or iPad to record these themselves.

Students will be encouraged to:

- find things out from a variety of sources, selecting and using information to meet their needs;
- develop their ideas using computing tools to refine their learning and enhance its quality and accuracy.

Links with other policies

Anti-Bullying Policy

PSHE Policy

RE Policy

Drug and Alcohol Education Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Equalities Policy

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

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