



Part of the Minster Trust for Education



Relationship and Sex Education Policy

November 2023

Introduction

Since 2021, Relationships Education has been compulsory in all primary schools in England, and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) became compulsory in all secondary schools. This is in response to the identified risks children and young people may face through their increased online activities and the need to support them to be safe and healthy, and manage their academic, personal, and social lives in a positive way.

What is Relationships Education

The focus 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 adults. This will create opportunities to ensure children are taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing and how friendships can impact on this.

Children will also be taught (in an age-appropriate way) to recognise and report different types of abuse, including emotional, physical, and sexual. This will include focusing on boundaries and privacy so that children understand that they have rights over their own bodies and know how to seek advice when they suspect or know something is wrong. There will also be opportunities to teach children about boundaries with their peers, including when they are online, and ensuring they learn that where abuse takes place it is never the fault of the child who is abused.

At Holy Trinity C of E Infant School, we believe that children should have the opportunity to develop high self-esteem, with the ability to form secure, healthy relationships, and make informed decisions about moral and social issues both online and within the community. The sequences of lessons aim to provide children with age-appropriate learning to make real, informed decisions that improve their physical and emotional health whilst recognising that choices can have good and not so good consequences.

The RSE Curriculum at Holy Trinity

At Holy Trinity, our vision and Christian values are at the heart of everything we do and play a vital part in our pupils' education, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good relationships are fundamental to our vision of 'Together we grow to be the best that God created us to be', which is underpinned by the Bible verse 'Love one another as I have loved you' John 15:12. We endeavour to ensure that PSHE & RSE is faith sensitive, inclusive, and inspiring; enabling children to make responsible and well-informed choices showing respect for differences of lifestyle and opinion.

We follow the Bible based version of the 'HeartSmart' resource which focuses on 5 key principles:

- How important, valued and loved we are.
- The importance of others and how to love them well.
- How to process negative emotion and choose forgiveness to restore relationships.
- How to bravely communicate truth and be proud of who we are.

- Developing a growth mindset and resilience, knowing there is a way through every situation, no matter how impossible it may seem.

Our learning involves acquiring information, developing skills, and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes.

A strong curriculum will build on the knowledge pupils have previously acquired, including in other subjects, with regular feedback provided on pupil progress. Lessons should be planned to ensure that pupils of differing abilities, including the most able, are suitably challenged. 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. The Headteacher and staff team will 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.

RSE will be taught through a planned programme within Personal, Social, and Health Education (PSHE) as well as in Science, Computing, PE and Show and Tell. This will ensure that it covers the statutory biological aspects and the social, emotional, and spiritual aspects.

In Key Stage 1 pupils learn to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others, identify and share their feelings with each other, recognise safe and unsafe situations and identify and be able to talk to someone they trust.

Agencies such as the school nurse and other visiting speakers e.g. new mothers and their babies may be invited to input into the programme. We also use the NSPCC PANTS resources as part of our curriculum.

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils should have learned:

- Basic communication skills – listening and talking with others.
- To recognise and name a range of emotions.
- To explain a range of ideas and feelings.
- To recognise an unsafe situation.
- To talk with a trusted adult and ask for help.

Early Years Foundation Stage

- The children will learn how they have changed physically since they were very small and how they will continue to grow and change all their lives.
- They will learn about the different parts of their bodies including their different functions.
- The children will examine what they currently do to look after themselves, including dressing and undressing.
- They will learn to recognise their personal needs and the adults who are responsible for looking after them.
- They will develop responsible and caring attitudes towards living things and the environment at home and at school.

- Activities will develop children's interpersonal skills, including sharing, taking turns, helping others and communicating in groups and with individuals.
- The children will learn some ways of being a good friend and when it is necessary to say 'sorry'.

Assessment

All teachers should have the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in these subjects as for other curriculum areas. Subject trackers are in use to monitor how each child is progressing against the subject objectives for each unit of work. This allows the teachers to identify where any additional support may be required. Additional support may take the form of nurture sessions, additional small group circle time activities, or where needed, ELSA or therapeutic conversations for individuals.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Our link governor, and the subject coordinator Miss Johnson-Cooper work alongside the Headteacher to monitor the impact of the Relationships Education. While there is a discrete PHSE lesson each week through Heartsmart, this is not a standalone subject. It is part of the school's ethos, vision, and values. The effectiveness of the curriculum will be monitored through:

- Assemblies and Collective Worship
- Circle times
- Stories
- Class work
- Pupil questionnaires
- Parent questionnaires

Through learning walks, coordinator subject deep dives, and work scrutiny, the school will evaluate the impact of the teaching and learning, and this will be fed into the subject overview and action plan for next steps.

Dealing with difficult questions and statements

Good practice allows children an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. This in turn can lead to an increase in children disclosing abuse, or of teachers becoming aware of concerns about a child's wellbeing. Teachers should all understand how to respond to disclosures of abuse and report any concerns they may have, following the school's safeguarding procedures.

To support our team in having a joint approach, the school have created the following guidance if a child asks a question that is deemed as beyond age-appropriateness or that is better dealt with on a 1-1 basis:

- The member of staff must acknowledge the question/statement and state 'thank you for your question/thank you for sharing that, I'm going to write that down and we can talk about that together later'.

- If a child makes a comment that fuels other children's comments, then the member of staff should say the following 'I can see there are lots of questions/thoughts, I need to have think about these so let's move on for now.' The member of staff must seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Senior Leadership (SL) or Headteacher as soon as possible.

Safeguarding vulnerable children

Any child that causes concern should be referred to DSL following the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures. If a child is finding the typical aspects of Relationships Education and PSHE difficult in a group/whole class context, staff should discuss this with a DSL or SENCO.

Withdrawal

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of RSE (other than sex education in the National Curriculum as part of science). However due to the age of our pupils, 'sex education' will not be taught in the infant phase, therefore there is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Policy Review

This policy was originally adopted May 2021 following a consultation period to allow parents and carers to share their views. The draft policy was sent home and parents/carers were requested to email the Headteacher with any questions, queries, or suggestions they wished the school to consider prior to finalising the policy. Parents/carers were given a three- week period to respond. The school did not receive any feedback from parents/carers as part of the consultation process.

As part of this 2023 review cycle, we have sought consultation once again, by sending the policy out to parent/carers, to enable them to share their views.

The policy will be provisionally approved at the FGB in November 2023 – but this version will not go live on the website until the parent consultation date passes and any amendments made and approved by the FGB.

Next review planned for November 2025