



# Relationships, Sex & Health Education Policy (RSHE)

Review Date: February 2027

This policy has been written with the underlying principles of a Church of England school.

## **Introduction**

In its new legislation the Department for Education has made it clear that the focus for Primary Schools 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. At North Cadbury C of E Primary School we have used that legislation to ensure that our children receive the right instruction to prepare them for healthy relationships throughout childhood and on into their adult lives.

We agree that our pupils need to begin by being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. This should happen right from the beginning of primary school, learning skills such as being 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.

Children need to be taught how to establish personal space and boundaries, show respect, and understand 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 school.

Respect for others is a fundamental aspect of healthy relationships and will be taught in an ageappropriate 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, our teachers will 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 will enable pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This will also help them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them. A key aspect of this education at North Cadbury C of E Primary School is also in the modelling of these healthy relationships through our interactions as colleagues which are a very practical model for our children to follow.

The principles of positive relationships also apply online especially as the majority of our Key Stage 2 children regularly use the internet. When teaching relationships content, teachers will also address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives.

Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. This is of vital importance to us and our children.

## **Rationale**

As a school, we believe that 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.

In a school wide context we can encourage the development and practice 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 will also develop personal attributes including honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice.

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 RSHE we should also teach our pupils the knowledge they need, to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. For us at North Cadbury C of E Primary School this will focus on boundaries and privacy, ensuring that our young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. It will also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online.

Our pupils will be taught how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong.

Effective RSHE is essential for our pupils, so that as they grow, they are able to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. This grounding contributes to promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, emotional, mental and physical development of our pupils, preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

### **Definition of Relationships, Sex & Health Education (RSHE)**

Key factors in RSHE are that we teach our children 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.

Relationships and Sex Education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about respect, love and care and the benefits of making and maintaining a stable marriage or relationship. We recognise that to be human is to experience sexual feelings, seek connections with other people and develop relationships which may be physical or nonphysical.

RSHE seeks to enable young people to feel positive about themselves, manage relationships and access the infrastructure of support available.

### **Aims and Objectives**

As a school we aim to provide our pupils with an age appropriate RSHE programme that is tailored to the physical and emotional maturity of our children. It should enable them to make positive choices about their sexual and emotional health, both now and in the future. We seek to achieve this aim by having three main elements to our programme.

- ***Attitudes and Values***

- learning to care about other people and being sensitive towards their needs and views;
- learning the importance of values, and individual conscience and moral considerations;
- accepting the differences between people and learning not to exploit them;
- learning the value of family life, marriage, and the importance of stable, loving and caring relationships for the nurture of children;

- learning the importance and responsibilities of the family unit for all its members;
  - learning to respect oneself and others and being honest, loyal and trustworthy in relationships;
  - learning to take responsibility for one's actions in all situations;
  - exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas; and developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.
- ***Personal and Social Skills***
    - learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
    - developing self-respect and empathy for others;
    - learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice;
    - learning how to make well informed and responsible decisions about their lives and developing an appreciation of the consequences of the choices made;
    - managing conflict;
    - learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.
  - ***Knowledge and Understanding***
    - learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages;
    - understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships;
    - learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay;
    - the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

We believe that high quality RSHE will be achieved by providing an environment and atmosphere where pupils feel safe, relaxed, not intimidated, but focussed; and where they have confidence and trust in the knowledge, ability and skills of their teachers.

### **Moral Framework**

Our pupils will be taught RSHE within the context of our Christian ethos and through a framework which models and encourages the following values:

- Being honest with themselves and others
- Developing a critical awareness of themselves and others
- Learning to show tolerance, understanding, respect and care for others
- Developing an awareness and belief in one's own identity

- Having a positive attitude towards the value of stable relationships for the upbringing of children
- An awareness of Christian values and beliefs about relationships, responsibilities and marriage
- Acknowledging and understanding diversity with regard to religion, culture and sexual orientation
- Having self-discipline regarding their sexuality.

Our Aims and values as a school are central to the principles of this policy:

1. **CHRISTIANITY**  
To encourage the experience of Christian life and participation in worship.
2. **CURRICULUM**  
To enable every child to achieve the highest standard of work and learning of which they are capable, which will help them to have a good start in life, so that they are able to achieve social and economic well being.
3. **HEALTH AND WELL BEING**  
To help our children enjoy good health and a healthy life style and to ensure they know how to stay safe.
4. **ETHOS**  
To promote qualities of tolerance, respect and awareness in a community where everyone feels appreciated, protected and safe, and is able to develop and flourish as an individual.
5. **PARTNERSHIP**  
To work together with parents. To contribute to the life of the neighbourhood, the parish and beyond.
6. **ENVIRONMENT**  
To create a stimulating environment in and around the school, which will help develop lively and enquiring minds, positive and responsible attitudes and will promote aesthetic and spiritual awareness.

### **Working with Parents**

The School is committed to working in close partnership with parents and guardians who are the key people in teaching their children about sex and relationships. Parents/guardians are invited to view the teaching materials and resources that will be used.

A parent or guardian who is concerned about any element of this policy, or is unhappy about their child's participation, should discuss their feelings with the Head Teacher. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of those aspects of the RSHE programme which are NOT part of the statutory National Curriculum Science Orders but may not withdraw their children from relationships education. If requested, alternative arrangements will be made for individual pupils, but it is hoped that this will not be necessary. If so, parents should consult with the Head Teacher to discuss appropriate arrangements.

### **Content and Organisation**

The organisation of RSHE is no different from other curriculum areas. It is delivered through planned programmes within Science, RE and PSHE. Occasionally, issues about RSHE may arise spontaneously in other lessons, where it is not the main focus of the lesson. This is not considered to be part of the planned RSHE programme and parents/guardians cannot withdraw pupils in these circumstances.

Provision may be made for pupils in mixed age classes to be taught in separate age groups. Normally, male and female pupils will be taught together, however, when deemed appropriate, there may be occasions when pupils are taught in separate gender groups.

Where visitors are invited to deliver aspects of the RSHE programme, the school follows the guidance published by the Somerset Healthy Schools Team. Visitors will be used to support not supplant, the role of the teacher and they will always be accompanied in the lesson by a teacher. Visitors will always be fully briefed on their contribution to the programme and will be given a copy of the current policy beforehand.

Aspects of RSHE are encompassed within the ethos of the school and may be delivered through:

- PSHE lessons
- SCARF
- Core and Foundation Subjects
- Worship Time
- CircleTime
- English & Maths lessons
- Health and Safety weeks
- Theatre in Education visits
- Project/Theme lessons

The RSHE programme will be delivered by:

- Class teachers
- Other specified visitor/s or agency.

A range of teaching approaches will be used, eg small group work for discussion, etc.

The overview and co-ordination of the taught RSHE curriculum including monitoring arrangements is the responsibility of the Science Co-ordinator in the school. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and training will be provided to ensure a high level of expertise for teachers involved in delivering the RSHE programme in the school. It will be the responsibility of every teacher to deliver the RSHE curriculum in their class.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The RSHE policy is monitored and evaluated through an annual review process involving Teachers, Science Co-ordinator, Leadership Team, and the Governing Body.

The delivery of RSHE will be also monitored and evaluated through lesson observation, questionnaires and work sampling.

### **Governors**

A designated Governor and the Local Governing Body (LGB) have a detailed understanding of the policy and provide a link to the full Governing Body including trustees and directors with regard to RSHE provision in the school.

### **Equal Opportunities**

RSHE is inclusive of all students; they have an equal entitlement to good quality RSHE. The programme will be delivered in line with the school's Equal Opportunities policy within an atmosphere of mutual respect. The whole school community will support an approach which ensures that no individual will be discriminated against on grounds of gender, race, disability, religion or sexual orientation.

Resources selected to support the programme will be free from cultural bias wherever possible and will avoid gender, race, disability or sexual orientation stereotyping. The programme will be sensitive to the needs of all pupils in the school.

The school will not discriminate against any member of the school community who is infected or affected by HIV.

### **The Sexual Offences Act 2003**

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 became law in May 2004. The Act outlines the law with regard to non-consensual offences including, rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault and causing a person to engage in sexual activity without consent.

Specific detail is given regarding child sexual offences (under the age of 16) and rape and other offences against children under 13.

It is clear that those who act with the purpose of protecting a young person from pregnancy, STIs, protecting their physical safety or promoting their emotional well being, will not be guilty of arranging or facilitating a child sex offence. This applies not just to health professionals but to anyone acting in the best interests of the young person, such as teachers, youth workers, Connexions Personal Assistants, social care professionals and parents. Young people under 16, including under 13s, can continue to seek contraceptive and sexual health advice or treatment in confidence.

The Act also outlines the law relating to the abuse of children by those in a position of trust. It is an offence for a person aged 18 or over intentionally to behave in certain sexual ways in relation to a child aged under 18, where the adult is in a position of trust in respect of the child. This applies to any person over the age of 18 working with a position of trust in an educational establishment. The offence covers all children under 18, however it is principally designed to protect young people aged 16 and 17 who, even though they are over the age of consent for sexual activity, are considered to be vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation from particular classes of persons who hold a position of trust or authority in relation to them.

### **Specific Issues**

#### **Personal Beliefs**

The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence their teaching of RSHE.

#### **Language and Ground Rules in Lessons**

All staff teaching RSHE will set ground rules in their classes. For example:

- \* no one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question*
- \* no one will be forced to take part in a discussion*
- \* the only language used will be easily understood and acceptable to everyone in the class*
- \* only the correct names for body parts will be used*
- \* meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.*

Distancing techniques will also help to avoid the inappropriate disclosure of information. These may include case studies, role play and speaking in the third person.

### Dealing with difficult questions

We have a variety of strategies for dealing with difficult questions. For example:

- if a question is too explicit or is inappropriate, the teacher will attend to it later, on an individual basis and a decision will be taken whether or not to inform the child's parents/guardians;
- if a child makes a disclosure that causes the teacher concern then the teacher must follow child protection procedures established within the county. (See 'Child Protection Handbook', 2000 Somerset Area Child Protection Committee).

### Puberty

Boys and girls need to be prepared for puberty before they reach this developmental stage. At North Cadbury C of E Primary School we teach about puberty and the need for extra care with personal hygiene mainly in whole class groups but opportunities are provided for single gender lessons also.

### Menstruation

Our programme will include preparation for menstruation. Basic information about the process of menstruation will be given to both boys and girls.

We will make appropriate and sensitive arrangements for the changing and disposal of sanitary wear for our pupils. (eg. Requests for sanitary protection are dealt with by Staff. There are trained First Aid staff who are used to dealing with sensitive issues.)

### Contraception

Pupils will be given basic, appropriate information about condoms and the contraceptive pill as part of the taught programme on reproduction.

### Confidentiality

*'Schools must be absolutely clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities. A clear and explicit confidentiality policy should ensure good practice throughout the school, which both pupils and parents understand. Teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality.'*

*'It is only in the most exceptional circumstances that schools should be in the position of having to handle information without parental knowledge.'*

(*'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance'*, DfEE, Ref 0016/2000. p.30)

The school will be acting in loco parentis. Whenever a pupil makes a disclosure, they will be persuaded to talk to their parents or carers. Child Protection issues will be addressed if necessary; but if not necessary, the wishes of the pupil will be taken into account.

Signed:      Dated:    01.02.2024

Position held: Head Teacher



## **Learning outcomes**

The following statements are offered as an illustration of learning outcomes for RSHE for each key stage. They give a basis for planning work to develop knowledge and understanding, values and attitudes and personal skills in RSHE. They draw on guidance from the DfE along with other sources and they reflect elements of the non-statutory framework for PSHE.

### **By the end of primary:**

#### **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 adults

## **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

## **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 following contacts are available for further information and advice on the content of this document and on Relationships and Sex Education in general:

	<b>Advisor for Relationship &amp; Sex Education Somerset LEA. telephone 01458 860482</b>
<b>Fiona Moir</b>	<b>Somerset Healthy Schools Co-ordinator Somerset LEA <a href="mailto:fxmoir@somerset.gov.co.uk">fxmoir@somerset.gov.co.uk</a> telephone 01823 357253</b>
<b>Sex Education Forum</b>	<b>National Children's Bureau, 8 Wakley Street, London EC1V 7QE <a href="http://www.ncb.org.uk">www.ncb.org.uk</a> telephone 0207 843 6000</b>
<b>Brook Advisory Service</b>	<b><a href="http://www.brook.org.uk">www.brook.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:admin@brook.org.uk">admin@brook.org.uk</a></b>
<b>Wired For Health</b>	<b><a href="http://www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk">www.wiredforhealth.gov.uk</a></b>

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