



# St Oswald's CE Primary School, York



*Learning for all, caring for each other, preparing for the future*

*Let us encourage one another – Hebrews 10.25*

## Relationships and Health (and sex) Education (RHE) Policy

Last Review Date: June 2024

Next Review Date: June 2027

Suggested Frequency of Review : Every three years

## Introduction

This policy sets out our school's approach to statutory Relationships Education and non-statutory Sex Education. It was produced by the RHE coordinator working alongside the Headteacher and Deputy Head teacher.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RHSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. At St Oswald's Church of England school, we want our young people to flourish and to gain every opportunity to live fulfilled lives. RHE is about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, healthy relationships, human sexuality and sexual health. It is also about the spiritual and moral aspects of relationships within the context of a Christian vision for the purpose of life. The RHE curriculum respects children of all faiths and those of none. Pupils will have considered how to ensure that they treat themselves and others, at all times and in all contexts, with dignity and respect. Good relationships are fundamental to our ethos and our success in being a happy, caring and safe school. It aims to provide pupils with the knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe, make healthy choices, develop respect for themselves and others, and form positive and healthy relationships.

We endeavour to ensure that RHE is faith-sensitive, inclusive and inspiring. We follow the principles in the Church of England Charter for faith-sensitive and inclusive relationships. We aim to educate pupils to understand every person's right to live freely within their sexual orientation or gender identity without discrimination as we prepare pupils to live in modern Britain.

## Rationale and ethos

At St Oswald's, RHE is underpinned by the ethos and values of our school as reflected in our school vision:

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Our vision is to create a safe, positive and stimulating environment in which all members of the school community learn and grow in confidence, knowledge and skills. At St Oswald's, we deliver our teaching of RHE through the Discovery Education Health and Relationships programme. The programme develops skills and knowledge in a values-based context which enables St Oswald's to convey and enhance our own values, learning and behaviour, and develops pupil wellbeing.

Relationships Education is learning about how to:

- be appreciative of existing relationships

- to form new healthy relationships
- to enjoy strong positive, non-exploitative, caring relationships online and in person.

This will particularly reference family relationships, including marriage, friendships and relationships with peers and adults. Pupils will be taught about LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer) content during their school years.

All staff have received appropriate RHE training and have the knowledge and understanding to deliver purposeful, engaging and high-quality lessons. As changes to the curriculum are made, staff will receive updates and training. Where appropriate, updated terminology is covered regularly within weekly staff updates and training, including safeguarding training. RHE lessons will develop skills and attributes such as resilience, self-esteem, risk-management, team working and critical thinking in the context of six core themes:

- Healthy and happy relationships
- Similarities and differences
- Caring and responsibility
- Families and committed relationships
- Healthy body, healthy minds
- Coping with change

#### Healthy and Happy Relationships

The 'Healthy and Happy Relationships' topic explores friendships: their importance, what being a good friend means, and how to keep friendships positive and healthy. Pupils investigate their own values and identity (including their online identity), and develop skills to resolve difficulties within friendships, including maintaining and respecting personal boundaries and safe touch, managing peer pressure and the effects of change on friendships.

#### Similarities and differences

The 'Similarities and differences' topic explores and celebrates the similarities and differences between people, exploring and encouraging ways to value and respect difference and diversity. It looks at the damaging effect that stereotypes can have, and how to identify and challenge them. It helps pupils recognise their own personal strengths and abilities, and develop self-respect.

#### Caring and responsibility

The 'Caring and responsibility' topic focuses on special people. It explores why they are special and how they care for and keep one another safe. It examines pupils' increasing responsibilities towards themselves and others as they get older, including the role they can play and the difference they can make within their communities.

#### Families and committed relationships

The 'Families and committed relationships' topic explores the importance and diversity in families, and the characteristics of healthy, positive family relationships. It enables pupils to recognise when they may feel unsafe within a family, and how to ask for help if they need it. It identifies the characteristics of a committed relationship, and at Year 6 explores human reproduction and other ways that people can start a family.

### Healthy bodies, healthy minds

The 'Healthy bodies, healthy minds' topic explores how to stay healthy, both physically and mentally. It explores ways to maintain wellbeing and prevent illness; how to develop a healthy, balanced lifestyle; and the consequences and effects of different habits and choices. It encourages the development of positive self-worth and recognition, what might affect or influence unhealthy ways of thinking, and how to overcome this.

### Coping with change

The 'Coping with change' topic explores how people grow and change from babies, through puberty to adulthood. At Key Stage 1, it examines ways in which children have grown and how they will continue to change, and how to develop resilience to change. At Key Stage 2, it identifies changes that will take place in children's bodies during puberty, and explores ways to manage the emotional effects of life changes, including transition to secondary school.

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

In the EYFS Curriculum, Personal, Social and Emotional Development links with RHE. The following is taken from the EYFS Framework (effective from September 2021):

### **Building relationships**

Children work and play cooperatively and take turns with others, form positive attachments to adults, make friendships with peers and show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

### **Managing Self**

Children are confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge. They can explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly, and can manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

### **Self-Regulation**

Children show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly. They set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate. Children give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

## Sex Education

In this school, aspects of content that might be regarded as Sex Education: learning about human body parts, growth, puberty and reproduction will be taught through the Science Curriculum. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from these aspects of the science curriculum.

At St Oswald's Church of England Primary School we believe that it is important to include sex education in our RHE curriculum to protect and prepare the children in our community. Parents do have the right to withdraw their child from this aspect of sex education and can do so by applying in writing to the Headteacher. We will invite parents to talk through their concerns, we will explain our rationale for RHE and invite parents to review the materials we intend to use. Withdrawing children from sex education remains a statutory right as a parent or legal guardian.

## Church of England Context

A key teaching of Jesus is to love God and love your neighbour. Within this commandment is the foundation of the Christian view of relationships. At St Oswald's Church of England Primary School our relationship education seeks to explore how we can 'love our neighbour' through what we say and do. Our school focuses on the importance of relationships and the qualities and character needed to sustain the best relationships that honour each other whether within a friendship, family relationship or romantic relationship. Christians believe that each child is a child of God, a unique being,, loved and accepted. As such, our school seeks to enable children to develop through an inclusive programme of teaching that is based on Christian principles, which both respects the human body and seeks to ensure health and wellbeing.

### **Health Education:**

'The focus in primary school should be on teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. Teachers should be clear that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.' From The Department for Education

### **Relationship 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 with adults.' From The Department for Education

### **Sex Education**

Sex education is not mandatory, but a decision has been made to include some aspects of sex education within our RHE curriculum. This will be taught to pupils in Year 6.

## How will RHE be taught in our school?

RHE is taught as an explicit lesson but is also embedded in other areas of the curriculum and is part of our day-to-day life at St Oswald's. Children are taught by familiar adults with whom they have a good relationship, in order to facilitate constructive, supportive discussions around sensitive topics. All staff teaching this important subject have received training delivered by Mrs Dunne (Headteacher) and Miss Slater (RHE Lead).

Pupils with SEND will have the content made accessible to them through differentiation by the teacher who is facilitating the session, which will usually be the class teacher. This will include a variety of scaffolds dependent on the child's needs. A consideration of visual aids, stories and word banks are some examples of these adaptations. For some children, it may be appropriate that an adult will support them on a one-to-one basis. We will respond to parental requests and concerns. We will refer children to specialist support where we deem it appropriate and this will be discussed by the Pastoral Care Team. Although certain aspects of the curriculum will be taught during a year group, if a child is identified as having a need for an aspect of RHE sooner, this will be responded to appropriately.

We aim to sensitively approach discussions around gender identity and sexual orientation. We aim to answer appropriate questions and offer support. The children, whatever their background and developing identity, need to feel that relationships and health education (and sex education where applicable) is relevant to them.

### Progress and Impact

Every lesson plan contains learning objectives and outcomes against which pupils' progress in learning and skills development can be measured. The activities within the lesson plan are designed to meet the learning objectives, and give teachers an opportunity to evidence progress and achievement of the learning outcomes. Each lesson plan also contains an assessment section highlighting which activities in particular teachers (and pupils) can use to demonstrate and evidence that learning outcomes have been met.

We will assess and keep a record of what the children have learnt in a variety of ways in school. This will include:

- Assessment resources included within the Discovery Education Programme
- Class floor books across the school used to record thoughts and feelings upon reflection after an RHE session.
- Every lesson plan includes success criteria so teachers can assess against it
- Assessments are made both formatively and summatively based on children's shown understanding within lessons. Due to the subject matter, expression both orally and recorded is used to make assessments. These assessments will be used to pass on information between teachers during transition times. Pupils' personal development will be communicated to parents within the end of year report.

As a result of a progressive, well-sequenced and purposeful RHE curriculum, the children of St Oswald's will have a strong understanding of the school's six Christian-rooted values: respect,

compassion, friendship, service, trust, and justice. This will lead to them being well-prepared for a successful future and promote life skills that support learning and will help them to lead a positive life.

As a result of the RHE curriculum, children at St Oswald's will understand the following:

- The importance of healthy and happy relationships
- The correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- The importance of valuing and respecting diversity

Additionally, the RHE curriculum at St Oswald's will guide children to:

- Show respect for people's similarities and differences
- Take positive risks
- Help others to develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy

Finally, children at St Oswald's will:

- Increase their own confidence to make the most of their abilities and to make informed life choices
- Develop confidence in talking about feelings and relationships
- Have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others

## Safeguarding

All staff have read Discovery Education's 'Creating a safe teaching and learning environment' guidance document before delivering any RHE lessons. The guidance provides a set of best practice principles for creating a safe learning environment that enables pupils to share ideas and information, sets an expectation for a mature response and increases teacher confidence in delivery and in managing discussion. Teachers should also refer to any relevant school policies where necessary, such as those on RHE, safeguarding, disclosure and child protection. Each lesson plan also includes essential teacher guidance which is specific to each lesson.

## Ground rules

Each phase has established 3 golden rules with the children. These are age-appropriate and are regularly reviewed. The children are reminded of these rules at the start of each lesson. This is to establish an expectation for respectful behaviour and responses, especially when teaching about sensitive issues that may invoke personal or emotional responses.

## Distance learning

Distance learning enables pupils to consider issues objectively rather than making things 'about them', even if they have experienced or are experiencing something similar. Distance learning also helps pupils to consider the advice they could give someone else in a particular situation, which they may then feel able to apply to themselves.

Examples of distance learning include using stories, images, film clips and case studies. The activities in this resource all aim to distance situations from the learner, but teachers should consider their own pupils and make any adjustments necessary.

Our aim is that children will relate themselves to the stories, videos and other resources used to support the teaching of RHE at St Oswald's.

### Questions

Children, especially younger ones, may have all kinds of questions about what they are learning. Older children may have plenty of questions but be self-conscious about asking them, especially in relation to more sensitive subjects such as puberty. It is important to respond to any questions in a way that shows that all questions are valued and that no question is considered 'stupid'; and that demonstrates respect for the person who asked it. It is also important to be honest in your responses, even if this means telling a child that you will answer their question at another time, when you have all the information you need. Being evasive, or not answering questions in order to 'protect' children, may lead to them trying to find out answers from inappropriate or inaccurate sources. In KS2, a questions box is used to help pupils to ask questions if they feel embarrassed or want to do so anonymously, particularly during the sex education aspect of RHE.

### Confidentiality and disclosure

Teachers should explain that if for any reason they are concerned for a pupil's safety or wellbeing, they will have to tell another member of staff. Pupils should never be promised exclusive confidentiality for any disclosure that causes concern for safety or wellbeing. If a pupil asks a question, uses language or behaves in a way that raises concern (including discussion or behaviour indicating a knowledge of sex or sexual activity that is inappropriate for the child's age), it should be raised with our Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with our safeguarding policy.

### Right to Withdraw

The school is aware that the main role in young people's relationships and health (and sex) education will come from parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with the parents and carers of the children at our school. From September 2020, parents have the right to withdraw their child from parts of the health education curriculum, but not any part covered in the statutory science curriculum and not any part of the relationships curriculum. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from any aspect of RHE they should discuss this with the Headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the curriculum they do not wish their child to participate in. The school will endeavour to comply with the wishes of parents in this regard and will provide appropriate sources of information for parents who wish to withdraw their children.

### Roles and Responsibilities

This policy will be monitored and evaluated by the Headteacher and RHE leader.



### **The Governing Board:**

The governing board will approve the RHE policy and hold the Headteacher and RHE leader to account for its implementation.

### **The Headteacher and RHE leader:**

The Headteacher and RHE leader are responsible for ensuring that RHE is taught in a carefully sequenced way within a planned programme, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from sex education.

### **Staff:**

Staff are responsible for:

- Teaching in line with the Church of England foundation of the school.
- Delivering RHE with sensitivity.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RHE.
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from sex education.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RHE are encouraged to discuss this with the RHE leader or the Headteacher.

### **Pupils:**

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RHE and, when discussing issues related to RHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity. Pupils are encouraged to have fun but not to make fun and our three golden rules are shared at the start of each lesson.

### **Training:**

Staff are trained on the delivery of RHE. The Headteacher may invite visitors, such as school nurse or sexual health professionals, to assist with the delivery of RHE or to train staff. Any visitors will follow the school policy and deliver in line with the Church of England ethos of the school.

### **Links with other policies**

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety Policy