



## St Mark's C of E Junior School

*Growing together, becoming all we are created to be*

### Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

The Department for Education Statutory Guidance was published in 2019, making Relationship Education a statutory part of the curriculum. Having reviewed our policy and provision in 2025, we are confident that our RSE approach is appropriate for our pupils based on their age, physical and emotional maturity, religious and cultural backgrounds, special educational needs and/or disabilities. For further information please see this document [Understanding Relationships and Health Education - a guide for primary school parents](#)

As a part of the educational experience at St Mark's C of E Junior School we aim to promote personal wellbeing and development through a comprehensive taught programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education that gives our pupils the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live healthy, safe, productive and fulfilled lives, both now and in the future.

While it is only relationships education that is statutory at primary level, the statutory guidance states: "The DfE continues to recommend that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings'.

As part of implementing the RSE curriculum, schools must consult with the parents, staff and governors to ensure there is a general consensus on our approaches to policy and the curriculum content.

Parent Consultation will take place from 23.05.25 – to 9.06.25 (*copy of letter – see Appendix 2*)

This policy is written to reflect this guidance and what is considered to be best practice. As part of the consultation process, parents are invited to comment and for these comments to be responded to by a member of SLT before the curriculum is taught.

This Policy has been directly informed by our school Vision and Values which are at the very centre of our teaching and learning here at St Mark's. It should also be read alongside the School's PSHE Policy and the Personal Development and Behaviour Policy.

#### Living our Vision

**The FACE of St Mark's: *Forgive, Aspire, Compassion, Engage***

**We, at St Mark's C of E Junior School, are a community of learners.** We show **aspiration** in every aspect of our learning: aiming high to achieve the very best we can and actively encouraging others to do the same. Learning more about ourselves, others and our world is seen as a joy and a huge privilege.

Through our learning, we deepen our relationships with one another, showing **compassion** and **forgiveness** in all that we do.

We **engage** in our learning as we embrace challenges, learn from and with each other and celebrate the success of others which leads to the mutual flourishing of all.

## **Legal Framework of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)**

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw pupils from sex education (but not Relationships or Health Education)

Schools are required to comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Amended 2023). 1 Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils and their families because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). Schools must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for these subjects.

### **Introduction**

We have based our school's RSE Policy on the DfE guidance document 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and the Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning (GHLL) resource 'Relationships and Sex Education' Guidance. As a Church of England school we have also taken guidance from material published by the Diocese of Gloucester.

### **School Statement on RSE**

At St Mark's C of E Junior School, we will deliver a high-quality, age-appropriate and evidence-based relationships, sex and health education curriculum (RSE) for all our pupils. This policy sets out the framework for our relationships, sex and health curriculum, providing clarity on how it is informed, organised and delivered and how everyone will be treated with dignity and respect.

It supports the Church of England [Vision for Education](#), where there is a core focus on relationships and the qualities of character that enable people to flourish together; it emphasises the value and preciousness of each person where each person is treated as a unique individual of inherent worth. We believe in the importance of high quality RSE teaching and learning and the role that it can play in promoting safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships under the promise of Jesus bringing 'life in all its fullness.' (John10:10). We follow the guidance from the Church of England Education Office in our approach to teaching RSE, seeking to be faith sensitive and inclusive.

At our school, we believe all children should be treated with dignity and respect and bullying of all kinds should be eliminated.

In order to ensure the safety of pupils, it is important to promote a strong anti-bullying stance that shows that any bullying (including negative remarks and behaviour around gender and sexuality) are unacceptable. Our Anti Bullying policy aims to combat all forms of negative discrimination ensuring that school is a hospitable place

where life can be lived without fear and where community can be found' ([Flourishing For All April 2025](#))

The planned RSE curriculum at St Mark's Church of England Junior School will provide pupils with the knowledge that will enable them to 'navigate and contextualise a world in which many will try to tell them how to behave, what to do and what to think. It will help them to develop the skills to express their own views and make their own informed decisions. This is a responsibility that should normally be shared between parents and school' (Valuing All God's Children 2019) We recognise and will distinguish between factual teaching (biological facts, different types of families, medicine and the law) and moral teaching (relationships and values) ensuring clarity at all times.

Our school vision supports the teaching of RSE. It provides the inspiration where all can flourish and pupils respect their uniqueness so that they are able to form healthy and loving relationships and show respect, loving care and dignity to others. In our school, we also consider the spiritual and moral aspects of healthy, loving and nurturing relationships within the context of our Christian vision for the purpose of life.

At St Mark's C of E Junior School, we commit to:

- Work in partnership with parents and carers.
- Deliver RSE professionally and as an identifiable part of PSHE.
- Ensure that RSE will be delivered in a way that affords dignity and shows respect to all who make up our diverse community.
- Help all pupils to build resilience and to support them to form healthy relationships and to keep themselves safe
- The promotion of healthy, resilient relationships set in the context of loving and caring for others
- Using an RSE curriculum that is based on honest and medically accurate information from reliable sources of information, supported by the school's Christian vision
- Taking care to meet the individual needs of all pupils including those with special needs and disabilities so all feel valued and respected through the materials that is used and the language that is used
- Seek pupils' views about RSE so that the teaching can be made relevant to their lives and support them into adulthood

### **Organisation**

RSE will be taught as part of a planned programme within the PSHE curriculum. Our teaching plan will promote resilient and healthy relationships, supporting children to keep themselves safe from harm. Children will be taught to show respect to all within our community developing a mutual understanding of other faiths and beliefs. Our school's Christian vision and values will underpin all our teaching. We will use two main resources to deliver our combined RSE and PSHE curriculum.

**HeartSmart-** We have adopted [HeartSmart](#) as a whole school approach (see PSHE Policy & Heart Smart Overviews on the school website). Teaching and learning within this programme actively delivers the 'Relationships Education' that is found in the RSE curriculum alongside all that is needed in the full PSHE curriculum. In addition, this programme uses 5 Principles to embed our Christian Values and empowers children to make good choices. The combination of taught lessons as well as reflection times to further embed our RSE and PSHE curriculum. This approach also links directly to our Behaviour and Personal Development policy and practice.

**Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning**-we will use the GHLL planning and resource pack 'Relationships and Sex Education' to explicitly teach some RSE lessons. This will complement the curriculum areas covered by the HeartSmart programme. The GHLL resource has been intended to ensure that quality and universal RSE is available throughout Gloucestershire Schools. The GHLL team have worked closely with the Gloucestershire Safeguarding and Children's Board and have produced a resource to enable teachers to help young people think about growing up, changes they see in themselves, hygiene, challenging stereotypes and different kinds of love. The resource provides a wealth of resources both online and suggested books for use at home and whilst learning at school.

### **Senior Leader Team**

- SLT will ensure that parents and governors are informed of the policy
- SLT will ensure outside speakers and visitors will work within this policy and uphold and support the school's vision
- TSLT will monitor and review the policy in partnership with the governing board and PSHE/RSE subject leader
- SLT will ensure regular training and updates for staff based on any identified needs, the school's context and any changes in legislation
- SLT will provide support, training and mentoring for Early Career Teachers (ECTs) to deliver the RHE/RSHE curriculum
- SLT will ensure clear guidance on agreed materials and resources to be used to support the teaching of RSE which is age appropriate and supports the school's vision

### **Planning**

There will be a whole school approach to the teaching of RSE and staff will work together in year group teams to plan for RSE teaching and learning, supplementing the planned PSHE lessons and other related curriculum subjects.

Resources for planning will be available to all staff online (Heart Smart) and on the school server and website (GHLL).

We understand that parents are the primary educators on many RSE matters and it is our intention to complement and reinforce this role. This policy details planning overviews; further planning documents will be available to parents via a link on the school website. Parents will be fully informed as to the arrangements for the teaching of specific RSE lessons.

All children will be taught in their class groups with the opportunity for small group activities where needed. The RSE curriculum lessons will be taught by the regular Class Teacher with the support of Teaching Assistants as required.

There are at least four discrete lessons planned for Years 3, 4 and 5 and five lessons planned for Year 6. The lessons will take place at a chosen point within the year and will form part of the wider PSHE planning.

Class teachers will determine when is the most appropriate time to teach these lessons and will review and adapt lessons taking individual classes' needs and situations into account.

## Subject Content

By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils will:

- Be able to recognise and compare the main external parts of male and female human bodies including agreed names for reproductive organs
- Know the names of the main internal parts of the body including agreed names for reproductive organs
- Know about the physical changes that take place at puberty, why they happen and how to manage them
- Understand why it is important to know how to keep themselves clean
- Understand that safe routines can stop the spread of viruses
- Understand genetic inheritance
- Understand there are different types of families to theirs
- Be able to challenge gender stereotyping
- Be able to identify the adults they can trust and ask for help
- Be self-confident in a wide range of situations
- Recognise their own worth
- Be able to discuss moral questions
- Be able to understand what is meant by consent

### Year 3 Discrete RSE - (taken from Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning Scheme)

Lesson	Learning Objectives	Key Vocabulary
Similarities and Differences- Reproductive Organs	To recognise the main organs of humans including scientific names for the reproductive organs. To identify the difference between men and women	Lungs, heart, brain, kidney, stomach, penis, testicle, vagina, ovary
Types of Love	To understand that there are different types of love	Love is ....
Personal Hygiene- Hand Washing	To understand how infection can spread and how to help to prevent it through good personal hygiene	Antibacterial, microbes, symptom, transmission, contagious, hygiene, infection
Personal Hygiene- Infection	To understand that our bodies have three main lines of natural defence To understand that sometimes the body needs help to fight infection	Antibodies, immune, infection, inflammation, white blood cell, disease, vaccination

**Year 4 Discrete RSE- (taken from Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning Scheme)**

Lesson	Learning Objectives	Key Vocabulary
Changes- Life Cycle	To understand some of the physical changes that will happen as humans get older	Respiratory system, circulatory system, reproductive system, puberty, adolescence, period, menstruate, menstruation
Changes- Responsibilities	To consider their responsibilities and levels of independence now To understand that these have changed as they have grown and will continue to change into the future.	
Personal Hygiene- Antibiotics	To understand that most common infections get better on their own through time, rest, intake of fluids and healthy living	Antibiotic, disease, illness, immune system, medicine , symptom
	To understand that antibiotics should only be taken as prescribed	
Challenging Stereotypes	To understand gender based stereotypes	Stereotype, gender specific

**Year 5 Discrete RSE- (taken from Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning Scheme)**

Lesson	Learning Objectives	Key Vocabulary
Changes- Physical	To know and understand the physical changes that may take place during puberty and why they happen  Operation ouch  <a href="#">Operation Ouch! - Specials: Dont Panic About Puberty - BBC iPlayer</a>  Periods <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQ5KqPCjasU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQ5KqPCjasU</a>	Physical and emotional changes, puberty
Changes Emotional	To understand that emotional changes happen at different rates for different people	Puberty, changes
Personal Hygiene- Keeping Clean	To consider new aspects of personal hygiene relevant to puberty	Personal hygiene, puberty, hormones, oestrogen, progesterone, testosterone

**Year 6 Discrete RSE - (taken from Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning Scheme)**

<b>Lesson</b>	<b>Learning Objectives</b>	<b>Key Vocabulary</b>
Changes-Physical	<p>To understand the functions of male and female reproductive organs</p> <p>To understand about the physical changes that must take place at puberty and why they happen</p> <p>Puberty</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQ5KqPCjasU">Operation Ouch! - Specials: Dont Panic About Puberty - BBC iPlayer</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQ5KqPCjasU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQ5KqPCjasU</a></p>	Penis, testicles, sperm, ova, ovum, ovary, fallopian tube, uterus, vagina
Changes-Emotional	<p>To be able to recognise their own changing emotions and be able to express their feelings and concerns positively</p>	Physical and emotional changes, puberty, feelings, emotions
Life Cycle-Sexual Intercourse	<p>To know about the facts of the human lifecycle, including sexual intercourse</p> <p>Resource- Miracle of Life</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IM2-8se6pp8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IM2-8se6pp8</a></p>	Penis, testicles, erection, ejaculation, sperm, ova, ovum, ovary, fallopian tube, uterus, vagina, conception, pregnancy, foetus
Relationships	<p>To consider the need for trust and love in marriage and established relationships</p> <p>To consider different types of love</p>	Families, adoption, fostering, lesbian and gay relationships, wider family, brother, sister, step/half brother/sister, grandparents
Birth and a New Baby	<p>To understand how babies are born</p> <p>To explore the impact a new baby has on a family</p>	Contraction, labour, uterus, dilation, cervix, umbilical cord, placenta, amniotic fluid, caesarean section
Consent	<p>To understand what is meant by consent</p> <p>To know that consent can be withdrawn at any time</p> <p>To understand the importance of gaining, as well giving, consent</p> <p>Resource consent:</p> <p><a href="#">Consent - YouTube</a></p>	Consent, denying, withdrawing, communication, personal space, uncomfortable, respectful relationship

### **HeartSmart- An Overview Grid can be found on the school Website (Curriculum, PSHE & RSE)**

The following topics are covered in each year group and use the following references in the grid. These lessons form the Relationships Education aspect of RSE taught within the wider curriculum area of PSHE. Please refer to the PSHE policy for further information.

Topic/theme	Reference
Families	F
Caring Friendships	CF
Respectful Relationships	RF
Online relationships	OR
Being safe	BS
Mental wellbeing	MW
Internet safety and harm	ISH
Physical health and fitness	PH
Healthy eating	HE
Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco	DAT
Health and prevention	HP
Basic First Aid	BFA
Changing Adolescent Body	CAB

### **Ground Rules for RSE**

Six Ground Rules will be established and revisited throughout the teaching of RSE lessons.

1. No one will be expected to answer a personal question
2. No one will be forced to take part in a discussion; everyone has the right to opt out
3. Only the correct names for body parts will be used
4. The meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way
5. Everyone will listen and respect each other
6. Other people's secrets are not ours to share

### **Answering difficult questions**

When delivering the RSE objectives, teachers will always consider how children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to differing types of questions or behaviours. Teaching methods should take account of those developmental differences (including when these are due to specific special educational needs or disabilities) and recognise the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Schools should 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. On occasion, an individual child will ask an explicit or difficult question in the classroom. Questions do not always have to be answered immediately; it may be more appropriate to address them later. We believe that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in these situations and could refer to the PSHE subject leader

### **Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Ethos Committee review the policy annually in partnership with Senior Leaders and consider any views expressed by parents, children and staff in order to make any changes or recommendations. Recommendations are fed back to the full governing body and are then actioned as appropriate. Governors will ensure that policy and practice continue to be consistent with the school's Christian vision and resources used are appropriate.



## **Roles and Responsibilities**

We recognise that every member of our school community has a role and responsibilities to uphold the principles and actions of this policy

### **The Governing Body**

- review and monitor the policy on an annual basis and make any necessary changes based on evaluations. Ensure the schools distinctive Christian vision is lived out through RSE.

### **The Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team**

- monitor the effectiveness and impact of the policy including the teaching and learning.
- build and maintain effective relationships, fully engage with parents when planning and reviewing RSE work
- The Headteacher responds to parent requests to withdraw their children from RSHE

### **Teaching and Support Staff**

- follow the agreed policy and scheme of work and where concerns arise seek additional guidance and or training through the leadership team.
- Staff model a positive attitude to RSE.

### **Pupils**

- fully engage with RSE teaching and treat all issues and peers with mutual respect and sensitivity.

### **Parents and carers**

- support their children in their learning and raise any questions regarding policy with the teachers and leadership team

### **Visitors**

- read and follow the agreed policy; keep up-to-date with policy and practice

## **Staff Development and Training**

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. All staff development and training is evaluated to ensure on-going improvement is achieved and that training has a positive impact on learning and teaching for all. ECTs and staff who have not previously taught RSE will receive training and support from the PSHE lead teacher.

## **The Right to withdraw from Sex Education**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the Sex Education aspect of RSE and can do so by making concerns known and applying in writing to the Headteacher. The school will invite any enquiring parents or legal guardians to talk through their concerns. An explanation of the rationale for RSE will be given; an opportunity will be offered to review the intended materials and consider the impact of not receiving sex education with peers.

If a pupil is withdrawn from the Sex Education aspect of this curriculum, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education (RHE). The school will document this process to ensure a record is kept.

## **Equal Opportunities**

The law now states that all pupils should have access to Relationships Education and Health Education that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this, our approach to RSE will take account of:

**Special Educational Needs**- Children with SEN are given full opportunity to take part in all RSE sessions. Where needed, a differentiated approach will be used to support specific children. It is not the school's policy to withdraw these children during RSE teaching time for any additional or catch up curriculum programmes as part of their SEND plan. Support staff who work alongside pupils are trained and included in planning for RSE.

**Religious, Ethnic and cultural diversity** -Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to RSE. The school will consult pupils and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different religious, ethnic and cultural groups.

**Varying home backgrounds** -We recognise that our pupils may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We shall always endeavour to prevent stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances

**Sexuality**-Some of our pupils will go on to define themselves as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender or questioning (LGBTQ). Pupils may also have LGBTQ parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. Eventually all our pupils will meet and work with LGBTQ people. Our approach to RSE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality and we shall actively tackle homophobic or sexist bullying if / when it occurs.

**Sexualised Language** - Our whole school approach challenges and seeks to prevent bullying of all types. This includes the use of sexualised language, where either girls or boys are made to feel inferior, uncomfortable or even unsafe. This might be as a result of words / phrases being used out of context or without full understanding of its meaning. However, the school's response will challenge such use of language directly and will include the below phrases as part of a dialogue with the child / adult to set clear expectations, to understand why the language was used and the impact this might have had on individual(s).

**Direct response:** *The school doesn't tolerate [sexist] language like that; The school policy says that we are all responsible for making this a safe place for everyone where we each one of us are valued as individuals; That kind of language is sexist and makes others feel unsafe.*

**Questioning response:** *What makes you think that? What do you mean by that? Let's talk about why people might think like that. How do you think that comment will make others around you feel?*

As is the case for all instances where a child feels upset as a result of unkind / inappropriate comments, it should be brought to the attention of the Class Teacher or a member of SLT immediately and will be dealt with promptly using the above approach.

### **Parental Engagement- Development and sharing our RSE Policy**

At St Mark's C of E Junior School, we are committed to building a strong and positive relationship with all parents through a shared understanding, mutual trust and co-operation. We achieve this by responding to any RSE queries in a sensitive and supportive way as well as sharing our school policy on the school's website. In addition, we seek views from parents on an annual basis to look for ways to improve our teaching and learning.

It is important that parents are involved in the development of the RSE curriculum and also when lessons are delivered. This policy and links to any resources that may be used, including books and video clips will be published on the school website.

DFE Guidance states '*Engagement means schools providing the opportunity for parents to feed in their views on the school's proposed Relationships Education policy, and includes considering whether any strongly held views of their parent body should lead the school to adapt when and how they approach certain topics with their pupils.*'

The DfE provide excellent guidance for Parents relating to the teaching of RSE in schools - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-sex-and-health-education-guides-for-schools>

### **Safeguarding Statement**

St Mark's C of E Junior School is committed to delivering good outcomes for children and young people by providing an outstanding safe learning environment that promotes their welfare and helps them to develop socially and emotionally so that they can make the most of their life chances.

### **Accessibility Statement**

St Mark's C of E Junior School is committed to providing an environment that enables all pupils, staff, parents and visitors access to the full curriculum and school information without discrimination of any kind regardless of their education, physical, sensory, social, moral, spiritual, emotional and cultural needs

### **Related Policies**

Personal Social and Health Education

Behaviour and Personal Development

Teaching and Learning

Safeguarding and Child Protection

E- Safety

Anti-Bullying and Hate

**Review** - this policy will be reviewed annually by SLT and the Governing Board.

**Next Review point:** Summer Term 2026