



Through God We Achieve

OUR VISION AT ST. STEPHEN'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

To deliver outstanding education in a caring community, with God at its centre

'Turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding'. Proverbs 2:2

OUR VALUES:

Joy - we provide a happy and stimulating environment, rooted in Christian values.

Excellence - we are a church school committed to the highest standards in everything we do.

Relationship – we work hand-in-hand with St Stephen's Church as well as our parents and carers.

Respect - we enable our children to deepen or realise their own faith and respect the freedom of others in their beliefs.

Nurture – our children are cared for spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally.

SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Action	Policy to be reviewed as required and at least annually		
	Owner	Date	Completed
Updated	Yasmin Bill Michael Schumm	June 2023	✓
Next Review	Yasmin Hall Michael Schumm	June 2024	
Approved	Governors	June 2023	✓

1. The Context of Relationships and Sex Education

The starting point for any Christian understanding of relationships and sex is the Bible, which is normative for all Christians. The Anglican response to the Bible has always been that it must be taken with great seriousness, whilst being subject to interpretation, reason and the developing nature of Biblical and historical scholarship. In fact, the Bible has numerous references to sex, marriage and relationships, in both the Old and New Testaments.

There are many Biblical passages that emphasise that humans were designed to need companionship; a partner to provide help and support. There is a strong emphasis on constancy and faithfulness, on monogamy (at least in later Biblical material) and that partnership should be for life. The Bible also contains passages of great passion, showing that physical love is also a gift from God and that sex with the right person, one to whom a serious and thoughtful commitment has been made, is a source of delight and tenderness. There is a robust acknowledgement of “passion fierce” and a “raging flame.”

The historic formularies of the Church of England, particularly the Book of Common Prayer and, now, Common Worship, have reflected these understandings.

Thus, the BCP marriage service notes the presence of Christ at the Wedding in Cana of Galilee, and emphasises that marriage is the proper setting for the upbringing of children, for the avoidance of fornication and “for the mutual society help and comfort that the one ought to have of the other both in prosperity and adversity”.

In Common Worship, the preface to the marriage service extends this idea: “Marriage is intended by God to be a creative relationship, as his blessing enables husband and wife to love and support each other in good times and bad, and to share in the care and upbringing of children” whilst the alternative preface picks up on the physical side of marriage.

“(marriage) is given that with delight and tenderness they may know each other in love, and, with the joy of their bodily union, may strengthen the union of their hearts and lives.”

“It must not be undertaken carelessly, lightly, or selfishly, but reverently, responsibly, and after serious thought.”

The references to carelessness and selfishness indicate an understanding of a deeper Biblical truth. The Bible explains that the world has been created by God, that all life belongs to Him, and is fundamentally good.

We are stewards of His creation, co-creators with Him, and should care for all life. The Bible makes clear, however, that humanity is fallen, frail, and subject to the ravages of sin. Human relationships – including sexual relationships – are no more, but no less, subject to sin than any

other human thought or activity. But the Bible goes on to teach that God's nature is of infinite compassion and forgiveness.

In whatever is taught it is essential that the notion of holding together human frailty and God's graciousness is not lost, that whilst lives can be marred by sin, sorrow and wrong doing, there is always a promise of healing, forgiveness and new life.

These tensions (between the goodness of life and sex, the nature of the Fall and the overwhelming fact of God's love and forgiveness) create dilemmas when discussing controversial issues in human sexuality – dilemmas which the Church of England has not always resolved. However, the General Synod some years ago said, "that to withhold compassion is evil and in circumstances of very great distress or need is a very great evil."

It is in this overall context – of the absolute value of persons, of the goodness of love and sex, of the nature of frailty and sin, and of the infinite love and forgiveness of God – that relationships and sex should be taught in Church Schools.

Introduction

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships and Health Education compulsory in all primary schools. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools but the Department of Education recommends that pupils and parents have access to a tailored Sex Education programme that is appropriate to the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. St Stephen's believes that providing pupils and parents with the option of high quality Sex Education is integral so pupils to make safe and informed decisions about sex.

Governor Responsibilities

Our Governing Body, whose right it is to decide whether Sex Education should be taught, have approved this policy and the accompanying definitions of when Sex Education is taught.

Definition

In line with our Relationships and Health Education Policy 2020, St. Stephen's defines sex education as the act of sex and how a baby is conceived. This will be taught in Year Six over a series of lessons. Pupils will also be drawing on their knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for Science.

All parents will receive ample notice of when the Sex Education lessons in Year Six will take place with the head teacher, class teachers and subject coordinator available to discuss any worries or concerns. Parents are invited to review the resources that are used in the Year Six Sex Education sessions before the lessons are delivered to the pupil and a parent workshop where parents are welcomed to ask questions about the materials and delivery before children take part in the sessions.

Relationships and Health Education (a separate subject) at St Stephen's ensures that both boys and girls throughout their time in St. Stephen's learn about the physical and emotional changes that they will encounter. In Year Four, children will learn about changes in personal hygiene because of the onset of puberty and in Year Five, children will move into single sex groups for the sessions which we have found helps children feel more comfortable with asking for clarification or questions.

In Year 5, girls and boys learn about:

Sweating; Change in body odour; Growth of body hair; Growth of pubic hair; Growing pains; Becoming taller; Changing emotions; Deeper voice; Erections; Wet dreams; Body Odour; Hygiene; Change in body shape; Weight gain; Periods and period management; Breast growth; Discharge

Right of Withdrawal

Parents **do** have the right to withdraw their child from Sex Education lessons that will take place **in Year Six**. Sex Education lessons about the act of sex and the conception and birth of a baby will not take place in any other year groups.

Parents **do not** have the right to withdraw their child from the Science or Relationships and Health Education curriculum. Reproduction is taught as part of the Science curriculum and puberty will be covered in the statutory Relationships and Health Education Curriculum.

*See Relationships and Health Education policy 2023

Why is Sex Education important?

It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively.

1. Effective sex education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives and should not be delivered in isolation.
2. The objective of sex education is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. A successful programme, (complimented by Relationships and Health Education), will help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.
3. Pupils need to be given accurate information and helped to develop skills to enable them to understand differences and respect themselves and others and for the purpose also of preventing and removing prejudice. Secondary pupils should learn to understand human sexuality, learn the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay, and learn about obtaining appropriate advice on sexual health.
4. Sex education should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and of society and preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

5. Effective sex education does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, to build up their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. It builds up knowledge and skills which are particularly important today because of the many different and conflicting pressures on young people.

6. Children and young people should be able to grow up feeling confident about their emotional and sexual health and with the ability to live alongside people who have different values and beliefs about sex and relationships.

The three main elements of Sex Education:-

1. Attitudes and values

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.
- Learning the value of family life, marriage, and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children.
- Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.

2. 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.
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

3. Knowledge and understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships.
- Learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services.
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay.
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

General Principles

- a. Sex education compliments a child's broad, balanced curriculum, integral to the basic curriculum of the school and part of the child's all round development.

- b. The school must recognise the legal right of withdrawal from sex education, other than that delivered through the National Curriculum Science and Relationships and Health Education, and must be sensitive to those parents who for religious reasons find the delivery of some explicit teaching in school unacceptable.
- c. It is essential to regard parents as partners in the delivery of sex education in the school and affirm their valuable role in the home, or delivered through the home. Pupils learn more about marriage and relationships from their own homes than they do anywhere else. For many this will be predominantly positive. The ordinary, everyday working out of long term commitment, will give them a sound template to work from. For others, it will be confusing and possibly painful; neglect and abuse will be what they know of relationships.
- d. As they grow older, the earliest learning is supplemented by a widening circle of acquaintance and by television, film, public lives and literature. Children absorb knowledge that fits with their early patterning easily. It is vital, therefore, that schools should explicitly participate in this area of children's learning.
- e. Regardless of background and behaviour pupils are to be caringly accepted within the Church school.
- f. The National Curriculum context for understanding reproduction, sexual behaviour and safety should also include the exploration of relationships, values, morals and Christian and other beliefs in the multi-faith context, so that increasing knowledge is gained alongside the development of communication and decision making skills and positive attitudes to oneself and others. In this way pupils will become increasingly responsible for their own sexual behaviour.
- g. It is essential that teachers concerned feel comfortable with this area of the curriculum to foster a spirit of sharing and openness. It may be that some discussions are managed more easily by teaching boys and girls separately.
- h. Schools should provide a safe and secure environment in which marriage and other long term human relationships can be explored. This implies that the teaching is designed to present concepts and ideas the individual pupils may choose to relate to their own experience.
- i. Children with special educational needs including cognitive and learning, communication, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties may require additional support with the content and delivery of lessons. Teachers will discuss individual needs with the SENCo and parents and appropriate accommodations will be put in place e.g. 1:1 session, use of alternative materials