



## 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.

### RELATIONSHIPS, HEALTH AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Action	Policy to be reviewed as required and at least annually		
	Owner	Date	Completed
Updated	Yasmin Bill	05/2023	✓
Next Review	Yasmin Bill	05/2024	
Approved	Governors	09/2023	✓

## **INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE FOR POLICY**

As a Church of England school, our intention is to embed the belief that “Every person in the school community is a child of God: so at the heart of Christian distinctiveness in schools is an upholding of the worth of each person” (**Valuing All God’s Children, Church of England 2017 p11**) and ‘Relationships Education...must be inclusive and meet the needs of *all* pupils’ (**Church of England Education Office Response to a Call of Evidence on RSE Curriculum p2**).

The government introduced Relationships and Health Education as a statutory subject for primary schools so ‘all young people are taught to stay safe and are prepared for life in modern Britain’. The topics that will be covered are to ensure pupils ‘embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life...have the knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support. (Gov guidance p. 8)

In line with the Government’s vision to ensure that all ‘all young people are taught to stay safe and are prepared for life in modern Britain’, the governors, teaching staff and volunteers of St. Stephen’s C.of.E recognise the necessity to implement Relationships and Health Education as part of our statutory teaching curriculum. We identify the need to teach pupils in an age-appropriate way about respectful and healthy relationships, internet safety and health education, which is in line with our safeguarding policy, ensuring that all our pupils have the necessary knowledge to build healthy relationships, stay safe and become successful adults.

To this end, the Governors and school staff will be committed to ensuring that all members of the school community are aware of the topics that will be covered in this subject, the primary resources that will be used as well as the school’s statutory and ethical responsibilities to St. Stephen’s pupils. This will include communicating policies and procedures effectively with parents/carers, ensuring all staff and relevant members of the Governing Body attend appropriate training and working effectively with other professionals on behalf of the children. The school’s Governors, Relationships Education Coordinator, Heads of Teaching and Learning and Safeguarding and Head teacher are responsible for ensuring that the statutory obligations are being met by the school and effective teaching and learning is happening at every opportunity.

### **Aims and Objectives of Relationships and Health Education**

At St. Stephen’s we agree with the Church of England that we want all of our pupils ‘to flourish and to be equipped to live and learn safely in the modern world’. Our aim is to empower our student body to gain the knowledge, skills and confidence to make their own positive, healthy and safe choices. This knowledge will enable them to be able to care for themselves as they grow, and develop resilience as well as applying their faith in times of hardship. They will know how and where to get help should they need it as well as respecting themselves while building positive

relationships as they grow.

**Relationships Education will cover:**

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring Friendships
- Respectful Relationships
- Online Relationships
- Being Safe

**NB some of these topics will include recognition of same sex relationships in line with the Equalities Act of 2010. Please see in the appendix.**

**Health Education will cover:**

- Mental Wellbeing
- Internet Safety and harms
- Physical Health and Fitness
- Healthy Eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and disease prevention
- Basic First Aid
- Changing adolescent bodies including puberty

We at St. Stephen's classify lessons involving puberty an integral part of health education **not** sex education. All parents will be duly informed when lessons about puberty will be taught and will be welcome to discuss methods and resources with the class teacher and Heads of Teaching and Learning. Please refer to the Sex Education Policy for further detail on what will be covered in Sex Education.

Relationships and Health Education is a broad and complex topic and as such some topics will also be covered in lessons across the curriculum such as English and Library. Science has links with Relationships and Health Education and will cover according to the National Curriculum:

**Year 1 pupils should be taught to:**

- Identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense

**Year 2 pupils should be taught to:**

- Notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults
- Describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene

**Year 5 pupils should be taught to:**

- Describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals
- Describe the changes as humans develop to old age

**Year 6 pupils should be taught to:**

- Recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents

**Roles and Responsibilities**

All members of staff have a duty of care to ensure that pupils practise healthy and safe relationships with their peers and any of other persons of interest (including staff). Please refer to our safeguarding policy for further steps regarding concerns.

All class teachers will plan and execute sequences of lessons that will meet the statutory requirements listed above.

The subject coordinator will ensure all teaching members of staff are aware of the statutory requirements, provide INSETs throughout the academic year to ensure members of staff are aware of any developments and monitor the pupils' development through lesson observations, work produced from these sessions, reviewing the class books and displays as well as speaking with the pupils across the school once a term.

The Head of Teaching and Learning will ensure that the subject coordinator is monitoring this subjects developments and review the monitoring done by said subject coordinator to ensure all learning is effective and in line with the government requirements.

The Headteacher will ensure that the school is meeting and exceeding the statutory guidelines alongside the Head of Teaching and Learning and Subject Coordinator.

The Head of Safeguarding will ensure that lessons about personal safety are being taught in line with the safeguarding policy.

Computing Coordinators will ensure that e safety (including cyber bullying and messaging friends online) is being addressed and taught in a sequence of lessons and alongside the Relationships and Health Education Coordinator will monitor pupils' understanding and development of this topic.

The lead governor and school governors will ensure that St. Stephen's is meeting the statutory requirements stated by the government and excellent teaching practice is consistently and regularly being carried out and excellent, age appropriate progress is happening in each year group.

## **Approaches to Teaching and Learning**

St. Stephen's approach to Relationships and Health Education consists of weekly timetabled formal lessons which build on pupils' understanding of the topics listed above. We use as a basis **Coram Education** plans and resources to provide consistency for all pupils and to ensure that each pupil's knowledge is built upon year by year through a spiral curriculum. All teachers may use additional appropriate resources to compliment **Coram Education** plans and the requirements set out in this policy at the discretion of the Subject Coordinator and the Head of Teaching and Learning.

Each term will cover issues that stem from three main topics:

- **Relationships**
- **Health and Wellbeing**
- **Living in the Wider World**

As some of the topics we discuss have a broad range of points, we as a school approach the various topics through child driven discussion ensuring pupils have the time, safe space and opportunity to explore various topics with guidance and support from the class teacher. This allows teachers to have the flexibility to revisit a topic a number of times based on the class' needs and the pupils' developing requirements throughout the year. We believe that effective teaching in Relationships and Health Education is informed by the children with the teacher having the expertise and understanding of their class needs to plan and teach accordingly. Each teacher is encouraged to respond to their pupils' needs by extending a particular lesson or focus if needed.

As some topics may be sensitive, each session begins with establishing a 'safe zone' where pupils and teachers identify how to create a safe nurturing space before delving into the topic. It is at each teacher's discretion how these 'safe zones' are established as well as being guided by the subject coordinator.

Discussion is a key part of Relationships and Education both for pupils understanding and teacher's informal and formal assessment for learning judgements.

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 SENDCo and parents and appropriate accommodations will be put in place e.g. 1:1 session, use of alternative materials

Enrichment opportunities are available throughout school life at St. Stephen's through workshops, drama, Library sessions, PSD sessions, sporting events and weekly assemblies with Reverend Denis, the Headteacher and RE coordinator ensure the Christian ethos is embedded in these topics.

## **Assessment**

To assess in education is to gain an understanding of a pupil's knowledge in a particular topic. In primary schools, an effective way of doing this is through informal and formal methods. All class teachers will gauge an idea of pupil's achieved learning through one to one and class discussion. Teachers will also keep a record of pupils' work and have a 'working wall' displaying pupils' thoughts and learning from each lesson that term. This will provide a constructive display for pupils to refer to and will be an 'active' resource in the classroom.

The subject coordinator will meet and discuss their learning every term as well as observing lessons throughout the school year to ensure excellent standards are being met and all children progress in their understanding. The subject coordinator will also talk with children to ensure that long term learning is being upheld in this subject in every year group.

## **Responding to tricky questions or statements**

All classes should establish 'ground rules' for a safe space at the beginning of each Relationships and Health Education session.

If a pupil says a comment or question which may not be appropriate for the year group or context of the lesson, the teacher will thank them for their comment (should this be apt) and respond with comments similar to 'We aren't going to talk about that now' or 'That's not appropriate for this conversation in the whole class setting' or 'That will be something you learn about when....'. These responses may vary year group to year group. The teacher or the TA will then follow guidance set in the safeguarding policy if he/she/they have concerns about the pupil's comment. If there are no concerns from a safeguarding point of view the teacher will relay comments to the parents should they wish to educate or address these issues at home.

When unsure about the next steps, teachers or TAs are advised to consult with the Headteacher and Head of Safeguarding on the next steps as soon as possible.

## **Right to Withdraw**

The only subject children can be withdrawn from is sex education which takes place in Year Six.

Lessons classed as Relationships and Health Education are statutory topics which children cannot be withdrawn from in line with the statutory government stipulations. Lessons discussing puberty including hormones, periods and body changes happen in Year Five and are classed as Health Education. Parents will be informed when these lessons will take place (in Year Five) so they have a chance to view the resources and discuss with the teacher the format of the lesson.

Please note puberty discussions in Year Four will address personal hygiene as part of Health Education.

## **SEX EDUCATION**

### **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 2023, 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.

### **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 SENDCo and parents and appropriate accommodations will be put in place e.g. 1:1 session, use of alternative materials

## **Appendix**

### **Documents that inform our Relationships and Health Education Policy**

*Documents that inform the schools RSE policy include:*

- *Education Act (1996)*
- *Learning and Skills Act (2000)*
- *Education and Inspections Act (2006)*
- *Equality Act (2010),*
- *Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st*
- *century (2014)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)*
- *Statutory safeguarding guidance (2016)*
- *Children and Social Work Act (2017)*
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Statement from the Diocese

Statement from the Church of England

Relationships and Health Education program of study

Relationships Education Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Computing Policy

**Subject Coordinator – Yasmin Bill**

**Head of Teaching and Learning – Chloe Bell**

**SENDCo – Sally Bouwman**

**Computing Coordinator – Luke Faith**

**DSL and Headteacher – Michael Schumm**

**Lead Governor – Nisha Collard**