

Stepney Greencoat Church of England Primary School



Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Reviewed: March 2011
Next review date: Jan 2013

Why the Relationships and Sex Education policy is important.

In February 2009, as a result of an enquiry by the 'Children's Society' into the nature of childhood today a report was published called 'Good Childhood'.

The Report contains a section on the making of good friendships among the young and what is needed to help them form moral sensitivity and healthy social relationships. It mentions that the age at which people have their first sexual encounter has dropped dramatically in recent decades and that teenage pregnancies are higher in the United Kingdom than anywhere else in Western Europe. Young people are subject to many pressures regarding this sensitive area such as the commercial portrayal of premature sexualisation and the fundamental shift in attitude towards pre-marital sex.

As a result, in all church schools, Governors and Teachers have an especial responsibility and opportunity to help young people towards mature and understanding Christian attitudes of the dangers, mishaps and properly focussed joys in these important areas of life.

As a consequence of the above the Governors, Teachers and Staff at Stepney Greencoat Church of England Primary School have adopted in full the policy on Relationships and Sex Education published by the London Diocesan Board for Schools which now follows.

The Rev'd Gordon Warren
Chair of Governors

1) Introduction

The Department of Education require all schools to have a Sex and Relationships Education Policy (SRE) and that it should be planned and delivered as part of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship curriculum.

At Stepney Greencoat C of E, we have changed the order of the nationally recognized phrase “Sex and Relationships Policy (SRE)” to Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE) in order to place greater emphasis on word relationships. Throughout this document, RSE will be used instead of SRE.

How We Approach the Delivery of RSE at Stepney Greencoat C of E Primary School.

At Stepney Greencoat C of E we teach RSE within a Christian context. While RSE in our school means that we give children information about forming relationships, learning about their bodies, sexual development and behaviour, we do this with an awareness of a Christian ethos and with Christian values.

2) Why is RSE Important?

RSE can be defined in different ways. The DfE Guidance states:

“It is the lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health.

“ It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity-this would be inappropriate teaching.”

According to the DfE:

- Effective SRE (RSE) is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives.
- The objective of SRE (RSE) is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development.
- A successful programme will help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.
- 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.
- RSE should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and prepare them for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- Effective SRE (RSE) does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It enables young people to mature, to build up their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity.

3) Our Aims in Teaching RSE at Stepney Greencoat C of E Primary School

At Stepney Greencoat C of E we have based our RSE Policy on the DfE Guidance document **Sex and Relationship Education Guidance** and the LDBS **Policy on Relationships and Sex Education** (June 2009).

In these documents, SRE (RSE) is described as learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of marriage and stable, loving relationships for family life. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health.

While we use RSE to inform children about sexual issues, we do this with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, placing high value on family life and supportive relationships. We do not use RSE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

We teach the children:

- about the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults
- about the way humans reproduce
- about health and relationship issues
- respect for the views of other people
- about forming relationships in line with a Christian ethos
- that children are best raised within a loving, secure, stable and committed relationship
- that babies should only be conceived when the parents are ready and able to care for them and
- cope with the responsibility of life
- that sexual relationships should wait until a person is emotionally and physically mature
- that relationships require effort and commitment to work

4) What We Teach in our RSE Lessons at Stepney Greencoat C of E Primary School

Our Objectives

During the course of the lessons taught at Stepney Greencoat C of E, from Reception to Year 6, we will teach RSE in the belief that:

- it is taught in the context of marriage, civil partnerships and family life
- it is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process
- children are taught to have respect for their own bodies
- it is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect
- children learn about their responsibilities to others

By the end of Year 6, pupils will understand:

- that there are different types of relationships in families
- key issues in keeping themselves safe
- who to ask if they feel unsafe
- where to get help in the wider community
- how their bodies work and change as they get older
- how babies are made
- that their actions affect others and that their actions have consequences
- how to identify their own feelings and the feelings they have towards others
- why it is important to respect the views of other people
- how some diseases are caused and that diseases can spread
- and be aware of HIV/AIDS

5) Values Framework

All RSE at Stepney Greencoat C of E will be delivered in the context of Christian teaching and the school's Aims.

Christian values and attitudes, with the emphasis on the importance of marriage, the family and stable relationships to build a child's self-esteem, self-awareness and sense of moral responsibility will permeate the entire curriculum, both explicit and implicit. It is built on the message that we all have the right to make choices, to think about our aspirations and the decisions that affect our future life choices. This is to ensure that pupils understand that sexual intercourse should only take place within a caring, committed and stable relationship such as marriage.

Teaching staff will always ensure that lessons will be delivered in a manner that enables pupils to develop:

- Respect for themselves and their own bodies
- Respect for the views of other people
- An understanding that sexual relationships should wait until a person is emotionally and physically mature
- An understanding that babies should only be conceived when the parents are ready and able to care for them
- An understanding that children are best raised within a loving, secure, stable and committed relationship
- An understanding that family life is important and can provide invaluable support for individual members
- An understanding that relationships require effort and commitment to work
- Through both RE and RSE lessons, pupils will be taught that God created all life and that every human being has a unique place in his creation and is highly valued. Because we, as individuals, are prized so highly by God, we should set high values on our body and consider how we use it.
- It will be acknowledged that not every relationship can live up to the high standards that are set by God.
- Those relationships that fall short of these high expectations are not condemned. God shows through the story of the prodigal son that everyone can be loved, forgiven and welcomed back.

6) How Our Objectives Are Achieved

The content of our teaching programme encompasses the following considerations:

- physical development
- emotional development
- social development
- self esteem
- family relationships
- relationships with friends
- human reproduction and genetic inheritance
- child development
- gender roles and stereotyping
- practical skills – decision making, listening etc

We believe that these areas are appropriate to the needs of our children. Some aspects will be dealt with implicitly.

Care will be taken in planning appropriate schemes of work that there is a balance between knowledge and understanding and feelings, attitudes and values.

We aim to ensure that Relationship and Sex Education is information based but will also include the exploring of feelings, attitudes and values whilst developing communication skills.

Aspects of our relationships and sex programme will be taught through the Science curriculum:

At **Key Stage 1** pupils will be taught:

- that animals, including humans, move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce
- to name the main external parts of the human body
- that humans can produce babies and these babies grow into children and then adults
- to recognise physical similarities and differences between themselves and other pupils
- to know that humans develop at different rates and that human babies have special needs

At **Key Stage 2** pupils will be taught:

- that there are life processes, including nutrition, movement, growth and reproduction common to animals, including humans
- the main stages of human life cycle
- in Year 5/6, about some of the physical, emotional and social changes which take place at puberty and about how changes at puberty affect the body in relation to hygiene
- in Year 5/6, about the basic biology of human reproduction

Aspects of our relationships and sex education programme will be taught through our Personal, Social and Health Education programme (PSHE):

At **Key Stage 1** pupils will consider the following:

- personal safety e.g. with visiting speakers such as a police officer, a nurse and drama groups
- a respect for their own space and that of others
- ways in which people learn to live and work together – listening, discussing, sharing
- the importance of valuing oneself and others
- the range of human emotions and ways to deal with these

At **Key Stage 2** pupils will consider:

- some of the skills necessary for parenting
- different patterns of friendship – to be able to talk about friends and friendships with family and teachers
- the meaning of friendship and loyalty and begin to develop skills needed to form relationships

Resources

A range of resources are drawn upon as appropriate to the objectives of the lesson and the age and maturity of the pupils e.g. SEAL Guidance, Living and Growing Videos – Channel 4

It is recognised that some topics within the RSE curriculum are more specifically related to either boys or girls (for example: wet dreams for boys and menstruation for girls). It is important for both boys and girls to be aware of these issues that relate to the opposite sex. However, to allow a more intimate teaching and learning environment, teachers may feel that some of these issues could further be addressed in more detail by teaching the class in gender groups, where possible, to allow for greater confidentiality.

7) Equal Opportunities and Differentiation

The pitch of the work undertaken in our RSE lessons will be appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils being taught. Children with learning difficulties may need more help than others in coping with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up; they may also need more help in learning what sorts of behaviour are and are not acceptable.

Staff planning and delivering RSE lessons always consider differentiated learning when choosing activities. They will plan for all the needs of the pupils within their class in order to allow them to access all the information they need from the lessons, no matter what their ability levels are.

8) Specific Issues That May Arise

Dealing With Questions From Pupils

Clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in terms of questioning by pupils will be established within the ground rules by the class teacher at the start of the RSE lessons. Teachers will use their professional judgement to decide on the amount of detail to include in their answers in order to answer questions truthfully and in an age-appropriate manner.

If a question is too explicit, is not age appropriate for the pupil or the whole class, or raises concerns about inappropriate sexual knowledge or awareness, then the teacher will remind the class of the ground rules established at the start of the lessons and explain why they are not in a position to answer the question. If the teacher feels there is a genuine desire by a pupil to know an answer, but the topic is not appropriate for the whole class, then, with the pupil's consent, it may be referred back to the parents.

If a question is raised that alerts a member of staff that a pupil might be at risk due to an inappropriate sexual knowledge or awareness, they shall notify the Headteacher and guidance in the Safeguarding policy shall be followed.

Homosexuality

We do not actively teach children about homosexuality but as the society in which we live is diverse and children will raise issues of interest and concern as well as introducing their own experience into class discussion, discussion may take place. When this happens it will always be handled without prejudice or bias. A discussion of civil partnership may arise through children's questions, but teachers will not advocate homosexual behaviour and will not discuss sexual activity between same sex partners.

9) The Role of Parents

At Stepney Greencoat C of E we believe that the primary role in children's RSE lies with parents and carers. We encourage parents and carers to provide a moral framework for their child/children as the School is not in a position to provide this individual guidance.

In promoting this objective we:

- inform parents about the school's RSE Policy and practice
- answer any questions that parents may have about the RSE curriculum
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy
- provide access to resources and ad hoc workshops when appropriate
- encourage parents to enter into dialogue with their child/children at home in order to follow-up and expand on issues raised at school during RSE lessons.

We believe that through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent information about their changing bodies and their increasing responsibilities.

10) The Role of Governors

The Teaching and Learning Committee of the governing body monitors and reviews the RSE Policy on a regular basis. The committee will report any recommendations or modifications to the full governing body.

11) Staff Training

All staff will have access to a range of RSE training courses, and it will be the School's responsibility to ensure that their professional knowledge and skills are developed to a suitable level in order to deliver the RSE curriculum effectively and appropriately.

12) Use of Outside Speakers

When speakers are invited to deliver part of the RSE curriculum, they will be given a copy of RSE policy beforehand, with particular reference to the Values Framework in which they will be expected to work.

A member of the Stepney Greencoat C of E staff will be present with the pupils at all times whilst any speaker is assisting in the delivery of the RSE curriculum. The School Nurse contributes to the planned sessions if required.

13) Safeguarding and Confidentiality

Teachers conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner. However, if a child makes a comment that suggests that they may be at risk of sexual or any other type of abuse, then the teacher has a responsibility to take such matters seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection and safeguarding. The teacher will notify the Headteacher, who is the named Child Protection Officer for the School. The Headteacher will then follow the guidance laid out in the School's safeguarding Policy.

14) Right of Withdrawal

Parents and carers will be invited to watch the videos and ask questions. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the RSE programme taught within the PSHE curriculum. Parents need to be aware that if they are withdrawing their child from some specific aspects of the programme, questions may be asked by pupils in lessons which relate back to previous discussions and lesson content.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from the RSE elements that are taught within the Science curriculum, which are statutory and focus on life cycles and reproduction, both in plants and animals.

If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from RSE lessons, they should discuss this with their child's Class Teacher or the Headteacher. Once a parent's request to withdraw is made, that request must be complied with until revoked by the parent. Children withdrawn from RSE lessons will undertake work in another class during this time.

15) Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing the RSE Programme

We are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this programme through:

- pupil feedback
- staff review and feedback
- parental feedback.

Evidence will be collated by the PSHE Co-ordinator and presented to governors regarding the effectiveness of the policy, which will be reviewed on an annual basis. Parents will be notified of any changes to the Policy.

16) Access to the RSE Policy

Stepney Greencoat C of E's SRE Policy will be available to parents on request in the form of a paper document.

17) Supporting Documents

- PSHE Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy