



The Downland Federation Primaries Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Date established: December 2012

Date of last review: November 2023

Date of next review: November 2024

Version No.: 1

Monitoring and Evaluation:

The effectiveness of the programme will be reviewed on an annual basis as part of the annual review of the PSHE programme.

**The Downland Federation is committed to the safeguarding
and welfare of its students and young people**

Status: Statutory

Consultation: Staff & Governors and parents.

Relationship to other policies: Equality, Race, Behaviour, Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying, Health & Safety, ICT.

Purpose:

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education Regulations (England) 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools from September 2020. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools however many schools include this within their curriculum. A definition of Relationships Education and what is covered in the curriculum can be found in Appendix A (DfE guidance, 2019).

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is "learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. A comprehensive programme of RSE provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex and sexual health. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and nonexploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline". (Brook, SEF, PSHE Association, 2014:3)

This policy is a working document that provides guidance and information on all aspects of RSE at Compton, Beedon and Basildon CE Primaries for staff, parents/carers and governors.

Aims

At Compton, Beedon and Basildon CE primaries, we believe that effective RSE can make a significant contribution to the knowledge, skills and understanding needed by pupils if they are to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. It is an intrinsic part of the physical, intellectual and emotional growth of an individual. Relationship and sex education is delivered through our PSHE and science curriculum, and may be addressed in other lessons mentioned below. The school will ensure that pupils are given information appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Effective RSE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain respectful, safe and caring relationships. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Through our RSE curriculum, we aim to:

- ensure that RSE is fully integrated into the PSHE and Science curriculum and not isolated, taken out of context or over-emphasised in any way;
- foster self-esteem and respect for others as the cornerstone of good health education and of therefore good relationship and sex education;
- encourage schools to provide a RSE programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the children;
- nurture a partnership between caring adults – governors, teachers, other staff and parents – to ensure sensitive support for children and young people as they grow and mature;
- ensure children have the ability to accept their own and others' sexuality;
- encourage children to enjoy relationships based upon mutual trust and respect, free from any abuse;
- generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion can take place without embarrassment;

- avoid sexual stereotyping and sexual discrimination;
- adopt a whole school approach to RSE.

1. Context

- 1.1. Our primary schools recognise that a planned, appropriate and sensitive approach to the provision of sex education is a fundamental entitlement of all our pupils. This policy statement will be continually developed in consultation with parents, pupils and governors, to reflect that the schools play a supportive and complementary role to that of parents in preparing pupils to meet maturely, the challenges of adult life.
- 1.2. The aim of the RSE policy is to clarify the provision of RSE to all pupils (including education about growth, puberty, reproduction, and sexuality) in line with the schools' underpinning Christian values and as set out in the guidance published by the Department for Education in 2019. Relationship and sex education is delivered through the PSHE and other appropriate elements of the curriculum.
- 1.3. This policy statement is designed to be complementary to, and supportive of, the role of parents in educating their children about sexuality and relationships. It recognises that the prime responsibility for bringing up children rests with parents/carers.
- 1.4. We aim to teach RSE in the context of the schools' vision and values framework and in the belief that:
 - it is an integral part of the learning process, beginning in childhood and continuing into adult life;
 - it should be provided for all children and young people including those; with physical, learning or emotional difficulties;
 - it should encourage consideration of values, moral issues, sexuality, personal relationships and the development of communication and decision-making skills;
 - it should foster self-esteem, self-awareness, the skills to avoid and resist unwanted sexual experiences and a sense of moral responsibility;
 - RSE is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process;
 - children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies and learn about their responsibilities to others;
 - it is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect and taught in the context of marriage and family life.
- 1.5. Although not compulsory, RSE **at these primaries** will include elements of sex education. Primary schools are encouraged by the Department of Education to deliver Sex Education that ensures that children are prepared for the changes adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born. Health Education, which will also be made statutory from 2020, covers the key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body. Pupils will receive stand-alone sex education sessions in Year 5 **and/or** Year 6. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that children know how babies are born, how their bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women. We always teach these with due regard for the emotional development of the children.
- 1.6. RSE is normally delivered by class teachers and high quality resources will support our RSE provision. These resources will be regularly reviewed. We will ensure RSE is

matched to the needs of our pupils by continuously monitoring and assessing the pupils existing knowledge and understanding, which will inform future planning.

Roles and Responsibilities

2. The role of parents

- 2.1. The primary role in children's RSE lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our schools through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we:
 - inform parents about the school's sex education policy and practice;
 - answer any questions that parents may have about the sex education programme for their child;
 - take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSE in the school.
- 2.2. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from any teaching of statutory content. However, parents do have the right to withdraw their children from those aspects of sex education, not included in the Science Curriculum or statutory RSE content.
- 2.3. If parents/carers do request their child be removed from these lessons, then their child will be provided with alternative work, linked with the PSHE programme, and be invited to join another class for that session. A register of any such pupils will be kept and distributed to all teachers involved. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the **Director of Primaries** who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. Once a child has been withdrawn, they will not take part in the RSE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

3. The role of the Director of Primaries

- 3.1. It is the responsibility of the Director of Primaries to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our RSE policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Director of Primaries' responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.
- 3.2. Along with the governing body, the Director of Primaries will support the design of a programme of study which ensures that the central aims of this RSE policy are covered and which meet the needs of pupils in their individual school. In doing this, the governing body and Director of Primaries will have regard to guidance on teaching styles, appropriate curriculum content and the age and maturity of the pupils.
- 3.3. The Director of Primaries may liaise with external agencies regarding the school RSE programme, and ensure that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy, and that they work within this framework and that of the school safeguarding policies.

4. The role of the pupil

- 4.1. Pupils need to engage in the learning process with age appropriate maturity and sensitivity.

- 4.2. Pupils will have to apply their learning to ensure they make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1. Teachers conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they have been a victim of abuse. In these circumstances the teacher will talk to the child as a matter of urgency. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw their concerns to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the school. The DSL will then deal with the matter in line with the Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy.

6. Implementation

- 6.1. The programme will teach about relationships, love and care as well as reproduction. It may be necessary to link RSE with issues of peer pressure and other risk-taking behaviour, such as drugs, smoking and alcohol, and ensure that young people understand how the law applies to sexual relationships.
- 6.2. Teachers have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils. RSE will be undertaken within the broad framework of the schools' core underpinning Christian values. The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence the teaching of RSE within the PSHE framework.
- 6.3. It is expected that a programme will be taught in Years 5 and 6, for pupils moving to secondary school which should include:
 - changes in the body related to puberty, such as periods and voice breaking;
 - when these changes are likely to happen and what issues may cause young people anxiety and how they can deal with these; and
 - how a baby is conceived and born.
- 6.4. Because the onset of menstruation can be alarming for girls if they are not prepared, our primary schools will introduce puberty in Year 4 and will ensure that our pupils know how to make requests for sanitary protection.

7. Delivery of RSE

- 7.1. RSE lessons are taught by the school teaching team and may be carried out in a variety of different ways within the PSHE curriculum.
- 7.2. Certain lessons are compulsory under the National Curriculum in Science and are excluded from the right of parents to withdraw their children.
- 7.3. RSE will not be isolated, taken out of context or over-emphasised in any way.

8. Sensitive issues

- 8.1 Staff members are aware that views around RSE issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all RSE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to a different opinion.

- 8.2 Both formal and informal RSE Education arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s) concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed individually later. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are concerned.
- 8.3 Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience. Teachers will be prepared to handle personal issues arising from the work, to deal sensitively with, and to follow up appropriately, disclosures made in a group or individual setting. Teachers will take all reasonable, practical steps to ensure that, where political or controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. Teachers will adopt strategies that seek to avoid bias on their part and will teach pupils how to recognise bias and evaluate evidence. Teachers will seek to establish a classroom climate in which all pupils are free from any fear of expressing reasonable points of view that contradict those held either by their class teachers or their peers.
- 8.4 Due to the nature of RSE education, pupils' learning may result in them seeking advice or support on a specific personal issue. Teachers cannot offer complete confidentiality; it is important for everyone's safety that teachers and pupils are clear about what can and cannot be kept confidential. It is also very important for external contributors, including school nurses, to be clear about these rules and that whilst working in the classroom, they are bound by the school's confidentiality policy, not their own. If this person believes that the child is at risk or in danger, they should immediately bring this to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will take action as laid down in the Child Protection Policy. All staff members are familiar with the policy and know the identity of the member of staff with responsibility for Child Protection issues. The child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The child will be supported by the teacher throughout the process.

9. Language

- 9.1 During all RSE lessons across KS1 and KS2, the correct terms for all body parts and functions will be used. Sex-related slang words will be clarified in a factual way and it is made clear to pupils which words are potentially offensive and that from this point onwards, the correct terms will be used.

10. Pupil access to help and support

- 10.1 The schools display ChildLine posters, and information about any agencies that support the welfare of children is held in the main office. Girls who start their periods at school are given confidential advice and support by members of staff. Girls are aware of the provision of sanitary protection which can be obtained from the school office.

11. Equal opportunities

- 11.1. Our school believes that RSE Education should meet the needs of all pupils, answer appropriate questions and offer support. This should be delivered regardless of

their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Homophobic bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively in line with our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.

11.2. The school liaises with parents/carers on this issue to reassure them of the content and context.

11.3. The Equality Act 2010 covers the way the curriculum is delivered, as schools and other education providers must ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Schools have a duty under the Equality Act to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Inclusive RSE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promote understanding and respect. The Department for Education has produced advice on The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE, 2014b).

12. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

12.1. Pupils with special educational needs will be given the opportunity to fully participate in RSE lessons, and a differentiated programme will be provided where necessary, to ensure that all pupils gain a full understanding. As far as is appropriate, pupils with special educational needs should follow the same RSE education programme as all other students.

12.2. Careful consideration should be given concerning the level of differentiation needed, and in some cases the content or delivery will have to be adapted. Teachers and/or learning support assistants should work with individual pupils where required, and if appropriate. It should not be the school's policy to withdraw pupils with special educational needs from PSHE education to catch up on other national curriculum subjects: these aspects of personal and social development are as important to all pupils as their academic achievement.

12.3. We recognise the right for all pupils to have access to RSE education learning which meets their needs.

13. Online and social media

13.1. Children and young people are growing up in a culture where technology and social media are important and have created more opportunity for sharing personal information. RSE should encourage pupils to think about what they want others to know and see about them – whether on or offline. Teachers should address the core issues of safety, privacy, peer influence and personal responsibility at an age appropriate level.

14. Visiting speakers

14.1. The schools may liaise with external agencies regarding their RSE programme, and will ensure that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy, and that they work within this framework. Occasionally, appropriate and suitably experienced and/or knowledgeable visitors from outside school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSE in school.

- Visitors are invited into school because of the particular expertise or contribution they are able to make;
- All visitors are familiar with and understand the school's RSE policy and work within it;
- All input to PSHE/RSE lessons are part of a planned programme and negotiated and agreed with staff in advance;

- All visitors are supervised/supported by a member of staff at all times;
- The input of visitors is monitored and evaluated by staff and pupils. This evaluation informs future planning.

15. Confidentiality

- 15.1. Teachers are required to adhere to The Downland Federation's statement on confidentiality as set out in employee contracts of employment.
- 15.2. Pupils should be reassured that their best interests will be maintained. However, teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. If confidentiality has to be broken, the pupil should be informed first and then supported, as appropriate.
- 15.3. It is only in the most exceptional circumstances that the school should be in the position of having to handle information without parental knowledge. Where younger children are involved, this will be grounds for serious concern and child protection issues will need to be addressed.
- 15.4. Pupils should be encouraged to talk to their parents and given support to do so. If there is evidence of abuse, the Downland Federation Child Protection Policy should be adhered to.