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| **Last updated:** | March 2021 |
| **Date for Renewal:** | March 2023 |

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

March 2021



***Loving to Learn, Learning to Love***

**Overall aims and Rationale**

We at Fishponds Church of England Academy recognise that our school is a diverse community, which welcomes children and staff from all over the world. We take great pride in celebrating the vast range of cultures, ethnicity and beliefs, whilst upholding our Christian values that are at the core of everything we do.

Our Vision statement ***‘Loving to Learn, Learning to Love’*** is based on the Bible text   
1 Corinthians 13:

*4Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant 5or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. 7It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

*8Love never ends.*

It is this vision that underpins our core purpose and values. Love is the basis for all that we do and we teach our children the following 12 values for life which, when followed, will help support and enable all to show love for themselves and others.

We undertake to follow the principles in the Church of England Charter for faith sensitive and inclusive relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (RSHE)<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/201911///RSHE%20Principles%20and%20Charter_0.pdf>

The ethos and approach to the teaching of RSHE at Fishponds C of E Academy complies with the Equality Act 2010. This policy should be viewed in conjunction with the following Academy policies; Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Safeguarding, SEND and the DBAT Equality Policy. Further information about RSHE can be found on our website under Curriculum Tab- PSHE and RSHE.

1. Introduction

This school’s RSHE policy is based on the government guidance documentation:   
‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education *Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers’* (published in June 2019)*.* This is statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

* 1. **Intention statement**

At Fishponds C of E Academy, PSHE and RSHE are rooted in our ethos of love: loving oneself and loving one another. The teaching of PSHE and RSHE allows for the recognition that we are all different and offers a chance to celebrate our uniqueness. It helps pupils to flourish as members of the school and wider community by teaching them awareness of emotions, healthy habits, how to keep safe and maintain positive relationships. Without PSHE and RSHE pupils may not develop as many tools for staying safe physically, mentally and online. It is particularly important because it supports children to act with love and respect, both towards themselves and towards others which, in turn, sets them up for living safe, healthy and fulfilling lives in the future. 

* 1. **Implementation**

RSHE stands for Relationships, Sex and Health education. We teach this within our PSHE curriculum, which also includes personal, social and economic education. This policy aims to detail our approach to the Relationships and Sex aspects of the curriculum, of which, the Relationships curriculum content is now statutory.   
  
For the majority of PSHE and RSHE teaching we use the JIGSAW scheme of work which begins by laying foundations in the Early Years and gradually builds on pupils’ knowledge as they move through the key stages. JIGSAW is designed as a whole school approach through which children acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives – now and in the future. The scheme considers the needs of the ‘whole child’ and is set within the context of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. JIGSAW also links with the Science curriculum when teaching children about life cycles, babies and puberty in the ‘Changing Me’ unit in term 6. All JIGSAW sex education lessons are delivered in an age- and stage- appropriate way. On more than one occasion, parent focus groups have been involved with selecting and approving these resources.

Fishponds CE Academy adopted the JIGSAW scheme of work for PSHE in May 2018. A working group of parents representing different faiths and cultures, members of the Local Board and school leaders consulted on the rationale behind the scheme of work, studied the teaching plans and resources. It was unanimously agreed that this would form the basis of the school’s Relationship and Sex education. In February 2020, another parent group was consulted again about the changes to the RSHE curriculum, the new JIGSAW resources and our ongoing approach to teaching RSHE throughout every year group in the school. During the meeting, and subsequent feedback survey, these parents were in agreement that the resources were suitable, relevant and age appropriate.   
  
In addition to JIGSAW we teach RSHE and PSHE through day to day practice, such as through our Behaviour Policy, We also have annual events such as Online Safety week, a Safety Day which includes the NSPCC PANTs rule and Anti-Bullying week which explores relationships (friendships) in more detail. Please see below for further detail as to the content that each area includes.  
 **2 Curriculum information for Relationships and Health education**

**2.1 Relationships education**

Relationships education topics serve to empower children to be able to treat themselves, their bodies, their friends, peers and their families with respect and gain a deep understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This area of the curriculum is statutory so parents and carers do not have the right to withdraw their children. The main curriculum areas covered by Relationships education in primary schools are:  
  
**Families and people who care for me** – how families can give love, security and stability, how families look different from one another but are characterised by love and care, healthy family relationships, trust, and how to seek support if needed etc.

**Caring friendships** – characteristics of healthy friendships, resolving conflicts and repairing friendships, judging when to trust or not trust somebody, respect for one another, the importance of permission seeking and giving within friendships and other relationships etc. **Online relationships –** how to keep safe online including: sharing of data online, knowing that people may pretend to be someone they are not and how to recognise and report harmful content etc. **Being Safe –** boundaries in friendships, recognising and reporting feeling unsafe, knowing that your body belongs to you, where to get advice or report abuse etc.  
 **2.2 Health (Physical health and mental wellbeing) education**Health education is taught through our JIGSAW scheme as well as delivery of the national curriculum for primary Science and Physical Education. We cover topics of: how to stay healthy through fitness, hygiene and a balanced diet, medicine safety, the changing body including bodily changes at puberty such as menstruation. This area of the curriculum is statutory so parents and carers do not have the right to withdraw their children. The main curriculum areas covered by Health and Mental Wellbeing education come under these headings:

**Mental wellbeing** – that there are a range of emotions and how to talk about these and manage them, simple self-care techniques and the impact of physical activity on mental health, that it is common for people to experience ill mental health and where and how to seek support etc. **Internet safety and harms –** the positives of using the internet, the benefits of rationing time spent online, the impacts of social media, that the internet can be a negative place where trolling and abuse could take place etc. **Physical health and fitness –** the mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle, the risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity) etc. **Healthy eating –** what constitutes a healthy diet, the risks of eating unhealthily and other behaviours such as alcohol consumption etc.

**Drugs alcohol and tobacco -** the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking etc. **Health and prevention –** the importance of good quality sleep, sun safety, dental health and personal hygiene etc. **Basic first aid** – concepts of basic first aid, how to make a clear call to the emergency services, etc.  
**Key facts about the changing adolescent body -** puberty and the changing adolescent body, including physical and emotional changes, menstrual wellbeing and the key facts about the menstrual cycle.

Lessons that discuss the changing adolescent body begin to take place in Year 3 and 4. Children will be informed that their bodies will change as they grow older and that this is to prepare them to be able to create a baby once they are adults. The Science curriculum will begin to explore conception and gestation in simple terms. The level of detail which is delivered in these lessons will gradually build each year, whilst remaining at an age appropriate level. Lessons on menstruation, and other bodily changes during puberty, will be delivered in more specific detail in Years 5 and 6 with time and space dedicated to answering children’s questions and ensuring that they are prepared for these changes.

**3 Curriculum information for Sex education (taught at Year 6)**

**3.1 What does Sex education include?**

In Year 6 (terms 5 and 6) Sex education takes place over a short sequence of lessons.   
It is taught alongside our JIGSAW unit of ‘Changing Me’ and includes:

* one lesson where the year group are split into separate sex groups to explore issues that will impact them as they experience puberty (boys: wet dreams, erections, masturbation, girls: hormones, menstruation, breast development)
* a chance for girls to explore sanitary products
* both sexes being taught about what each other will go through in terms of these bodily changes to ensure awareness about what the other sex experiences
* lessons on the need for increased hygiene practices during puberty and adulthood
* lessons which recap and explore conception and gestation in more detail than previous years
* a brief, age appropriate explanation of how the sperm meets the egg via intercourse
* Acknowledgement that sex is something that happens between two consenting adults, and should be part of an intimate, loving relationship, such as within a marriage or long term relationship.
* that the age of consent is sixteen and that it is illegal to have sex any younger than this age
* the chance for all children to ask questions anonymously and receive a factual, balanced answer from their teachers, pitched at an appropriate level for their stage of development

By teaching children about how their bodies will change and develop, children will be prepared with the knowledge that these changes are absolutely normal and happen to everyone.

**3.2 What teaching methods are used in Sex education lessons taught at Year 6?**

* Teachers set a group agreement or ground rules with pupils to ensure that an atmosphere is created where pupils feel able to ask questions, discuss concerns, talk about feelings and relationships, but do not discuss or ask private information of each other or the teacher.
* Questions are answered honestly and sensitively, appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. In Key Stage 2 classes we provide a question box so that pupils can anonymously ask questions and these are then answered by the class teacher. This enables the teacher to make a judgement about how best to answer the questions posed. It may be that further advice may need to be taken before addressing some of the issues raised or that some questions may not be a suitable one for group discussion, some may be best to discuss with parent /carers first.
* Resources or leaflets are chosen to ensure that they are appropriate to the age and maturity of pupils. They take into account equality of opportunity through their use of language, cultural attitudes, family make-up and images, including body image, avoiding stereotyping, racism and sexism.
* A variety of teaching methods are used that enable pupils to participate and reflect on their learning including role play, quizzes, pair and small group work, mixing groups so that pupils work with a range of peers. We also use case studies, stories, puppets and role plays to help de-personalise discussions and help pupils gain confidence to talk and listen to each other.
* On the whole pupils are taught in mixed groups to ensure that boys and girls learn the same information. However, sometimes it is useful to include time when single sex groups can discuss issues with a teacher of the same gender. This is mostly applicable when they learn about body changes through puberty and about reproduction.
* The RSHE policy reflects and is line with our equal opportunities policy and the school ensures that the RSHE teaching programme is an inclusive one and is appropriate and relevant to all pupils, including those with SEN and disabilities.

For more information about what is covered in these lessons, and the opportunity to ask questions, we encourage parent /carers to attend the school’s RSHE parent drop in which takes place each year in term 5 before the delivery of the Changing me section of Jigsaw. Information can be viewed at any time on the school’s website under Curriculum – RSHE and PSHE pages.  
  
**3.3 Is RSHE/Sex education compulsory?**The Relationships and Health aspects of the RSHE curriculum are statutory and therefore parents/carers cannot withdraw their children from these lessons. This includes all information given in regard to the adolescent changing body, as well as conception and gestation, which fall under the statutory Science curriculum.  
  
The Sex education lessons taught in Year 6 are not compulsory, however, theRelationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education government guidance documentation (published in June 2019) describes that, whilst Sex education is not statutory:

*…it is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils’ ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The Department continues to recommend therefore 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 and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born.*

By creating a safe space for children to ask questions, understand the scientific facts about reproduction, and equipping children with the knowledge that sex should only ever take place between two consenting adults in a loving, long term relationship, our aim is that children will be prepared with the foundational knowledge they need for their secondary school education and to keep themselves safe.

**3.4 The Right to Withdraw**

If children do not have the chance for Sex education in school it is likely that they will hear information about sex from the media, internet and/or from other children. This information could potentially be misleading or confusing. It may be safer for your child to learn from experienced and sensitive teaching staff, within a context which concentrates on building self-esteem and confidence to make healthy, informed choices.

If a parent/carer wishes their child to be withdrawn from Sex education lessons in Year 6, they should make the request in writing with reasons for withdrawal and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard, although we work hard to provide parents with adequate information before their decision is made. We would recommend discussing this with the child’s teacher and/or the Principal before making a final decision.

**4 Further information about RSHE at Fishponds Academy**

**4.1 Who teaches RSHE?**

RSHE will be taught by the class teacher but sometimes health professionals or other visitors will help deliver RSHE, such as the school nurse or a visit from a pregnant mum or a parent with their baby.   
  
If visitors are involved in RSHE we will:

* plan and evaluate their contribution as part of the school’s RSE teaching programme
* provide the visitor with an up-to-date copy of the school's RSE Policy and ensure they adhere to it
* ensure that the class teacher is present throughout the lesson, taking responsibility for class management
* follow up in later lessons

**4.2 How do we ensure that we are inclusive?**  
  
Teachers ensure that the content, approach and use of inclusive language reflect the diversity of the school community, and help all pupils feel valued and included, regardless of their gender, ability, disability, experiences and family background.

* Teachers do not discuss details of their personal relationships with pupils.
* Teachers are sensitive to the issues of different types of relationships. Promoting inclusion and reducing discrimination are part of RSHE throughout the school and reflect our Equality policy. When teaching about relationships and families we also include same sex relationships.
* Homophobic and transphobic references and homophobic and transphobic actions and bullying are not tolerated in school and are challenged and dealt with as part of our commitment to promoting inclusion, gender equality and preventing bullying under the Equalities Act 2010. This is also in line with our school’s Promotion of British Values as part of SMSC. Click link here for our British Values page on our website. <https://www.fishpondschurchacademy.bristol.sch.uk/our-learning/our-school-values-and-british-values>
* Teaching about different families is part of RSHE and we aim to reflect the broad range of experiences amongst pupils and ensure all pupils feel their family is valued. We will emphasise the importance of strong and supportive relationships, including marriage for family life and bringing up children.

**4.3 How are lessons adapted for children who have additional needs?**

Where needed, RSHE is differentiated to meet the needs of pupils and specialist resources may be used to respond to their individual needs. In some cases pupils have individual support or work in small groups with a TA or learning mentor. Resources are adapted to meet the needs of every child in the class. We use ‘social stories’ for children with particular needs such as autism to ensure that they build their understanding through use of simple sentences, visuals and repetition. All children will be given the opportunity to ask questions and receive tailored answers, appropriate to their level of understanding. Examples of the sort of social stories that we might use can be found on the RSHE information page on the school website alongside further information to support parents/carers to continue discussions at home.

**5 Consultation about our RSHE curriculum**

**5.1 Involving children**

To ensure that our RSHE programme meets the needs of the children in our school, the school will use pupil voice to review and evaluate the programme regularly. Before adopting the JIGSAW scheme of work, School Council were consulted in an age appropriate way.

5.2 The role of parents

The school is well aware that the primary role in children’s relationships and sex education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. We do our best to find out about cultural views which may affect the RSHE curriculum and will try to balance parental views with our commitment to comprehensive RSHE and equality.

Fishponds CE Academy agrees to:

* Inform parents about the school’s Relationship, Sex, Health Education policy and practice
* Ensure information is available on the Fishponds CE Academy website for parents and carers to view
* Offer opportunities for parents to explore, ask questions and feedback about the resources being used to teach RSHE lessons
* Answer any questions that parents may have about the relationships, sex and health education of their child; we believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing body and their increasing responsibilities

6 Confidentiality and Safeguarding Children Procedures

Although RSHE is not about personal disclosures and personal issues it is possible that a child may disclose personal information. Staff understand that they cannot promise children absolute confidentiality, and children know this too.

If teachers are concerned in any way that a child is at risk of sexual or any other kind of abuse, they will talk to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and follow the school’s Safeguarding and Child protection Procedures. If a child discloses to a teacher that they are sexually active or are considering sexual activity, then this would be viewed as a child protection issue.

**7 Staff Training to deliver RSHE**

It is important that RSHE is taught by teachers that are knowledgeable, skilled and confident. We will ensure that teachers are trained to teach RSHE.

Training could include:

* What to teach and when
* Leading discussions about attitudes and values
* Information updates
* Facilitating group discussions
* Answering questions
* Managing sensitive and controversial issues

8 Monitoring and review

The PSHE co-ordinator monitors the teacher’s planning and delivery of PSHE, including Relationships, Sex and Health Education. Children and staff are regularly involved in evaluating the RSHE programme.

The Values and Communities Committee of the Academic Council monitors our Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the Academic Council, as necessary, if the policy needs modification. The Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the Relationships, Sex and Health Education programme, and makes a record of all such comments. Fishponds CE Academy regularly reviews its policies and procedures in the light of any new guidance or legislation available.

**9 Disseminating this Policy**

A copy of the policy is on the school website and can be downloaded from there. Any parent requiring a hard copy of this policy can request it. When this policy is reviewed, parents are informed through the school’s newsletter.

Date policy last reviewed and updated: March 2021

Review: When guidance and legislation from DFE is provided.

**Key Reference Documents :**

1. ‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education *Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers’* (published in June 2019)*.*
2. DFE guidance for RSHE 2020 <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908013/Relationships_Education__Relationships_and_Sex_Education__RSE__and_Health_Education.pdf>
3. Guidance on RSHE from the Church of England.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-11///RSHE%20Principles%20and%20Charter_0.pdf>

1. Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2020 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
2. Equality Act 2010

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

1. SEND Code of Practice 0-25

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

1. Government guidance of tackling bullying <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>
2. Promotion of British Values as part of SMSC in schools DFE Nov 2014 <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf>
3. Mental Health and behaviour in schools DFE Nov 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

1. Guidance on dealing with sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools. DFE May 2018.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>