Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Introduction

The Blake School is a Church of England school, and all RSE is set in a context which is consistent with the school's Christian ethos and as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. RSE is seen as a valuable part of the school's commitment to fostering pupil's wellbeing, developing their resilience and character and ensuring that they know how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a safe and positive way.

Context

RSE is taught within a framework of Christian values. The school's heritage provides a solid foundation for teaching regarding how to live well as a community, to be respectful in relationships and to live together to enable the flourishing of all. It is the Christian understanding that sex is a gift of God as part of creation and therefore whilst sex education is used to inform children about sexual issues, it is done with regard to matters of morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions.

Sensitivity and respect are shown to all children when teaching about personal relationships and sexual activity. RSE upholds Christian values regarding marriage and relationships, while being mindful of and sensitive to the circumstances of pupils and the variety of expressions of family life that they experience.

Pupils are given the opportunity to explore their own attitudes, values and beliefs and to develop an individual moral code that will guide their actions, within the understanding of the right of others to frame and hold their own views and with an expectation of respect.

What is Relationships and Sex Education?

The Education Reform Act (Section 1) states that schools should provide a curriculum which "promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils...and of society; and prepare such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life." RSE is an important dimension of this statutory entitlement.

RSE is an umbrella term for all the teaching and learning offered to pupils to -

- enable them to develop the skills needed for maintaining healthy and sustainable relationships
- enable them to make informed decisions,
- to understand the importance of being safe
- to understand the importance of their own wellbeing
- to understand their own and others sexuality.

RSE is part of lifelong learning. It is about understanding the value and importance of friendships, developing stable and loving relationships, respect, love, and the importance of family life. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes.

Principles of Relationships and Sex education at The Blake School

- Inclusive Christian principles and values, emphasising respect, compassion, love, care and forgiveness.
- The belief in the absolute worth of all people and the unconditional, infinite love of God.
- It is part of a wider and age appropriate, social, personal, spiritual and moral education process.

- Relationships bring responsibilities and consequences.
- Violence and exploitation are always wrong.
- Healthy and stable relationships are central to a flourishing community.
- Education is key to ensuring that children are able to make informed, well thought out and reflective decisions in relation to their own health, wellbeing and safety and that of others.
- Everyone is responsible for their own behaviour and no one is ever responsible for any violence or abuse that they experience.

Aims

Through implicit and explicit learning experiences children will learn -

- Vocabulary for talking appropriately about health and wellbeing, friendships and relationships.
- About physical and emotional development.
- About the significance of marriage and families as key building blocks of community and society.
- That the sanctity of marriage is an important belief in Christian teaching and practice and should be based on love and mutual respect
- That the culture of advertising and the media influences their views, behaviour and understanding concerning sexuality.
- The characteristics of healthy friendships and relationships.
- To have respect for their own and other people's bodies.
- How to protect themselves.
- That it is important to build positive relationships that involve trust and respect.
- To use technology responsibly in order to keep themselves safe, whilst respecting their own and others' well-being and integrity.
- How to foster their own health, wellbeing and self-esteem.
- That questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment.
- To avoid sexual stereotyping and sexual discrimination and prevent prejudice.
- How to manage conflict, report concerns and seek help or advice from others if needed.

How is RSE provided?

Children need to be given accurate information in order to develop skills which enable them to understand difference, to respect themselves and others and also for the purpose of preventing and removing prejudice.

A planned, age-appropriate and progressive programme of RSE gradually equips children with the knowledge and skills that they need to live healthily, build strong relationships and keep safe as well as preparing them for adult life. It teaches children the skills they need to fully manage the natural physical and emotional changes that will happen to them as they grow and mature into healthy, confident and responsible adults. In line with national recommendations, RSE will be delivered as an integrated part of the R.E., PSHE and Science curriculum, it will not be isolated, taken out of context, or over-emphasised in any way. RSE is taught to each year group, starting in Reception.

Overview of Relationships Programme.

- personal hygiene
- challenging and avoiding sexual stereotyping
- considering media messages
- developing a positive body image
- changing relationships as we grow up
- aspirations and how we might see our futures

- different types of relationships
- how to find help and support
- developing emotional literacy
- peer influence and peer pressure
- considering rights and responsibilities
- raising self-esteem and increasing self-awareness
- exploring friendships making, valuing and maintaining them
- respect: challenging assumptions, stereotyping and prejudice
- communication skills saying 'no' and being assertive, dealing with conflict, negotiation,
- The characteristics of healthy family life
- Staying safe, including online
- The importance of healthy living and mental wellbeing
- The physical and emotional changes of puberty and growing up

Overview of the Sex Education programme

- human sex and reproduction
- naming sexual organs
- sexual health

Right of withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education programme, except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum. If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from sex education lessons, they should discuss this with the headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not want their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of parents in this regard. Once a child has been withdrawn, they cannot take part in the Sex Education programme until the parent notifies school that they wish their request for withdrawal to be removed. The school will ensure that appropriate provision is made for children who are withdrawn from Sex Education, with particular emphasis placed on preserving the child's dignity.

Organisation of Relationships Education

RSE is delivered by the pupils' class teacher and through many areas of the curriculum (See Appendix 1). It may be delivered in mixed or in single sex gender groups, depending on the topics being covered. Relationships Education is seen as fundamental to the school's ethos and underpins much of what is talked about in Collective Worship, during circle times and as staff support children in their friendships.

The science curriculum covers specific knowledge about how the body changes and develops through puberty.

Organisation of Sex Education

Sex education is delivered in discrete lessons. Methods of delivery may include whole class discussion, independent learning or video/DVD discussion and a presentation/ talk by a health professional.

If a teacher is extremely uncomfortable with the idea of teaching Sex Education, they may opt out from doing so and another teacher or professional well known to the children will deliver the programme instead. This is offered as an option because extreme discomfort with the topic is likely to impact on the quality of the delivery. In this event we would support the teacher through training and providing opportunities to observe lessons other more confident teachers deliver.

All parents and carers of children in Year 5 and 6 are informed of the content of the Sex Education programme of lessons, to explain what the issues are, how they are taught, and to provide them with the opportunity to see the materials the school uses in its teaching.

The three main elements of RSE:

1. Attitudes and values:

- Learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral considerations.
- Learning the value of healthy friendships.
- Learning the value of family life, marriage, and stable and loving relationships.
- 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 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 and to stay safe.

3. Knowledge and understanding:

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- Understanding mental health, emotions and relationships.
- Learning how to build and maintain positive friendships and relationships.
- Where to find help, advice and support

The Blake School has in the past adhered to the Healthy School Standard, promoting health education. The principles of the scheme continue to be adhered to and therefore the school:

- consults with parents in relation to the RSE policy;
- trains teachers to teach sex education;
- listens to the views of the children in the school regarding sex education;
- looks positively at any local initiatives that support staff in providing a quality RSE programme.

Homosexuality

Prejudice, victimisation and the use of homosexual slang as a form of abuse are contrary to our schools' values and are not tolerated. In the same way that all prejudicial behaviour and attitudes are addressed, the school will take action in the event of either explicit or implicit homophobia

Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that sex and relationship education is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs. As part of the curriculum, our teachers will deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support.

Menstruation, contraception and abortion

Alongside information about puberty, information will be shared preparing children for menstruation and making adequate and sensitive arrangements to help girls prepare for and cope with menstruation.

Teachers will not give personal or individual advice on contraception. Different types of contraception may be dealt with alongside information about agencies offering help and advice and as part of discussions regarding sexual intercourse.

Abortion is not an explicit part of the school's RSE curriculum. Where a direct question is asked, any answer will present a carefully balanced view, recognising the range of cultural and religious beliefs and the complex moral issues.

Online and social media

RSE will encourage pupils to think about what they want others to know and see about them – whether on or offline. The curriculum will address the core issues of safety, privacy, peer influence and personal responsibility.

'Sexting' and other self-made images and messages of a sexual nature raise particular issues of safety, privacy, peer influence and personal responsibility. Specific work about 'sexting' will be addressed in RSE as soon as it is identified as a potential issue. Teaching covers communication skills, attitudes and values, the law, acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and how to seek help.

Consent

RSE lays the foundations for developing empathy and understanding between girls and boys, young men and young women. Pupils should be encouraged to consider the importance of equality and respect within friendships and relationships, and to develop positive, non-violent behaviour.

While men and women can be both victims and perpetrators, evidence shows that girls are disproportionately likely to experience pressure, coercion or violence from boys and men. They should learn to recognise physical, sexual and emotional violence and how to get help if they need it.

The law states that children under the age of 13 can never legally give consent and therefore anyone engaging in sexual activity with a child within the school is breaking the law. Sexual activity involving children within the school will always result in a child protection referral.

Pornography

Teaching will make clear that pornography is not the best way to learn about sex because it does not reflect real life, and can therefore be worrying, confusing and frightening for young people. Pupils are made aware that some pornography – child abuse images, for example – is illegal for any age. RSE will enable all young people to understand pornography's influence on gender expectations of sex.

The Role of Parents

This policy statement is designed to be complementary to, and supportive of, the role of parents in educating their children about sexuality and relationships. We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. In promoting this objective staff:

- inform parents about the school's RSE policy and practice so that the parents and school can work together to support their children. We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages.
- answer any questions that parents may have about this policy including sex education;
- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the specific arrangements for sex education within the school;

The Role of Other Members of the Community

Occasionally, appropriate and suitably experienced professionals from outside school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSE in school. These visitors are invited into school because of the particular

expertise or contribution they are able to make. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the primary health nurse and other health professionals, provide valuable support with the sex education programme.

The following guidelines are followed;

- All visitors are familiar with and understand the school's RSE policy and work within it.
- All input to PSHE lessons is 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.
- Health professionals are bound by their professional codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with individual pupils but, in a classroom situation, they follow the Trust's Confidentiality Policy.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding Children Procedures

Pupils should be reassured that their best interests will be maintained. However, teachers cannot offer or guarantee confidentiality. If confidentiality has to be broken, the pupil should be informed and then supported, as appropriate. As appropriate pupils should be encouraged to talk to their parents and given support to do so.

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.

Teachers conduct sex education lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. If a child raises any concerns during these lessons related to child protection, teachers will inform the designated member of staff for child protection and safeguarding. The school's Child Protection and safeguarding policy will be followed, and any actions taken will be in accordance with it.

The Role of the Headteacher

Relationships Education

It is the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues and questions with sensitivity.

Sex Education

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about the sex education curriculum. The headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school's sex education programme and ensures that all adults who are working with children on these issues are aware of the school's policy and the requirement to work within it.

Resources

RSE resources are chosen and checked for

- being inclusive
- positive, healthy and unbiased messages
- age appropriateness
- promoting positive values
- accuracy
- being up to date

This RSE Policy has clear links with other school policies aimed at promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

APPENDIX 1 - RSE Coverage

The table below sets out the broad curriculum areas as they are covered across the year groups and throughout the school. Each year group has detailed curriculum plans that unpick the broad headlines below.

Much of the school's RSE curriculum is covered implicitly and explicitly within Collective Worship, circle times and the conversations that form part of the day-to-day of school life. These conversations reflect our values and underpin our school and everything that we teach.

Our every day conversations with children take place in the light of children's experiences in school and therefore explore the importance of friendship and how to put things right where they have gone wrong, they endorse the uniqueness and value of every individual in our school and promote self-esteem.

Children's mental health is always of concern and Collective Worship often reflects on the importance of caring for yourself and how to promote wellbeing. These messages are often reinforced in weekly newsletters to parents encouraging conversations at home that encourage positive mental health.

Year Group	Area covered via Science	Area covered via RE and Values	Area covered via PSHE	Areas covered by Sex Education
Reception	How to keep healthy – foods,	Differences between people and	Family Links	
	exercise etc.	cultures and how we respect the	Hygiene	
		differences.	Healthy living	
			Citizenship	
			Anti-bullying	
Year 1	Ourselves -The senses and how	Belonging – What it means to belong	Family Links	
	humans and animals move and grow.	to a family, class, school, community,	Playground games	
	Includes identifying main body parts.	faith.	Healthy living	
		Weddings – re-enact a Christian	Hygiene	
		wedding ceremony and learn about	Citizenship	
		the meaning of marriage and	Anti-bullying	
		commitment.		
		Family – people we care for and who		
		cares for us.		

		Health – being healthy and personal hygiene. Values education based on Christian values supporting relationships for life. Is everybody special? Is it important to belong?		
Year 2	Health and Growth -How animals, including humans grow (life stages), their basic needs and the importance of exercise, hygiene and healthy eating.	The parables Jesus told and what they teach us about our relationship with God and each other. Family – people we care for and who cares for us. Health – being healthy and personal hygiene. Values education based on Christian values supporting relationships for life. Being thankful	Accepting praise and criticism Personal power to do the right thing Making good choices and accepting consequences Managing anger Celebrating being 'me' and differences between people. Playground games Hygiene Anti-bullying	
Year 3	Animals -including human skeleton, the importance of a balanced diet.	Jesus' life, teachings and examples of how to live are embedded throughout the key stage.	Family Links Anti-bullying Internet safety Citizenship	
Year 4	Animals (including humans, teeth, eating, digestion/nutrition)	The Ten Commandments and their importance to keep us safe and happy in our relationships.	Family Links Anti-bullying Dealing with feelings and managing difficult feelings Internet safety	

			Citizenship	
			Power to choose	
Year 5	Animals – Describing the changes as	The responsibilities of free will in	Dealing with feelings and emotions	Puberty - how does your body
	humans develop from birth to old	every aspect of life.	Anti-bullying	change? (1)
	age including changes experienced in		Internet safety/staying safe	
	puberty, gestation periods of		Citizenship	
	humans and other animals.		Bodily changes and personal hygiene	
			What makes a good classmate?	
	Living things and habitats (Life cycles		What does respect look like in our	
	of plants and animals)		school, community and home?	
			What does it mean to have a growth	
			mindset?	
Year 6	Animals including humans- human	Life as a journey, Rites of passage,	Dealing with feelings –	Puberty - how does your body
	circulatory system.	The importance of commitment.	understanding feelings and emotions	change? (2)
	Impact of diet, exercise drugs and		Anti-bullying	Changing emotions
	lifestyle on human body.		Internet safety including the use of	Just the way you are
	Evolution		social media	Relationships
	Recognising that living things		Citizenship	Sex and human reproduction
	produce offspring of the same kind		Relationships and reproduction	
	bur offspring vary and are not		including birth	
	identical to their parents.			
			IMPS programme (Witney Hospital)	

APPENDIX 2

By the end of primary school -

Families and people who care for me	 Pupils should know - that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability. the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives. that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care. that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up. that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong. how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.
Caring relationships	 Pupils should know - how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends. the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties. that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right. how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.
Respectful relationships	Pupils should know - • the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs. • practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • the conventions of courtesy and manners. • the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. • that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority. • about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help. • what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.

	 the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.
Being safe	 what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context). about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact. how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know. how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult. how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so. where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

Mental wellbeing	 that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health. that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations. how to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings. how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate. the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness. simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests. isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support. that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing. where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
	 their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online). it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.
Internet safety	Pupils should know –
and harms	 that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits. about the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.

	 how to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private. why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted. that the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health. how to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.
	 where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.
Physical health	Pupils should know-
and fitness	 the characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle. the importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise. the risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity). how and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they
	are worried about their health.
Healthy eating	 Pupils should know – what constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content). the principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals. the characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).
Drugs, alcohol	Pupils should know –
and tobacco	 the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.
Health and	Pupils should know –
prevention	 how to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body. about safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun
	 damage, including skin cancer. the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn. about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist. about personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing. the facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination.
Basic first aid	Pupils should know –
Dasic III st alu	 how to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary. concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.
Changing,	Pupils should know –
adolescent body	 key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes. about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.

The tables are taken directly from the Department of Education 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. Statutory Guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers' dated 2019