



St Mary's CE Infant School
19 Church Green
Witney
Oxfordshire
OX28 4AZ



Relationships and Health Education Policy

St. Mary's Infant school is committed to inspiring every individual. We embed the Christian value of love across school life because we believe that a person who feels loved, secure and happy can flourish. We encourage everyone to achieve their potential, develop their talents, celebrate their uniqueness, and rejoice in their relationships with others.

'Do everything in love'
1 Corinthians 16:14

Approved by: / Governing Body

Date: Feb 2022

Last reviewed on: February 2022

Next review due by: March 2023



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Introduction:

At St Mary's Infants School, we have based our school's relationship and Health Relationship Education policy on the DfEE guidance document, Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (ref DfEE 0116/2000), taking out the elements suitable and appropriate for Infant aged children. The DFE document, Sex and Relationship Education, is defined as 'learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of stable and loving relationships, and care. At St Marys, we do not explicitly teach Sex Education but focus on Relationships. We do not use Sex and Relationship Education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation. We promote an awareness of the moral code and values which underpin all our work in school with a carefully age-related plan. (See below).

We have consulted with our parents, staff and children to arrive at this policy.

Aims/Objectives:

Children will be supported in developing the attitudes, skills and knowledge which will help them to have enduring, loving and fruitful relationships. We aim:

- To ensure that SRE is inclusive of and helpful to all pupils and all cultures. It will be based upon the knowledge of and sensitivity towards the needs of individual children and groups taking account of maturity, gender, culture and SEN.
- To teach that strong, mutually supportive and stable relationships are to the benefit of individuals and families and are the building blocks of the wider community.
- To teach children about the physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults.
- To provide children with the correct language and terminology to discuss the changes in their bodies and an awareness that other languages may be used.
- To help children to gain confidence in understanding and explaining, without embarrassment or shame, their feelings and relationships and the changes in their bodies.
- To impart knowledge so that children can understand and take responsibility for their own actions.
- To teach children to respect their own bodies and to understand that sexual activity is most properly expressed within the context of a faithful and stable relationship.
- To teach children to be aware of the breadth of human sexuality and the other patterns and forms of permanent, faithful and stable relationships that exist in our society and are recognised in law.
- To help children to keep safe from unwanted attention and to ensure that they know where to go for help and advice.
- To contribute to children's emotional health and well-being and, in particular, to understand their rights as human beings and the rights of others.
- To eliminate prejudice and stereotyping on the basis of gender, marital status or sexual orientation.



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Organisation:

We teach RHE in the context of the school's aims and values in the belief that:

- RHE should be taught in the context of committed relationships and family life;
- RHE is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process;
- Children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies;
- Children should learn about their responsibilities to others.
- It is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect;
- Children need to learn the importance of self-control.

Teaching and Learning Styles:

If children are to have good relationships, they need to understand their own feelings and motivations, their attitudes and beliefs and the impact they have on others. They need to respect other people's beliefs and to respect similarities and differences so long as these differences do not impact on the rights of others. The school and classroom will provide an environment which is safe, supportive and respectful. Children's views and needs will be respected and they will not be judged or ridiculed. Nobody will be expected to give details about their own experience and all discussions will be confidential. If however, during discussions, the teacher believes a child may be at risk, normal child protection procedures will be followed.

Inclusion:

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's RHE lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. In promoting this objective we:

- inform parents about the school's RHE policy and practice;
- answer any questions that parents may have about the RHE of their child;
- take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RHE in the school;
- encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the school policy and making modifications to it as necessary;
- inform parents about the best practice known with regard to RHE, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home. 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.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the RHE provided at school, should the sexual element be taught, except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (such as the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction that are essential elements of National Curriculum Science). If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from RHE lessons, they should discuss this with the headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in.



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Teaching Strategies:

The teacher will establish ground rules before lessons in order to make an appropriate atmosphere for RHE.

- Children will be free to take an active part in the discussion, if they wish to, or to listen without contributing if they prefer.
- Correct names for parts of the body will be used although common names may be referred to and explained.
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.
- Each person's views and beliefs will be respected and listened to.
- Children should feel comfortable and confident to ask any questions they may have within a safe and familiar environment.
- No one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer personal questions.
- Misunderstandings will be corrected sensitively.

Discussions

Research has shown that discussions are an effective method for RHE. Structured discussions draw on existing knowledge, make sense of new information and give children an opportunity to practice their social and personal skills. A key aspect of successful discussion is the opportunity to reflect on learning and consider what actions they may take in certain situations.

Videos

Pictures can take the place of a thousand words but they must be used carefully and should usually be followed by a discussion. Videos will be chosen carefully and sections viewed at appropriate times to make the content more relevant.

Discussing stereotypes

Stereotypes will be acknowledged and discussed.

Dealing with difficult questions

Teachers will respond to children's questions sensitively and at an appropriate level. Teachers must be careful to respond only to the question that was asked and not to anticipate that children want to know more than they have asked about. Particularly explicit questions do not have to be answered directly. The teacher may tell the child that her/his question will be answered but that some time is needed to consider or reflect upon the question. Teachers might seek advice from the head, PSHE lead if they are unsure about how to respond. Some questions may be answered on an individual basis rather than in front of the class.



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The Content of RHE at St. Mary's Infant School

The school uses the SCARF resources for all teaching and learning of RHE.

Foundation Stage

Children will learn about:

- Significant people in their lives.
- Their moods and feelings.
- Loss and mourning.
- Friendships and ways of resolving conflicts.
- Their body and other people's: similarities and differences.
- Growth cycles in plants and animals.
- How their bodies are changing and in particular how they have changed since they were babies.

Key Stage One

- How we know if things are living or not living.
- Life cycles of plants and animals.
- Name parts of our body, and know that there are different parts of the body related to being male or female.
- Humans produce babies that grow into children and adults who may have babies of their own.
- Treat living things with care.
- Personal safety.
- That we have rights over our own bodies which others should not violate.
- How to eat healthily and keep our bodies safe in the sun.
- Talking about feelings and emotions, appreciating ways in which we live and work together, valuing each other and ourselves.
- How to resolve conflict and make amends when we fall out.

The role of other members of the community

We encourage other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support to the children with regard to health education. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the school nurse and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our SRE programme. Other people that we may call on include local clergy, social workers and youth workers.



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Confidentiality

The class teacher or the school nurse will conduct RHE 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 class teacher or school nurse will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. He/she will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse and will draw his/her concerns to the attention of the Executive headteacher. In these circumstances the Executive headteacher and class teacher will talk to the child as a matter of urgency. The Executive headteacher will then deal with the matter in accordance with the School Child Protection Policy.

The Role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Executive Headteacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about our RHE policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively.

The Executive Headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school RHE programme, and ensures that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy, and that they work within this framework.

The Executive headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

Monitoring and Review

The Full Governing Body monitors our SRE policy on a 3 yearly basis. This is due to be revised for March 2023.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (inc. responding to disclosures)
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)