



## Relationship and Sex Education Policy (RSE)

### Introduction

### Development and Reviewing Procedures

This policy has been developed and agreed in consultation with all Stakeholders (Staff, Governing Board and Parents /Carers). It takes full account of the school's legal obligations and reflects the National aims and priorities included in the DfE's *Sex and Relationship statutory guidance June 2019*.

May 2021 - The Chair of Governors reviewed the policy and ascertained how RSE will be delivered at Cayton School.

Staff were consulted during a staff meeting May 2021.

Key staff attended SRE training May 2021.

A consultation with Parents/ Carers about what aspects of RSE are going to be covered at Cayton School (available on Dojo and the school website May 2021) including an opportunity to engage with staff via Dojo/phone if required, was carried out.

This policy covers our school's approach to Relationship and Sex Education, not only in lessons but also through the attitude of our staff and children alike, our ethos and approach and commitment to equality both within and outside of the classroom. We endeavour to support each child to fulfil their potential in all aspects of their personhood: physically, academically, socially, morally and spiritually. There is a wide spectrum of understanding about human sexuality and gender, and within a school community many different views may be held too. It is acknowledged that this is a sensitive topic.

This policy was produced following guidance from the Department for Education (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019), Jigsaw Programme (**appendix i**) and through consultation with all stakeholders.

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis (in one year in the first instance and then every two years thereafter) to ensure that it reflects the attitudes and belief of the school population and remains up to date with both current guidance from the Government and the DfE but also remains relevant to the experiences of our children.

We recognise that as a school we have a legal responsibility under The Relationships Education, Relationship & Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 & 35 of the Children & Social Work Act 2017, to provide comprehensive Relationship Education and Health Education for all children receiving primary education.

We acknowledge that in order for children to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, children need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. We understand that high quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects can help prepare children to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help.

As part of the Education Act 2002 all schools must provide a balanced and broad-based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of children at the school and of society, whilst also preparing children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

We recognise that we have a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure the best for all children irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, maternity, religion, sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children. As a result, RSE needs to be sensitive to the different needs of individual children and may

need to adapt and change as the children change. Not only does the teaching need to be sensitive to these needs it must also help the children realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours or prejudice-based language.

Whilst as a school we are aware we need to be mindful of and respectful to a wide variety of faith and cultural beliefs, and we will make every attempt to be appropriately sensitive; equally it is essential that young people still have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals. This must include clear, impartial scientific and factual information on matters (**appendix ii**). Furthermore, all teaching should reflect the law as it applies to relationships, marriage, adoption and care. At Cayton School, we follow the Jigsaw Programme for all aspects of PSHE. Please (**appendix ii**) to see the specific annual coverage.

We acknowledge that all young people deserve the right to honest, open and factual information to help better form their own beliefs and values, free from bias, judgement or subjective personal beliefs of those who teach them.

### **Defining Relationships Education**

The Department for Education defines “Relationships Education as, teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships and relationships with other peers and adults.”

We believe relationships education is designed to help children to develop the skills to recognise and manage healthy relationships both online and in the real world. It is designed to build self-esteem and to explore personal identity.

It is about helping children understand and make sense of the world they are growing up in; to recognise that differences and similarities between their peers and their families; to understand the fact every human being is unique and has the right to be respected. There are many different family structures and all children have the right to feel safe.

Relationships education has been shown to help keep children safe by allowing them to understand appropriate and inappropriate touching- to realise that their body is special and belongs to them. It is about building the foundations of an understanding of consent and personal boundaries; in that no one has the right to touch them in a way they don't like, but also the difference between public and private behaviours.

It is important for children to know the names and functions of their body parts and to be reassured it is natural to be curious about them. Indeed, by teaching children the correct terms for their private body parts, children are proven to be safer from abuse.

In addition, we believe that relationships education helps children to develop their vocabulary and emotional literacy to enable them to talk about and manage their feelings. It helps children build their own support networks and the confidence to ask for help when they feel unsafe. This is a required element of the Health Education Guidance.

### **Defining Sex Education at Primary School**

Although The Relationships Education, Relationship & Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made Relationship Education compulsory in all primary schools, Sex education is currently not compulsory. However, the Department for Education continues to recommend that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and maturity of the children. At Cayton School we follow this recommendation and teach it in an age appropriate way and follow the Jigsaw Programme.

We recognise that some parents may be uncomfortable with the thought of their children receiving sex education in primary school. Equally, we recognise it is completely natural for children to have questions about sex, their bodies and to be curious about where they came from. In the age of information where children in primary school have access to the internet through mobile technology we believe it is better that children receive age appropriate answers from us, rather than it being left to their peers or the internet.

At Cayton School, sex education is an opportunity to answer children's questions about where they came from, an opportunity to explore their own stories, to be clear about how a baby is conceived and formed as set out in human life cycle (which is covered through the national curriculum for science). Furthermore, it should ensure that all children are prepared for both the physical and emotional changes of puberty including menstruation. Children need to understand how both girls' and boys' bodies function and change as they grow into adults.

We believe that sex education should allow children a safe space to ask the questions they may have without shame or judgement. Starting learning in primary school is the best way of preventing the topic of sex, reproduction and private body parts becoming taboo and children from becoming embarrassed by the topic.

It is the duty of Cayton School to give our young people the learning that will enable them to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. This includes ensuring that they have the skills to keep themselves safe from harm and develop positive and healthy relationships, free from exploitation pressure or abuse.

We define Sex Education as understanding human reproduction.

### **Subject Content**

Relationship, Sex and Health Education is delivered by the classroom teachers. The local authority delivers ongoing support and training to ensure that RSE leaders are confident and competent in supporting class teachers to deliver lessons appropriately and safely. This includes training around safeguarding and answering children's questions age appropriately.

It is important that lessons are delivered by classroom teachers as it highlights to the children that relationship and sex education is something we can all talk about. Our classroom teachers know our children. This means they are more likely to be aware of any additional needs, support or particularly sensitive topics that may make a child in their class vulnerable due to some of the sensitive nature of the topic. We believe this makes them ideally placed to deliver the material sensitively to all children in their class.

By tackling children's questions around sex as part of a wider programme focused around relationships, family, self-awareness, emotional literacy, consent and personal boundaries, children will feel better able to engage in discussion and ask questions without embarrassment. Equally, tackling sex and reproduction in this way helps to promote positive messages and values around sex as well as children's relationship with their own bodies without shame or guilt and will develop respect for other people's body autonomy.

We do not separate our classes into girls and boys for any of the sessions, including lessons around puberty. It is important for both girls and boys to learn about each other's bodies, changes and experiences. By keeping children together in mixed groups, children will learn to talk openly without embarrassment in front of each other and we can foster better understanding, break down gender stereotypes and build positive relationships and respect for each other, regardless of gender. This ensures that any non-binary or transgender children are included without feeling vulnerable.

There are regular opportunities to learn about E-safety and healthy relationships online. This is because the framework integrates online behaviours as it explores relationships, secrets, personal boundaries and rights & responsibilities. It does not tackle online and offline as two separate entities. For children, growing up in a digital world there is an ever increasing blurring of the lines between the two.

### **Answering Children's Questions**

Children are likely to have many questions that may occur at any time. Children tend to ask whatever is on their mind. We see this as a positive point and a sign that we have created a safe environment where children feel empowered to feed their natural curiosity and learn about themselves, their bodies and the world around them. However, we acknowledge that some parents may feel uncomfortable about how particular questions may be dealt with in class.

Children are better off receiving honest, open answers from safe adults in their lives, rather than it being left to the internet or older children with a smart phone. In the age of information, where children in primary school have access to tablets, smart phones and the internet (often unsupervised) it is essential that we help children to recognise they are able to ask questions without judgement rather than searching for answers on the internet.

We believe that if children ask a question they deserve an answer. If ignored they merely build unnecessary barriers, making children think they have done something wrong; they are unlikely to ask again, and are instead left to seek their answers from less reliable or child friendly sources, due to shame. However uncomfortable the question may be, the thought is already in their heads. It is much better that we, as safe adults, take responsibility and tackle the question safely and age appropriately.

### **Dealing with children's questions age appropriately will be done as follows:**

- Children will be praised for asking questions. We wish to encourage children to seek answers from safe adults.
- If a question is relevant to the whole class, we will answer it to the whole group.
- However, as with any other subject, there may occasionally be the need to differentiate depending on children's knowledge and experience. Some children may need additional information or support compared to others.
- If a child asks a question that is not necessarily suitable for the entire class, we will respond, by saying: "that is fantastic question, hold that thought, I am going to set everyone some work and I will come and talk to you and answer your question in a minute when everyone else is working."
- If the member of staff doesn't have an answer or doesn't know, they will say so. There is no shame in not knowing the answer but the member of staff should make an effort to help the child to find the answer later.
- If the member of staff is not sure how best to answer a particularly tricky question, our suggested response is: "That is a brilliant question, I would like to give you an equally brilliant answer, so let me have a think about it and once I know the best way to explain it clearly I will come back to you"
- This will allow teaching staff time to think, seek help, advice or support from colleagues, or to speak to senior management.
- If a child asks a question we know parents may be uncomfortable with, staff may choose to delay answering the question (as above) until they have spoken to the parent/carer if possible and talk through their response.

- Teachers will answer questions, openly, honestly, scientifically and factually without relying on their own personal beliefs.

### **Parents and parental rights to withdraw**

Successful teaching around RSE can only take place when parents and school work together. Especially, considering we both want children to grow up safe and happy in healthy relationships, with the ability to manage their emotions and speak up when they feel unsafe. Therefore, we are committed to working together with parents.

We endeavour to be transparent and give parents information about Jigsaw and lessons we deliver around RSE as we recognise it can be a sensitive subject for some families for a number of reasons.

We recognise the importance of parents knowing about the content of the lessons so they can carry on the conversations at home and have an opportunity to talk to their children about their own families, beliefs and values. Curriculum plans (showing which content is to be covered when), will be available on the school website for parents to access. Parents should talk to classroom teachers for more information about the lessons to be taught.

“Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory Relationships and Sex Education” DfE Guidance p.17

At Cayton School, puberty is taught as a statutory requirement of Health Education and covered by our Jigsaw PSHE Programme in the ‘Changing Me’ Puzzle (unit). We conclude that sex education refers to Human Reproduction, and therefore inform parents of their right to request their child be withdrawn from the PSHE lessons that explicitly teach this i.e. the Jigsaw Changing Me Puzzle (unit) e.g.

- **Year 4, Lesson 2 (Having a baby)**
- **Year 5, Lesson 4 (Conception)**
- **Year 6, Lesson 3 (Conception, birth)**

Puberty is introduced gently in Y3 because some girls may start their periods this early and it is necessary to prepare them for this, so they are not scared or worried. Conception is introduced age-appropriately in Y4 in the context of understanding why our bodies change during puberty. Understanding of Human Reproduction, conception and puberty is built upon in Year 5 and then puberty, conception and childbirth is age-appropriately covered in Y6. For further information on the coverage of puberty and reproduction please see **appendix iii**.

We will happily show parents all of the teaching materials and context of any of our lessons and explain the reasons why any material is included. We will also highlight that whilst parents have the right to withdraw their child from these lessons, they do not have the right to withdraw other children from receiving these lessons. We believe it is better for children to hear from safe adults than to hear second hand from their class-mates at break-time.

If parents do decide to withdraw their child, they should inform the Headteacher/ Class Teacher who will find other provision for the child to engage in during the lesson. Currently, Headteachers must comply with requests to withdraw from any non-statutory lessons in the RSE programme.

### **Safeguarding Children**

The school is committed to ensuring that children are aware of behaviour towards them that are not acceptable, how they can keep themselves safe and how to share a concern and complain. All children are informed that we have a Designated Safeguarding Lead with responsibility for child

protection and whom this is. We inform children of whom they might talk to, both in and out of school, their right to be listened to and heard and what steps can be taken to protect them from harm. (Please refer to our Child Protection Policy for further details.)

When teaching any sensitive topic (such as RSE, which deals with family life, safe and appropriate touching, personal body parts and healthy relationships), we recognise the potential to uncover incidents of abuse through children's disclosures.

All members of staff who deliver any of our RSE programme, have statutory training around safeguarding children and are all aware of our school's safeguarding policy and procedures in the case of a disclosure or suspicion of a safeguarding concern.

### **Assessment and Evaluation**

Assessment of PSHE, which includes RSE is not about assessing someone's 'character or behaviour' but the extent to which they are progressing in their current learning, their on-going learning needs and the impact the learning is having on the child. It is important that the children's learning is assessed because assessment increases "motivation and improves learning; it provides feedback about child's progress and achievements, and how their learning might be improved; it helps children to reflect on and identify what they have learned and what they need to do to continue their learning; it allows the SLT, Governors and School Inspectors to see the impact the provision is having for children and whole school outcomes" (PSHE association 2016).

Assessment in RSE needs to establish: What do children already know and understand? What have they misunderstood? What gaps do they have in their knowledge and what preconceptions/prejudices may have to be challenged.

Assessment for Learning (formative assessment) - regular assessment of child's progress against the intended learning outcomes is important to ensure that learners are making expected progress and to inform planning for subsequent lessons and units of work. The children are continually assessed against the intended learning outcomes.

### **Special Educational Needs**

For all children, there is a need for clear, explicit and repeated teaching about sex and relationships to avoid confusion. Children with learning difficulties may need to specifically learn things which other children learn incidentally, for example, what being 'private' actually means. They may be more open to exploitation than other children and may need additional teaching to help them understand acceptable parameters and behaviours. Above all, they need the knowledge, skills and understanding to make informed, positive decisions about their own relationships and lives, and about their own safety. RSE lends itself to study by children with a range of different abilities. Children can work on the same content at different rates and levels; some may be supported by a teaching assistant (eg extra discussion, stories relating to the topic).

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