

## Sex and Relationships Education at Alverton School

### What is Relationship and Sex Education?

"It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual activity - this would be inappropriate teaching." (Department for Education and Employment, SRE Guidance, 2000)

From September 2020, Mental Health and Wellbeing as well as Relationships Education are statutory requirements and we have spent a lot of time embedding these within our curriculum. Sex Education is not statutory and parents do have the right to withdraw their child from these sessions. However, my aim is to provide you with enough information in order to reassure you that all of our teaching will be age appropriate and the needs of each individual child will be catered for and met. I am always happy to meet with parents to discuss the sessions and share resources with them if necessary because I do feel that SRE is an important addition to our curriculum.

### Why is RSE needed?

- More than ever before, children are exposed to representations of sex and sexuality through the media/ social media and the social culture around them, so we need to present a balanced view of RSE and help them to be discerning and stay safe.
- Research shows that most parents say they want the support of schools in providing RSE for their children.
- Research consistently shows that effective RSE delays first sexual experience and reduces risk- taking.
- Surveys of children and young people, as well as Ofsted, have repeatedly told us that RSE tends to be "too little, too late and too biological".
- Children **should** know the basic facts about puberty and human reproduction before they go to secondary **school**, for their own safety and wellbeing.

## What are the aims of RSE?

There are four main aims for teaching RSE within the context of Primary School PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education):

- To enable young people to understand and respect their bodies, and be able to cope with the changes puberty brings, without fear or confusion
- To help young people develop positive and healthy relationships appropriate to their age, development etc. (respect for self and others)
- To support young people to have positive self-esteem and body image, and to understand the influences and pressures around them
- To empower them to be safe and safeguarded

## FAQs

Won't telling my children about human reproduction take away their innocence?

No. The evidence suggests that high-quality RSE does the opposite: it actually delays young people's first sexual experience, and it helps them become much more confident and comfortable about making informed choices. **Good and appropriate RSE takes away children's ignorance, not their innocence.**

Teaching about safety and relationships as part of PSHE contributes to how schools approach the safeguarding of pupils. It helps them to recognise when they and others are at risk and equips them with the skills, strategies and language they need to take appropriate action.

This is crucial to fulfilling statutory duties in relation to safeguarding pupils as well as to meeting Ofsted expectations. Ofsted expressed concern in its 2013 PSHE report that a lack of high-quality, age-appropriate RSE in over a third of schools left young people vulnerable to inappropriate sexual behaviours and exploitation. It is clear, therefore, that PSHE plays a vital part in helping to meet school's responsibilities to safeguard their pupils, your children.

I've heard that I can take my child out of SRE lessons.

Yes, it is. Currently, parents/carers have the legal right to withdraw their children from the RSE included in the PSHE curriculum (as that is a non-statutory subject). But they are not permitted to withdraw their child from the Sex Education included in the National Curriculum Science Orders, as Science is a statutory subject. When Relationships Education becomes statutory we expect the parental right of withdrawal to be retained.

If you are considering taking your child out of RSE lessons within PSHE, please consider the following:

- All the other children in your child's class will have been taught this information and may well talk to your child about it, perhaps in the playground... and potentially mislead them or confuse them as a result. It may prove far better to allow experienced and sensitive teaching staff to teach your child in a progressive, developmental way that is grounded in research.
- They will be learning about reproduction in Science lessons. The RSE in PSHE will echo this and will concentrate on teaching children how to enjoy healthy, appropriate relationships, improve self-esteem and self-confidence, and make healthy, informed choices. When viewed this way, it is hoped that RSE won't be seen as contentious or a cause for concern, but rather as helpful.
- Attend an information session at the school to fully understand the rationale behind and the content of this work.
- Talk to your child's teacher, the head teacher, or the teacher in charge of PSHE. Often, when parents and carers find out what is in the PSHE curriculum, their fears are allayed as they can appreciate it is in the best interests of their child's lifelong learning.

I intend for RSE to be a partnership between the school and the parents/ carers, working for every child's safety and benefit. Over the last few years we have used a scheme of work from the Christopher Winter's Project for SRE. This has recently been updated to incorporate some of the new statutory objectives and is a scheme that I feel works well and covers everything that we want to cover. Here is an overview for each year group;

### **Reception - Family and Friendship**

1. Caring friendships: understanding the importance of friendship
2. Being kind: recognising the importance of forgiveness
3. Families: understand there are lots of different families

### **Year 1 - Growing and Caring for Ourselves**

1. Different friends: knowing we can be friends with people who are different to us
2. Growing and changing: understanding babies and children grow up
3. Families and care: exploring different types of families and who can help us

### **Year 2 - Differences**

1. Differences: exploring gender stereotypes
2. Male and female animals: exploring males and females are different
3. Naming body parts: knowing the physical differences between males and females

### **Year 3 - Valuing Difference and Keeping Safe**

1. Body differences: exploring the differences between males and females
2. Personal space: understanding appropriate touch
3. Help and support: exploring different types of families and who can help us

### **Year 4 - Growing Up**

1. Changes: exploring the human lifecycle
2. What is puberty?: exploring how puberty is linked to reproduction
3. Healthy relationships: exploring respect in a range of relationships

### **Year 5 - Puberty**

1. Talking about puberty: exploring emotional and physical changes
2. The reproductive system: understanding male and female changes
3. Help and support: understanding the importance of personal hygiene

### **Year 6 - Puberty, Relationships and Reproduction**

1. Puberty and reproduction: understanding how and why the body changes
2. Communication in relationships: understanding the importance of respectful communication
3. Families, conception and pregnancy: understanding the decisions in starting a family
4. Online relationships: understanding communication in a respectful way
5. Respect and equality: developing respectful relationships

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss any aspect of our SRE provision, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Amy Clemens  
PSHE / Pastoral Lead