

# **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education**

## **Parent Consultation**

# **Building a Federation and Home partnership**

We recognise as a Federation that you, the parents and carers, are the prime educators for your children. It is our responsibility to complement and reinforce this role.

# **Federation and Home Partnership:**

We hope that by consulting with you about the RSE curriculum you will:

- be informed of the RSE curriculum
- be consulted about the statutory changes to the RSE curriculum
- be informed of the RSE policy
- be given the opportunity to express your views

# What is RSE?

RSE stands for “Relationships and Sex Education” and is part of Relationships and Health Education. New statutory guidance has been introduced to teach children about relationships and health.

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools.

# Why have changes been made to RSE?

The Department for Education (DfE) guidance states:

“To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

(DfE, 2019, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education)

# The main aims of RSE

To help young people develop positive and healthy relationships appropriate to their age and development.

To nurture tolerance and respect for differences in others.

To support young people to have positive self-image and body image and to understand the influences and pressures around them.

To enable young people to understand and respect their bodies, and to be able to cope with the changes puberty brings.

# What will your child be taught?

## This is statutory in all primary schools.

### **Relationships Education**

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

### **Physical health and mental wellbeing**

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

# What are the benefits of teaching RSE?

RSE explains the positive qualities of relationships, such as trust, respect and commitment as well as recognising that there are different types of relationships and families. It raises the importance of educating children about gender equality, consent, relationships in an age appropriate way. RSE can provide young people with the knowledge required to resist peer, partner and media pressure and understand issues of consent as well as what is and is not appropriate behaviour.

There is evidence that good quality RSE teaching can help young people to:

- Have consensual relationships
- Delay the age of first sexual encounters
- Prevent underage pregnancy
- Know who to report abuse to
- Have improved sexual health



# How will we be teaching RSE?



We have recently purchased the Coram Life Education programme, which is the leading provider of relationships, health, wellbeing, and drugs education across the UK. The lessons are delivered under the strapline 'Helping Children Make Healthy Choices.'

# Why use SCARF resources through out the Federation?

A whole-school/Federation approach is vital to improving children's emotional health and wellbeing, helping to keep them safe, improve behaviour and raise achievement. Using the SCARF supports our schools in developing and implementing a whole-school approach.



# Units of work

- In consultation with staff and governors we have reviewed the SCARF units of work.
- We have carefully reviewed the language and content to ensure it meets the needs of our children.
- Please see documents on the Carey Federation Website:
- Information for parents – SCARF Resources.
- Information for parents – age appropriate content.

# Curriculum links

Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education are not stand-alone subjects. They complement several national curriculum subjects. This includes citizenship, science, computing and PE. We will look for opportunities to draw links between the subjects and integrate teaching where appropriate.

# Science and PSHE/RSE at KS1

## Science Key Stage 1

- identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense
- notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults

## • RSE Key Stage 1

- The names for the main parts of the body (including external genitalia) the similarities and difference between boys and girls
- how to maintain physical, mental and emotional health and well-being
- how to manage risks to physical and emotional health and well-being
- ways of keeping physically and emotionally safe
- about managing change, such as puberty, transition and loss
- how to make informed choices about health and well-being and to recognise sources of help with this

# Science and PSHE/RSE at KS2

## Science Key Stage 2

- describe the differences in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird
- describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals
- describe the changes as humans develop to old age
- learn about the changes experienced in puberty

## RSE Key Stage 2

- how their body will change as they approach and move through puberty
- about human reproduction
- how to develop and maintain a variety of healthy relationships, within a range of social/cultural contexts
- how to recognise and manage emotions within a range of relationships
- how to recognise risky or negative relationships including all forms of bullying and abuse
- how to respond to risky or negative relationships and ask for help
- how to respect equality and diversity in relationships

# Non-Statutory Sex Education

Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools. However, current government Sex and Relationships Education guidance states that children should learn about puberty before they experience it. We know from research that if we don't deliver this vital education we leave our children at greater risk of poor mental health. We know this because as many as 24% of girls start their periods before the subject is covered in lessons and 38% of boys experience wet dreams before having learnt about them.

In the Carey Federation we know it is important that we support the transition phase before moving to secondary school. It supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. It also helps children to avoid worrying about, "playground rumours" and promotes open discussions and confidence.

We want to ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings.

As well as consulting parents more generally about the school's overall RSE policy we will consult parents of Y5/6 pupils about the detailed content of what will be taught during non statutory Sex Education lessons.

# Non-Statutory Sex Education

- In the Carey Federation, we have always delivered very effective Relationships and Sex Education and the new guidance is simply about ensuring that all children get the information they need and want.
- This programme will be delivered in an age appropriate and sensitive manner by class teachers. Teaching is taught in mixed gender groups to Y5 and Y6.
- The lessons will help children to learn about their bodies including the changes that take place at puberty, and will help keep them safe, so they can form healthy relationships (friendships) with others, now and in the future. This programme of work has been developed over the years in discussion with the School Nurse.
- Year 5 and 6 children are taught:
  - Sexual differences and naming body parts
  - Impact of puberty and the importance of physical hygiene
  - About menstruation and wet dreams as a part of normal development
  - How a baby is conceived (the egg meets the sperm) within the context of loving relationships.
  - That in most animals including humans the baby grows inside the mother
  - How to answer each other's questions about relationships and know where to find support and advice



# Can parents withdraw their child from Non Statutory Sex Education?

- Parents have a right to withdraw their children from the non statutory Sex Education aspect of RSE if they wish to do so, but not from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction provided under the National Curriculum for science.
- Parents do not have to give reasons for withdrawing their child but must inform the head teacher.
- Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing, making it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in.
- Please refer to the Carey Federation RSE policy.

# Menstruation –Health Education

## Statutory Curriculum

The statutory guidance states that by the end of primary school pupils should know:

- 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.

Best practice states that menstruation education should be delivered to both boys and girls, as learning about menstruation is a concept of reproduction, as covered by the national curriculum science and fosters good relationships by breaking down the stigma of going through these changes leading to less bullying. Parents will be given notice when these topics are introduced.

In addition to curriculum content, schools should also make adequate and sensitive arrangements to help girls prepare for and manage menstruation including with requests for menstrual products. Schools will need to consider the needs of their cohort of pupils in designing this content.

# **The changes include education of LGBT.**

## **Why are these issues included?**

The children in our Federation may or may not experience Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) families, but will more than likely on social media, TV or in their future, so it is important that education is embedded throughout their primary school life.

There has been much mis-information in the media about how LGBT issues are to be taught within the Relationships, Health and Sex Education curriculum in primary schools. The subject will be approached in timely points as part of this area of the curriculum

We have a responsibility to usualise the diverse range of society in which they are growing up. Relationships Education is designed to foster respect for others and for difference and educate pupils about healthy relationships. Teaching children about the society that we live in and the different types of loving, healthy relationships that exist is very important.

# Questions that may be raised.

## **Q. How do you decide what is appropriate for each age group**

A. Use of the SCARF materials. We refer to the DfE Guidance and what the best ages are to teach certain topics. We will use their professional judgement and consult with the Governing Body, parents and pupils on the teaching of RSE in their school. If we are in any doubt we will refer to the RSE guidelines or seek external advice. We value your feedback on this aspect of RSE teaching.

## **Q. I don't want my child to take part in RSE lessons**

A. Can you explain your concerns? We welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you further. I do have to inform you that Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from the statutory RSE and Science curriculum components of sex education within RSE.

## **Q. What if I Have Trouble Talking to My child About this kind of stuff?**

A. If you don't feel comfortable talking with your child, make sure they have another way to get this information. Maybe watching a video or reading a book together would be easier. We have some great resources we can refer you to. You also can ask your doctor, nurse, or a trusted family member to talk to your child if you find that easier.

# Questions that may be raised.

**Q. Surely learning about homosexuality and transgender issues is going to encourage my child to consider this as an option for themselves.**

A. Raising awareness around LGBT issues does not encourage or teach children to become homosexual or transgender. It does however teach tolerance and respect for others.

**Q. You say all protected characteristics should be treated equally so why are you are valuing LGBT over faith?**

A. There are nine Protected Characteristics in the Equality Act (2010). It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. These are called protected characteristics.

All Protected Characteristics are equal and the Equality Act makes clear that no single characteristic is more important than any other. Both religion and sexuality are equally important and The Carey Federation committed to tackling discrimination against either.

**Q. As a family we don't believe people of the same sex should be married**

A. Through RSE teaching we develop in children to treat views of others with kindness and respect. It is a statutory requirement that underpins each topic. Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious.

# Questions that may be raised.

## **When Should I Talk to My child About Periods?**

A. Talking about periods shouldn't be one big talk at a particular age. Instead, start the conversation early and slowly build on your child's understanding. Girls **and** boys need reliable information about periods. So make sure you talk to your sons too!

For example, if your 4-year-old sees a tampon and asks what it's for, you could say, "Women bleed a little from their vagina every month. It's called a period. It isn't because they're hurt. It's how the body gets ready for a baby. The tampon catches the blood so it doesn't go on the underwear."

## **Q. Will girls and boys be taught about menstruation together?**

A. Yes boys and girl need reliable information. Teaching boys about menstruation will instil compassion for their sisters, friends, mothers, and all the future women in their lives. And if boys understand what their peers are going through, that will reduce incidents of teasing about periods. While your son doesn't have to worry about menstruation for his own sake, the girls and women in his life do, which is reason enough for him to understand what it's all about

## **What happens if my daughter starts her periods whilst at primary school?**

A. Come and talk to us. We will discuss provision for your daughter to make sure she feels comfortable at school.

# How will staff deal with questions raised by pupils in school during RSE lessons?

- Teachers will establish clear parameters with the whole class. Ground rules in class and across the school are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter and teaching RSE.
- Pupil's questions will be dealt with honestly and sensitively and in an age appropriate way. If staff are faced with a question they do not feel comfortable answering within the classroom, techniques such as distancing, the use of a question box, or creating time to talk to a child individually will be used.
- Children may also be signposted back to parents/carers. The teacher will contact the parents/carers to give a context to the conversations that have been held in class.
- Safeguarding

# Parental Feedback

- Parental Feedback - We welcome the opportunity to consult about the teaching of PSHE/RSE. The role of parents/careers in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. We value working with you to deliver the best RSE teaching to the children. Please access the parent consultation link on our Carey Federation website to complete a short survey.



# In summary:

- We hope we have informed you of the RSE curriculum
- We have informed you of the statutory changes
- You are aware of the RSE policy
- You have been given the opportunity to express your views.