

Grimsargh St Michael's C of E Primary School



Health and Relationships Education Policy

Let your light shine before people so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5: v.16)

Inspiring, believing and achieving in our loving Christian community

Our aim in school is to provide a safe, secure environment in which the children value themselves and others. We aim to develop positive self-esteem and to enable our children to make well-informed, appropriate decisions and choices. A focus is placed on the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other peers and adults. We aim to do this through the 'big ideas':

Relationships: *I can build positive relationships with other children and adults.*

Health: *I can understand how to look after myself, both mentally and physically.*

Respect: *I can learn how to respect myself and others.*

This policy re-affirms our Mission Statement; to develop the children intellectually, socially, morally, spiritually, physically and culturally within a caring, supportive and stimulating environment, based on the values of the Christian faith, taking into consideration each child's needs, abilities and interests.

The staff and children who are a part of our school community follow the core values to empower, nurture, respect, welcome, love, inspire and worship as Christian ambassadors so that they may let their light shine and glorify our Father in Heaven.

Rational

At Grimsargh St Michael's CE Primary School, Relationships Education teaches children the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other peers and adults.

'Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it. **'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'** On these commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Matthew 22 v 37-40

At Grimsargh St Michael's CE Primary School, we believe it is important to address health and relationships education as it lays the foundations for supporting children and young people through their physical, mental and moral development. We are committed to helping keep our children safe and equipped with the correct information. Some things they learn from other sources may be incorrect, frightening and confusing. We believe this includes supporting our children to confidently

and safely filter information and images on social media and to recognise online safety dangers, particularly in online relationships.

This policy covers our approach to HRE. It was produced by the school's PHSE and HRE Leader through consultation with school advisors, staff, governors and parents. This policy is also written in accordance with the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Draft Guidance (DfE July 2018). From September 2020, Relationships Education in primary schools became statutory; alongside guidance from Blackburn Diocese.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of health and relationships education at Grimsargh St Michael's CE Primary School are:

- To ensure Health and Relationships Education is part of a child's broad, balanced curriculum, integral to the basic curriculum of the school and part of the child's all-round development.
- To enable pupils to understand the qualities of healthy relationships based on Christian principles, including the principles of respect and kindness.
- To prepare children for healthy relationships in an online world.
- To understand how to stay safe, know the importance of boundaries and how to report abuse or feelings of being unsafe.
- To help pupils develop a positive and secure personal identity, a sense of their own value and feelings of confidence and empathy.
- To create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationship.
- To ensure that all understand the importance of respecting others and accepting those who differ, yet challenging those behaviours and attitudes which exploit others and do not reflect Christian values.
- To prepare and enable children to cope with changes to their bodies, instincts and feelings as they enter puberty.
- To provide information that is clear and appropriate to their age and maturity and to offer acceptable and accurate vocabulary to describe their bodies.
- To know how to '**love your neighbour**' even when we might disagree.

Statutory requirements

This school complies with the requirements of the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty in addition to complying with the statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

Policy Development and Review

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, advisors and governors and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review- PSHE Leader and Head Teacher gathered all relevant information including relevant national, diocesan and local guidance and attended training sessions.
2. Diocesan advisor consultation- PSHE Coordinator and Deputy Head Teacher met with the diocesan advisor to discuss the RE policy.
3. Staff and governor consultation- all school staff/ governors were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
4. Parent/stakeholder consultation- parents and any interested parties are invited to respond to the policy and, if appropriate, speak to key members of staff.
5. Pupil consultation- we considered the questions pupils have asked in previous years.
6. Ratification- once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

Definitions

1. **Relationships Education** is the programme of work that forms part of the basic curriculum. In primary schools, the focus should be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships and relationships with other children and adults. It covers all types of relationships including online, peer to peer, family and carer relationships. It also covers respect for others and staying safe.

2. **Sex Education** is a programme of work that covers how a baby is made in the context of a stable, loving relationship. The children learn about how a baby is conceived, develops in the womb and how a baby is born. The children learn about puberty in both sexes including both physical and emotional changes (this also comes under Health Education). The focus is to teach children about the nature and purpose of the changes of puberty, to help them deal with these changes in a practical way and to encourage them to make wise decisions as they develop and mature.

Sex Education is not compulsory for primary schools. As a school, we have chosen not to teach Sex Education, and to focus on Health Education, defined below.

3. **Health Education** is a programme of teaching about puberty, physical health and fitness, healthy eating, mental wellbeing, drugs, alcohol and tobacco. This involves key facts about puberty in both sexes and the physical and emotional changing adolescent body, including menstruation. It is important to support children to understand and be able to deal with these changes.

4. **The Science curriculum** explores reproduction in the context of life cycles of plants and animals including humans. It includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts and the human body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty (see National Curriculum for Science).

Right to be Excused from Sex Education

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of RSE (see definition 2 above). Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher. A copy of the withdrawal request will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Headteacher will arrange a meeting to discuss the request with parents and, where appropriate the child, and take appropriate action.

However, as a school, we have chosen not to teach sex education, and focus on 'changing adolescent bodies', which is part of health education. However, the science curriculum in all maintained schools includes content on human development, including reproduction, which there is no right to withdraw from. Simple and age-appropriate material is used in Year 5 and Year 6 to teach about the reproduction of plants, animals and humans.

Parents cannot withdraw their child from any part of Health and Relationships Education or the Science curriculum (see definitions 1, 3 and 4 above) as this now forms part of the basic curriculum and is a requirement of the government's statutory guidance.

Curriculum Delivery of HRE

The HRE curriculum is delivered through the SCARF Coram PSHE scheme of work. This includes age-appropriate lessons and activities that teachers adapt in light of our HRE policy, Christian values and advice from the subject leader. Each year group chooses either a 1-hour session fortnightly or a 30-minute session weekly (depending on the needs and suitability of the class) to teach discreet lessons covering appropriate topics and themes. The PSHE/HRE curriculum overview for the school outlines which topics are taught in which year groups and when. All content is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly children with special educational needs or disabilities and where specific

adaptions are needed, these are detailed in the overview and additional advice for teachers document produced by the subject leader.

Difficult questions & sensitive issues in relation to Health and Relationships

Our school's Health and Relationships Education programme will provide opportunities for children to 'talk honestly and openly'. At the same time, we have to respect the pace of children's maturation.

We feel that Sex Education is best postponed until the secondary school years. There are also sensitive or controversial topics (see below) over which some staff, parents and governors may have reasonable concerns.

Our school has decided not to talk about or answer any questions on: rape, oral sex, exploitative or violent sexual practices, incest, abortion, prostitution, contraception, masturbation, about forms of sexual intercourse including homosexual practices, or foreplay. AIDS/HIV issues may be discussed in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner as and when they are encountered. If a child asks a question on any topic listed in the first section of the above list, teachers will explain that this is a matter not dealt with in school, that the child should consult their parent for an answer.

The school will normally seek to inform parents when such a question is asked. If teachers are asked a question and they are unsure whether to answer, they will explain to the children that they cannot answer the question at that moment and will seek support from the PSHE Leader/Leadership Team to clarify the suitability of the question.

In some cases, a question or request for advice may indicate the pupil to be at risk or in danger, in which case appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the school's written policy and procedure for Child Protection and Safeguarding. This also means that if a pupil puts a private question to a teacher or other member of staff and requests secrecy, no promise of secrecy or confidentiality will be given, but with the reassurance that any steps taken will always be in the pupil's best interest.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board will approve the HRE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that HRE is taught in a carefully sequenced way within a planned programme, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from sex education.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Teaching in line with the Church of England foundation of the school.
- Delivering HRE with sensitivity.
- Modelling positive attitudes to HRE.
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from sex education.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching HRE. Staff who have concerns about teaching HRE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in HRE and, when discussing issues related to HRE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of HRE (e.g. in use of the Coram Life Education) and collaborate over appropriate groupings during delivery. The headteacher or HRE leader may invite visitors, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to assist with the delivery of HRE or to train staff. Any visitors will follow the school policy and deliver in line with the Church of England ethos of the school.

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of HRE is monitored through discussion with teaching staff involved in delivering HRE, alongside plans and examples of work, and anonymous pupil questionnaires.

Signed: **Miss Lucy Cross**

Last Reviewed: **September 2023**

Next Review Date: **September 2024**