



# RSE Policy

Adopted in September 2019

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Approved by The Governing Body

Next Renewal in March 2025

Renewed  
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**24**

Version  
**5**

The governing body recognises the importance of keeping its RSE Policy up-to-date and will review the policy on an annual basis.

This policy was adopted by the Governing Body of the Lincoln Saints Federation in 2019.

## **Principles of the policy**

This policy has been written in consultation with representatives from the different areas of school, parents and external RSE programme officers from Lincolnshire County Council

RSE was implemented in September 2020 for all schools.

*“The new curriculum will be compulsory from September 2020. Schools should start teaching from that date if they meet the statutory requirements. If they are not ready, or are unable to meet the requirements, they should begin teaching by at least the start of the summer term 2021”.*

## **9<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – The Department for Education**

In March, 2017 The Government announced the amendments that were to be made to the Children and Social Work Bill on request of the Secretary of State for Education to make regulations requiring:

- All primary schools in England to teach age-appropriate ‘relationship and sex education’; and
- All secondary schools in England to teach age-appropriate ‘relationships and sex education’

## **The current legislation and review of RSE in schools refers to the `Under the Education Act 2002` which previously stated that all schools must provide a balance and broadly based curriculum which:**

- *Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society and*
- *Prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.*
- *Students have a “Right to receive information that is important to their health and well being.” UNICEF Article 17*

## **Documents that inform the schools RSE policy include:**

- Education Act (1996)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Supplementary guidance SRE for the 21<sup>st</sup> century (2014)
- Keeping Children safe in Education ( Statutory Safeguarding guidance 2018)
- Children and social work act (2017)
- The Relationship education, relationships and sex education and health education ( England regulations 2019)
- The PSHE Association
- The Sex Factor by The Chailey Heritage Foundation.

## **The Background to RSE in a Special School**

Research highlights the importance of a high-quality age appropriate relationship and sex education programme.

Barnardo's undertook a study on the quality of SRE delivery and input for young people with special needs and published their findings in the report 'Overprotected Under-protected' in September 2015.

The report stated the following;

- *Overprotection, disempowerment and social isolation of young people with learning disabilities all contribute to increased vulnerability to sexual exploitation*
- *Society often refuses to view young people with learning disabilities as sexual beings, making it harder for people to accept that they can be sexually exploited*
- **Professionals' understanding of 'capacity to consent' to sex by young people with learning disabilities was raised as a concern.**
- *Lack of accessible sex and relationships education, including information about how to stay safe online, for young people with learning disabilities was seen as creating vulnerability*
- **Young adults aged 18 and older who are at risk of sexual exploitation may fall through the gap between children's and adults' services**
- *There was a lack of awareness and training of professionals, both in terms of sexual exploitation and concerning learning disabilities.*

### **Mencap statement:**

*"People with a learning disability have a right to develop loving relationships and must be free to express their sexual identity. Adults and young people with a learning disability also have the right to have consensual sex. Personal and sexual relationships can bring happiness, fulfilment, companionship and a greater sense of freedom to the lives of people with a learning disability.*

*Our vision is a future where the personal and sexual relationships of people with a learning disability are accepted and barriers are removed. We want to see individuals supported to have positive, healthy, and safe relationships"*

### **Evidence from the Barnardos et al report 'Overprotected Under-protected September 2015**

*"All educational establishments should provide high-quality, age-appropriate sex and relationships education, including same-sex relationships, with information adapted and made accessible. This should form part of a whole-school approach to child protection that includes information about internet safety, awareness of exploitation and when to give, obtain or refuse consent.*

***Information and guidance on sex, relationships, keeping safe and risk-taking must form part of every child's plan (education, health and/or care plan) and associated support, in order to help young people with learning disabilities to build their understanding, knowledge and confidence, and reduce social isolation. This should form part of a life course approach to supporting young people with learning disabilities as they grow into adulthood"***

## **RSE within a SEND School**

Our school is mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes, as set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subjects to those with SEND.

We are aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND.

Relationships Education and RSE can also be particularly important subjects for some pupils; for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities.

In special schools there is a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages.

## **Equal Opportunities**

As a School the Executive Headteacher and Governing bodies under the Equalities Act ensure that the school strives to do the best for all pupils irrespective of their disability, education needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy, maternity, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

Staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours and to build a culture where everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes are not tolerated.

## **Inclusion:**

- Gender identity, sexuality, religion, ethnicity, nationality and race**
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Within RSE we must ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. We must ensure that we comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice), under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment, religious belief and ethnicity are amongst the protected characteristics.

Our RSE input across the phases of school are sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. When and where it is appropriate and necessary we will include content relating to LGBT+Q. This content is fully integrated into programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson.

As an organisation we must be aware of the importance of inclusivity within our approach and language in RSE. Within the teaching and implementation of RSE we will endeavour to;

- Foster a safe and accepting environment for all
- Ensure understanding of LGBT+ terminology
- Recognise young people as individuals and increase their understanding of identity, gender and sexuality
- Equip staff with knowledge and skills to best deliver an inclusive RSE
- To signpost young people to gain external support and remind them of trusted individuals internally they can get support from
- Take religious belief into consideration and respect individuals personal beliefs

### **RSE Core Values at St Francis Special School**

We believe that there should be no barriers to allowing our children and young people access to the themes and issues which will be a part of their life long learning – As legislation requires and our school ethos promotes that RSE should be covered in an appropriate way, with our learners in mind. We are committed to curriculum pathways which reflect the changing needs of our student cohort across the different phases within school. It also takes into account any pastoral issues being experienced by children and young people at a local or national level.

RSE at St Francis is underpinned by ensuring the content considers our learners and their individual needs.

Progress and Development in the following areas is key;

- 1) Cognitive Ability and Understanding
- 2) Physical and Emotional Wellbeing
- 3) Communication
- 4) Personal Safety

RSE is delivered across the different curriculum pathways according to the cognitive ability and needs of the learners;

- EYFS (Early years foundation stage)
- Pre- Formal
- Informal
- Semi- Formal
- Formal

Each curriculum pathway uses the key themes suggested in the draft guidelines provided by the DfE as outlined;

### **Key Themes and Content in RSE**

It is suggested that **by the end of Primary** the following themes need to be covered;

#### **Relationship Education**

##### **(Primary)**

- Families and People who care for me
- Caring Friendships
- Respectful Relationships
- Online Relationships
- Being Safe

### **Physical health and Mental Wellbeing (Health Education)**

- 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 (including menstruation)

### **Sex Education (Primary)**

Although Sex Education is not compulsory in Primary schools as the national curriculum for science includes subject content in related areas such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. Where appropriate and necessary more detailed teaching / discussion will be provided. All Students are to be supported through their emotional and physical development and changes.

### **Menstruation**

The onset of menstruation can be confusing or even alarming for girls if they are not prepared. Pupils will be taught key facts about the menstrual cycle including what is an average period, range of menstrual products and the implications for emotional and physical health. In addition to curriculum content, school makes adequate and sensitive arrangements to help girls prepare for and manage menstruation including with requests for menstrual products.

**By the end of secondary** the following themes need to be covered;

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

- Families
- Respectful relationships including friendships
- Online and Media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health
- The law surrounding sex, relationships and young people

### **Physical health and Mental Wellbeing (Health Education)**

- 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 (including menstruation)

All are outlined within the guidance for Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education and create some cross over in content.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/781150/Draft\\_guidance\\_Relationships\\_Education\\_Relationships\\_and\\_Sex\\_Education\\_RSE\\_and\\_Health\\_Education2.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/781150/Draft_guidance_Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education2.pdf)

It is important to note that; *each curriculum pathway will focus on specific areas which are appropriate to the needs of their children.*

As a school, we use 'The Sex Factor' approach created by the Chailey Heritage Foundation to deliver Sex Education lessons, appropriate to their physical and neurodiverse needs.

The programme includes a range of 30+ scripted social stories which cover a variety of topics. We use anatomically correct dolls when delivering The Sex Factor and lessons are protected and are not disturbed during this time.

### **Managing difficult questions**

Children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to differing types of questions or behaviours. Teaching methods should take account of these differences (including when they are due to specific special educational needs or disabilities) and the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. Class teachers will consider what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting, as teachers may require support and training in answering questions that are better not dealt with in front of a whole class.

Many children and young people will often ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond what is set out for Relationships Education.

A **keywords and phrases document** will assist teachers to use a common language and set response to specific questions and ensure continuity of approach across the phases of school. This document will also be made available to parents.

### **Use of materials**

There are many resources available to aid the delivery of RSE; A resource list will be made available to parents upon request.

### **Student Relationships within school**

We are aware that children and young people explore different types of relationships as they get older. Language surrounding relationships is important for our young people and friendships and relationships hold a range of meanings for them.

We want to encourage age appropriate dialogue about their relationships and suitable behaviour within and around school as well as ensure our students have correct information surrounding the law.

A common language which supports conversations around relationships and sex is present within schemes of work /terminology documents across the curriculum phases.

## **Masturbation**

From early on the words public and private are used with children and young people in school

Some children and young people find masturbating comforting, not all children are even aware what it is or what it may represent. Vocabulary will be used to discourage public touching with the words 'private' and phrases such as 'hands on the table' or hands to yourself will be used where necessary.

Parents will be notified where public masturbation or inappropriate touch is an issue.

## **Working with parents/carers**

Parent partnership and information sharing is at the heart of RSE as it is essential that staff and parents work together to ensure the best support and input for all children and young people. We value parental input and questions and will encourage parents to take part in a course 'Speak Easy' which will equip them with the information, terminology and courage to talk to their children and young people about difficult topics.

The RSE policy is an open document which all parents can access and comment upon.

## **Withdrawal from RSE**

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from all or part of any SRE provided, with the exception of the biological aspects necessary under National Curriculum Science. Contact with parent/carer by the pastoral lead will be made to discuss any concerns the parent/carer may have. By working with parent/carer, every effort will be made to overcome and resolve any issues which rise to enable their son/daughter to participate in planned sessions. Where this cannot be resolved, then alternative support they may require in order to enable them to assist their son/daughter to undertake this learning at home. Support could be through the attendance by parents on the "Speakeasy" course.

This applies to students until three months before their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. At the time they can make their own decision to be involved in RSE

## **Working with external agencies;**

- The Hope project (Helping others prevent exploitation) which is funded by BILT ( British institute for learning disabilities) have previously supported Post 16 teaching of RSE by discussing relationships, highlighting the dangers of online relationships and exploitation and creating an open forum for students to discuss issues relating to RSE. They have given us resources which can be helpful in the delivery of the subject.
- Input from RSE team from Lincolnshire County Council ;

## **Monitoring and Evaluating RSE**

A termly working party of teaching and support staff meets to discuss issues relating to RSE and provide support and resources.

The common languages and phrases document will be developed within this working party.