

# *Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health and Mental Wellbeing guidance for Church of England Secondary Schools in Canterbury Diocese*

*October 2019*



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# Preparing to implement the Statutory Guidance

## Suggested Timeline

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### Autumn Term 2019

#### Focus on preparing and training leadership teams, staff and governors

- Work with governors, leadership team and staff to create a shared understanding of Relationships and Health Education (RHE) in school. Discuss how it flows from your distinctive Christian vision and follows the equality act and statutory duty.
- Explore and discuss current PSHE curriculum and provision within school. What are the strengths and potential gaps that need addressing to create a PSHE curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils enabling them to flourish?
- Begin to write policies for Relationships Education and Sex Education and Health and Wellbeing Education.

### Spring Term 2020

#### Focus on parental engagement

- Invite parents into school to discuss the proposed PSHE curriculum and how it will be taught in school. Allow them time to view the content and resources and give their feedback, ask questions and share their concerns.
- Use feedback from parental meetings to complete policy documents for RHE and Sex education.

### Summer Term 2020

#### Focus on finalising the preparation of policies and PSHE curriculum

- PSHE curriculum to be finalised and prepared for September 2020.
- PSHE curriculum included in prospectus and referenced in meetings for new parents.
- Finalise and ratify policies for Relationships Education and Sex Education and Health and Wellbeing Education.
- Staff training on dealing with difficult questions, terminology and expectations of the new statutory RHE guidance. Create shared language for speaking to the children about issues of relationship and sex education.
- Staff training on new curriculum and expectations of RHE becoming a statutory subject within the curriculum.

### Autumn Term 2020 onwards.

- Relationships and Health Education curriculum becomes statutory in all schools.
- Clear policies must be in place and published on the school website.
- PSHE training for new staff.
- PSHE lessons timetabled and program of monitoring to be set up to measure impact of these lessons on pupils.
- PSHE curriculum content included in presentations / newsletters / class pages for parents.
- Follow up meeting for parents if necessary.
- Annual meetings with parents to discuss PSHE curriculum to be regularly timetabled into school calendar.

# Summary of Relationships Education and Health and Wellbeing Education guidance

## Context:

The statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

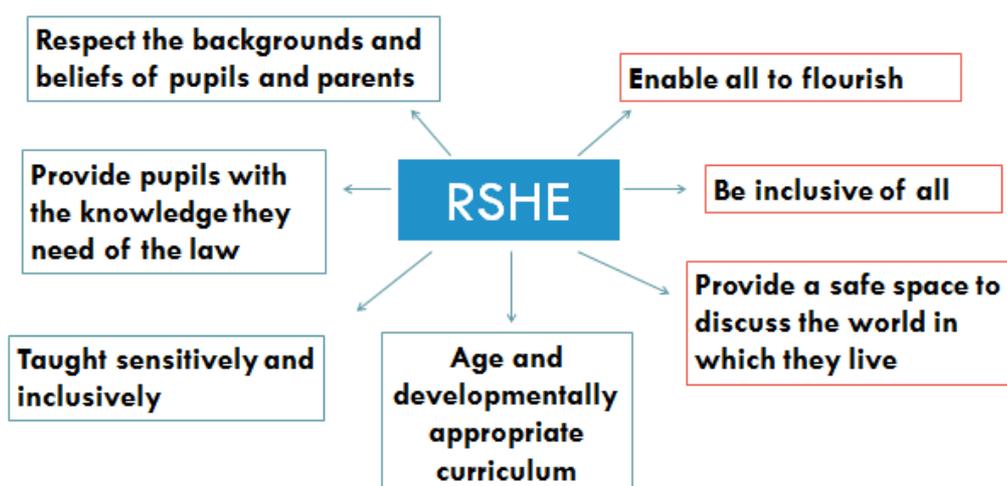
The guidance **will become compulsory in all schools from September 2020** and replaces the Sex and Relationship guidance document published in 2000.

Schools must have regard to the guidance, and where they depart from those parts of the guidance which state that they should (or should not) do something they will need to have good reasons for doing so.

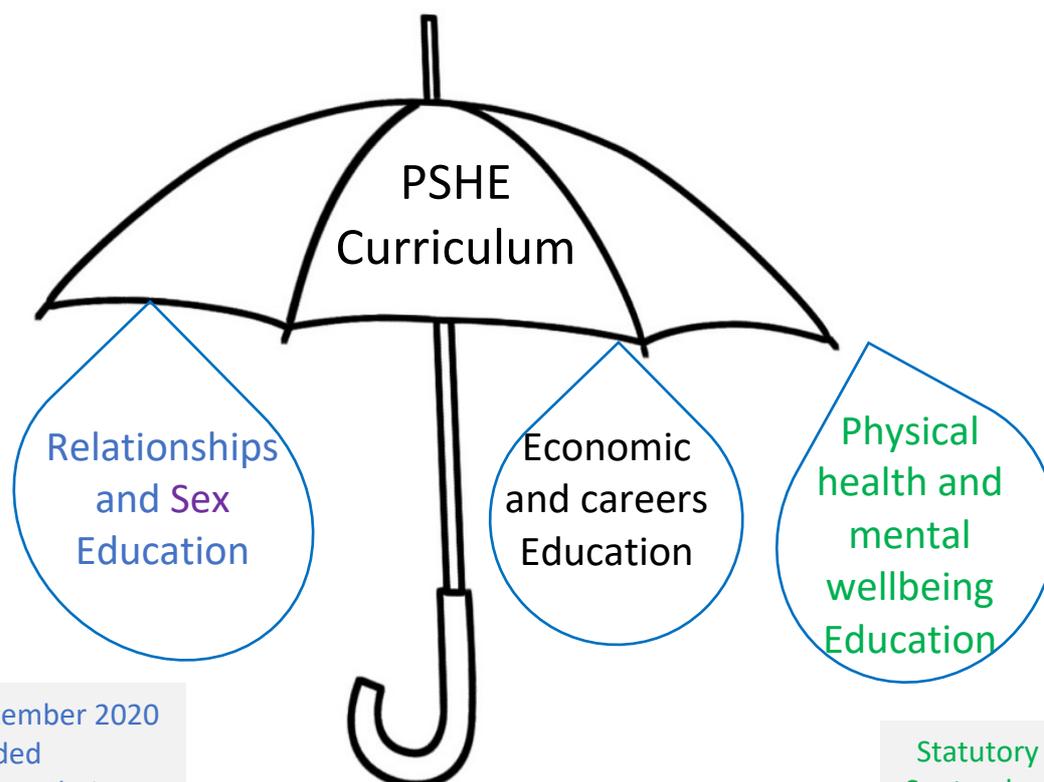
The Relationships Education and Health Education guidance document contains information on what schools **should** do and sets out the legal duties to which schools **must** comply when teaching Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

Under the proposals, **all pupils** will study compulsory health education as well as new reformed Relationships and Sex Education in secondary schools. Parents have the right to withdraw pupils from sex, but not relationships, education.

The national curriculum states that 'all schools should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), drawing on good practice'. PSHE education contributes to schools' statutory duties outlined in the Education Act 2002 and the Academies Act 2010 to provide a balanced and broadly-based curriculum and is essential to Ofsted judgements in relation to personal development, behaviour, welfare and safeguarding. **The relationships and health aspects of PSHE will be the only part of the PSHE curriculum that will be compulsory in all schools (from 2020.)**



Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is an important and necessary part of all pupils' education. **DfE 2019**



Statutory from September 2020  
Policy needed

Parents can't withdraw their children from Relationships Education.

Parents CAN withdraw their children from Sex Education up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. (See para 47)

Statutory from September 2020  
Policy advised  
Parents can't withdraw their children.

Relationships and Health Education (RHE) and Sex Education (SE) is an important subset of PSHE. Together they are part of the wider desire to teach a broad curriculum and both are equally important to the flourishing of children and young people. As such they should both be offered as part of a broad and balanced education and both must be properly resourced and supported. Accordingly, there should be a specialist PSHE and RSE teacher/subject leader in every secondary and primary school. This will be necessary to ensure the quality of teaching and learning in these subjects. **Church of England Education Office 2018**

## Key information:

### 3. Policy guidance Para 12 - 18

- By September 2020, **all** schools must have in place a written policy for Relationships and Sex Education.
- Schools must consult with parents in developing and renewing their policy.
- Schools must ensure that the policy meets the needs of pupils and parents and the community they serve.
- The policy should define relationships and sex education (for secondary schools), and set out the subject content, how it is taught, how it will be made accessible for those with SEND and who is responsible for teaching it. The policies should also describe how the subject is monitored and evaluated, and include information about a parent's right to request that their child be excused.
- These policies must be published on the school website and be available to parents and others.

### 4. Relationships Education and RSE in schools with a religious character. Para 19-22

- All schools must have a good understanding of pupils' faith backgrounds and form positive relationships between the school and local faith communities help to create a constructive context for the teaching of these subjects.
- In all schools, when teaching these subjects, the religious background of all pupils must be taken into account when planning teaching, so that the topics that are included in the core content in this guidance are appropriately handled. Schools must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or beliefs are amongst the protected characteristics.
- All schools may teach about faith perspectives. **In particular, schools with a religious character may teach the distinctive faith perspective on relationships, and balanced debate may take place about issues that are seen as contentious.** For example, the school may wish to reflect on faith teachings about certain topics as well as how their faith institutions may support people in matters of relationships and sex.
- In all schools, teaching **should reflect the law** (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.

### 5. The right to withdraw Para 45-50

#### **Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of the statutory RSE.**

This must be clearly communicated with parents to ensure they know; what is being taught and when and that they have the right to withdraw their child if they choose to do so. This information must be clearly laid out and explained in school policies that are on the schools website.

Following detailed discussions with the Head, school and parents, the school should respect the parents request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the children with sex education during one of those terms.

If a child is excused from sex education, it is the schools responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the time of withdrawal.

**There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.**

## 6.1 Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) – Secondary School *Para 65 -77*

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.

- It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and successful marriage, civil partnership or other committed relationship.
- It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what behavior is acceptable and unacceptable in a relationship. This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how much situations can be managed.
- Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It should also support people, through life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time. Knowledge about safer sex and sexual health remains important to ensure that young people are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life.
- Key aspects of the law relating to sex should be taught; age of consent, what consent is and is not, definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment and the choices permitted by law around pregnancy.
- Internet safety and harms should be addressed, teaching pupils the rules and principles for staying safe on line.

Pages 21- 23 sets out a more detailed description of what should be covered by the end of secondary education, (KS3 -5 in maintained schools)

This should all be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment. It is recognised that there will be a range of opinions regarding RSE. The starting principle, when teaching all these issues, must be that the applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

Maintained schools are also required to teach the national curriculum for science. At key stage 3 and 4, teaching will include lessons on; reproduction in humans, structure and function of male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycles, gametes, fertilisation, gestation, birth and HIV/AIDS.

There continues to be **no** right to withdraw from any part of the national curriculum.

## 6.2 Physical health and mental wellbeing - Secondary school para 93-99

In secondary school, health and wellbeing education should build on primary content and should introduce new content to older pupils at appropriate points.

This should enable pupils to understand how their bodies are changing, how they are feeling and why, to further develop the language that they use to talk about their bodies, health and emotions and to understand why terms associated with mental and physical health difficulties should not be used pejoratively.

Teaching about the impact of puberty, which will have started in primary school, should continue into secondary school, so that pupils are able to understand the physical and emotional changes and the impact they can have on their wider health and wellbeing.

Pupils should also be taught about the benefits of hobbies, interest and participation in their own communities can make on their overall wellbeing.

Pupils should be taught factual information about effective information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental and physical health conditions, drugs, alcohol and effective interventions.

Pupils should be taught how to judge when they, or someone they know, might need support and where they can seek support if they have concerns. This should include details on which adults in school and external sources of support.

## 7. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender guidance (LGBT) para 36-37

In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. Schools must ensure that they 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 are amongst the protected characteristics.

Schools should ensure that all of their teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. At the point at which schools consider it appropriate to teach their pupils about LGBT, they should ensure that this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson. Schools are free to determine how they do this, and we expect all pupils to have been taught LGBT content at a timely point as part of this area of the curriculum.

## 8. Role of Governors

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing boards or management committee should also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes;
- the subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn; and,
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

Foundation governors and trustees of faith academy trusts will also have wider responsibilities in relation to maintaining and developing the religious ethos of the schools.

## 9. SIAMS Evaluation Schedule – Strand 5

The following need to be explored:

- The school offers age appropriate and coherent relationships and sex education that reflects the school's Christian vision and supports pupils to form healthy relationships.
- c) Does the school have an approach to relationships and sex education (RSE) that ensures children are able to cherish themselves and others as unique and wonderfully made, and to form healthy relationships where they respect and offer dignity to others.

# Policy guidance and principles

All schools **must have** in place a written policy for Relationships and Sex Education,

Your policy must reflect your school context and clearly demonstrate how it is an outworking on your distinctive Christian vision.

Schools must:

- consult parents in developing and reviewing their policy.
- ensure that the policy meets the needs of pupils and parents and reflects the community they serve.
- have an up-to-date policy, which is made available to parents and others.
- provide a copy of the policy free of charge to anyone who asks for one and should publish the policy on the school website.
- ensure the policy reflects the views of teachers and pupils. Listening and responding to the views of young people will strengthen the policy, ensuring that it meets the needs of all pupils.

<b>Policies for mandatory subjects</b>		<b>Policy for non-mandatory subjects</b>
<b>For primary education<sup>9</sup></b>	<b>For secondary education</b>	<b>For primary schools that may choose to teach sex education</b>
Define Relationships Education	Define Relationships and Sex Education	Define any sex education they choose to teach other than that covered in the science curriculum.
Set out the subject content, how it is taught and who is responsible for teaching it.		
Describe how the subject is monitored and evaluated.		
Include information to clarify why parents <i>do not</i> have a right to withdraw their child.	Include information about a parent's right to request that their child be excused from sex education within RSE only.	Include information about a parent's right to request that their child be excused.

# Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy guidance

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The school offers age appropriate and coherent relationships and sex education that reflects the school's Christian vision and supports pupils to form healthy relationships. *(SIAMS evaluation schedule)*

## **Policy contents:** Relationships and Sex Education

- Define Relationships and Sex Education
- Explain how Relationships and Sex Education is an outworking of your distinctive Christian vision.
- Set out details of content/scheme of work and when and how each topic is taught.
- How the content/scheme of work will take into consideration the age of the pupils, local context and religious background of the pupils. The content / scheme of work must also consider other factors, such as any special educational needs or disabilities of their pupils.
- Who delivers Relationships and Sex Education— para 51-53 details the protocols for working with outside agencies to deliver part or some of the syllabus.
- How the subject will be monitored and evaluated.
- How staff will manage and handle difficult questions that go beyond what is set out for Relationships and Sex Education curriculum.
- Clear explanation of which parts of the curriculum parents can and can not withdraw their children.
- Requirements on schools in law e.g. the Equality Act (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice)
- How the policy has been produced, and how it will be kept under review, in both cases working with parents
- How often the policy is updated – Confirm the date by which the policy will be updated.
- Who approves and ratifies the policy.

## **Example definition of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)**

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship.

[How is Relationships Education an outworking of your distinctive Christian vision?](#)

## **Aim of Relationships and Sex Education**

- To teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.
- To help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing.
- To be able to identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.
- To understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.
- To enable young people to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity
- To support people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

## **Effective Relationships and Sex Education lessons will:**

- Be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment.
- Provide clear progression from what is taught in primary school in Relationships Education.
- Teach young people about family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult.
- Enable young people to distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful.
- Teach and discuss behaviour that is acceptable and unacceptable in a relationship. This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.
- Provide information young people need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.
- Enable young people to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship.
- Provide opportunities to discuss issues around contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure).
- Discuss issues around contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure).
- Teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.
- Provide opportunities to share knowledge about safer sex and sexual health, to ensure that young people are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life.
- Make young people aware of what the law says about sex, relationships as well as broader safeguarding issues. So they know what is right and wrong in the law and ensure young people take responsibility for their actions. (*see para 82*)

**Teachers should** build on the foundation of Relationships Education from primary school and, as pupils grow up, at the appropriate time extend teaching to include intimate relationships.

**Teachers should** use approaches such as distancing techniques, setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion and using question boxes to allow pupils to raise issues anonymously.

**Schools should** continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary:

Relationships Education curriculum will cover these areas through graduated age appropriate activities and discussions. (page 27-29)

- **Families**
- **Respectful relationships, including friendships**
- **Online media**
- **Being safe**
- **Intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health**

### Working with parents/carers and the wider community

- The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.
- All schools should work closely with parents when planning and delivering these subjects. Schools should ensure that parents know what will be taught and when, and clearly communicate the fact that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.
- Parents should be given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of RSE. Good communication and opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about the school's approach help increase confidence in the curriculum.

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## *Health and Mental Wellbeing Education*

**Policy contents:** Health and Wellbeing Education

- Define health and mental wellbeing
- Explain how Health and Mental Wellbeing Education is an outworking of your distinctive Christian vision.
- Set out details of content/scheme of work and when and how each topic is taught.
- How the content/scheme of work will take into consideration the age of the pupils, local context and religious background of the pupils. The content / scheme of work must also consider other factors, such as any special educational needs or disabilities of their pupils.
- Who delivers the content and how it will be taught.
- How delivery of the content will be made accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND
- How the subject will be monitored and evaluated.
- How to manage and handle difficult questions that go beyond what is set out for Health and Mental Wellbeing.
- Strategies for staff to support children with poor mental health and wellbeing, or if sensitive issues are raised within lessons.
- Clear explanation that parents do not have the right to withdraw from this curriculum area.
- Requirements on schools in law e.g. the Equality Act (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice)
- How the policy has been produced, and how it will be kept under review, in both cases working with parents
- How often the policy is updated – Confirm the date by which the policy will be updated.
- Who approves and ratifies the policy.

**Example definition of health and mental wellbeing education**

**Health and wellbeing education should focus on enabling pupils to make well-informed, positive choices for themselves by providing a language they can use to describe their bodies, health and emotions in a safe and supportive environment.**

How is Health and Mental Wellbeing an outworking of your distinctive Christian vision?

**Aim of Physical health and mental wellbeing education**

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Schools Officer, Christian Character The Diocese of Canterbury

- To teach the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing and that they are interlinked i.e.: good physical health contributes to good mental health and vice versa.
- To highlight the importance of mental wellbeing being part of normal daily life, in the same way as physical health.
- To promote pupils' self-control and ability to self-regulate, and provide strategies for doing so.
- To reduce stigma attached to health issues, in particular those to do with mental wellbeing.
- To engender an atmosphere that encourages openness, so pupils feel they can check their understanding and seek any necessary help and advice as they gain knowledge about how to promote good health and wellbeing.

**Effective physical health and mental wellbeing lessons will:**

- Enable pupils to understand how their bodies are changing, how they are feeling and why.
- To further develop the language that they use to talk about their bodies, health and emotions and to understand why terms associated with mental and physical health difficulties should not be used pejoratively.
- Enable pupils to understand where normal variations in emotions and physical complaints end and health and wellbeing issues begin.
- Teach and discuss the impact of puberty, so that pupils are able to understand the physical and emotional changes, which take place at this time and their impact on their wider health and wellbeing.
- Emphasise steps pupils can take to protect and support their own health and wellbeing.
- Enable pupils to understand the relationship between good physical health and good mental wellbeing and that this can also influence their ability to learn.
- Teach and discuss the importance of self-care, the benefits of physical activity and time spent outdoors, sufficient sleep, good nutrition and strategies for building resilience.
- Make pupils aware of the positive contribution hobbies, interests and participation in their own communities can make to overall wellbeing.
- Helps pupils understand that humans are social beings and that outward-facing activity, especially that with a service focus (for example, work, volunteering and participation in organisations such as the scouts or the girl guiding movements, the National Citizen Service or the Duke of Edinburgh Award) are beneficial for wellbeing. This can also contribute to the development of the attributes for a happy and successful adult life.
- Support pupils in recognising what makes them feel lonely and that self-focused or isolating lifestyle choices can lead to unhappiness and being disconnected from society for those who have greater need for companionship and relationships.
- Teach pupils factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental and physical health conditions, drugs, alcohol and information about effective interventions. (Schools may choose to include issues such as eating disorders, Eating disorders and extreme weight loss are a specialised area and schools should use qualified support or advice as needed.)

- Teach pupils how to judge when they, or someone they know, needs support and where they can seek help if they have concerns. This should include details on which adults in school (e.g. school nurses), and externally can help.

**Teachers should** be aware of common ‘adverse childhood experiences’ (such as family breakdown, bereavement and exposure to domestic violence) and when and how these may be affecting any of their pupils and so may be influencing how they experience these subjects. The impact of time spent online, the positive aspects of online support and negotiating social media, including online forums and gaming, should also be included. Teachers should understand that pupils who have experienced problems at home may depend more on schools for support.

**Schools should** continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary:

**Health and mental wellbeing curriculum** will cover these areas through age appropriate activities and discussions. (page 36 – 38)

- **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**

## *PSHE Curriculum guidance*

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Schools are free to determine how to deliver the content set out in the guidance, in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum.<sup>3</sup>

Effective teaching in these subjects will:

- ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size
- clearly communicate the content to pupils
- ensure lessons are created in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme.
- include sufficient well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real life situations.

<sup>3</sup> Maintained schools and academies are required to provide a curriculum, which is broad and balanced in accordance with Section 78 of the Education Act 2002.

In secondary schools, RSE will often address aspects of relationships and sex education in an integrated way within a single topic. Schools should develop programmes of teaching which prioritise effective delivery of the content, and do not need artificially to separate sex education and Relationships Education.

The lead teacher will need to work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education programmes complement, and do not duplicate, content covered in national curriculum subjects such as citizenship, science, computing and PE.

It is important to check prior knowledge and build this into the planning process to ensure a smooth transition between primary and secondary.

# PSHE Resource signposting

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## **PSHE Association**

[https://www.pshe-](https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/system/files/Mapping%20PoS%20to%20Statutory%20guidance%202019%20update_0.pdf)

[association.org.uk/system/files/Mapping%20PoS%20to%20Statutory%20guidance%202019%20update\\_0.pdf](https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/system/files/Mapping%20PoS%20to%20Statutory%20guidance%202019%20update_0.pdf)

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/pshe-education-planning-toolkit-key-stages-3-and-4>

<https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/Consultation%20activities%20-%20SRE%20policy%20-%20Sept%202014.pdf>

## **Jigsaw**

<https://www.jigsawpshe.com/>

## Appendix A

# Board of Education

*Serving children, schools and young people*

## A statement on behalf of Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education about Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance (2020)

The Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education (CDBE) fully supports and endorses the new RSE statutory guidance for schools and encourages its school leaders, governors and clergy to fully embrace the teaching of RSE in line with the new statutory requirements set by the DfE from 2020.

All Church of England schools are required in law to meet the Equality Act 2010 and from September 2020 to meet the requirements of the statutory guidance for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

### Principles

Our Church schools need to understand their role as a school for the whole local community built on Christian principles, (*for example; love, hospitality, inclusivity and compassion*), whilst being considerate of their Church of England foundation and the teachings of the Anglican Church in regards to relationships and sex.

Our Church schools must be committed to being welcoming and inclusive communities where all feel included, can learn and flourish, living out Jesus' promise of life in all its fullness (*John 10:10*) regardless of their family arrangements, beliefs or sexual or gender orientation.

The delivery of RSE in our church schools should encompass the teachings of the Church of England, including the Christian understanding of marriage as the context for sexual relationships and the importance of trust, loyalty, fidelity and choice, as well as the understanding of abstinence and celibacy as positive life choices, whilst being sensitive to the community it serves.

*In particular, schools with a religious character may teach the distinctive faith perspective on relationships, and balanced debate may take place about issues that are seen as contentious. For example, the school may wish to reflect on faith teachings about certain topics as well as how their faith institutions may support people in matters of relationships and sex. (RSE DfE guidance para 21)*

Children and young people need to be taught about the world in which they live in, to ensure they are able to articulate their own feelings and choices, whilst being considerate and understanding of the views, beliefs and life choices of others.

Children and young people are entitled to learn about relationships and sex education in a positive and safe environment, where they can develop the vocabulary, knowledge and skills to help understand themselves and others.

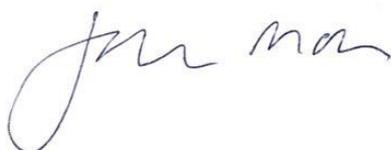
Children and young people need to be equipped with language and tools to develop healthy resilient relationships, in age-appropriate ways. This is especially vital in an internet age where they have far greater exposure to information than before, much of which reaches them from outside the safety of the classroom or family context.

The CDBE recognises that issues relating to relationships, human identity, sexual orientation and sex are sensitive and important. Therefore, these issues should be addressed in an age appropriate way within school to ensure pupils are given accurate information as a basis for understanding difference and removing prejudice.

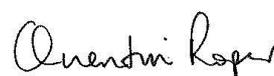
### **What schools should do next**

In line with this guidance, the CDBE expects Governing Bodies of Church of England schools within the Diocese of Canterbury to consult with parents on the RSE policy for their own school to ensure that parents and pupils are clear as to how this element of the school's curriculum will be taught and delivered.

Schools should ensure their RSE policy and curriculum reflects their distinctive Christian vision.



Dr. John Moss  
Chair of the Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education



Canon Quentin Roper  
Director of Education

School leaders and governors of our Church schools will already be familiar with the broader context of the teaching of RSE in Church schools which are set in the following documents:

- 'Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good' – [The Church of England Vision for Education](#)
- Statutory Inspection of Church of England & Methodist Schools – [Inspection Schedule](#) – Strand 5
- '[Valuing All God's Children](#)' – The Church of England's report (2017)
- [Link](#) to the DfE Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education guidance document.

## Appendix B

What young people most desire from RSE is to learn about securing, developing and sustaining healthy relationships and knowing to recognise when and how relationships go wrong.

Children want to be prepared for the opportunities, joys, challenges and responsibilities of being in relationship with other people. RSE must provide the understanding, vocabulary and strategies children need to keep themselves safe and to thrive within good relationships of all kinds. It should give children accurate information to equip them for life in the modern world and make sure they are not harmed or negatively influenced by unrealistic or dangerous materials and expectations.

Our desire is for young people to flourish and to gain every opportunity to live fulfilled lives and RSE should teach about healthy relationships and lifestyle choices.

Schools will be encouraged to reflect their own ethos and values whilst being sensitive to the needs of the community, including the context of belief, faith, religion and culture.

In Church of England schools, RSE will be rooted in the teachings of the Church, including the importance of trust, loyalty, fidelity and the Christian understanding of marriage as the context for sexual relationships, as well as the understanding of abstinence and celibacy as positive life choices.

In partnership with parents, schools have a vital role to play in the formation of our children. Taking that responsibility seriously means we are not prepared to leave their development to the distorted representations of sex and relationships that are just a few clicks away on their phones and computers, but will actively promote staying safe, developing healthy relationships, and protecting self-esteem and good mental health. That's what good RSE should aim for as it contributes to an education that develops dignity and respect.

Nigel Genders, the Church of England's Chief Education Officer

## Appendix C

TES 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019

**Article by Bishop of Ely, Stephen Conway. The Children of England's lead Bishop for education**

### **CofE: We hope parents won't withdraw their kids from the new RSE**

#### **A senior Church of England bishop throws support of church behind the controversial new sex education guidance**

This week, the new framework for the teaching of relationships and sex education (RSE) will become legal.

Much has been written about the guidance, and it's not surprising. Relationships are at the core of what it means to be human. How we frame those relationships – in family and friendship, within communities and between nations – needs careful thought. For Christians, as for other people of faith, our identity as humans exists in relationship with God. We believe that the dignity and worth of every individual exists because they are made unique and precious in the image and likeness of the Creator.

We seek to live in loving human relationships which reflect something of God's love for the world, and to form patterns of life in family and society in which each may be fully alive as God intended. The challenge is to live in ways which are rooted deep in Scripture and the tradition of the Christian faith, and which contribute to the common good of the plural society of which we are part today.

The point of the new RSE guidance is to update the existing legislation, which is nearly 20-years-old. When that guidance was written, fewer than ten per cent of households were connected to the internet, and connection speeds were snail-like.

There were no smartphones and no social media. Now, despite positive steps in regulating the internet, even primary school aged children live in a world of rapid online interactions that those with a duty of care will never be able fully to moderate or even to understand. More and more young people are exposed to pornography, to practices such sexting and shaming, and inhabit an online world which has real-life consequences for mental health and the development of positive relationships. Most parents would agree we cannot let this be the quantum of their role modelling, but do not themselves feel fully equipped to offer alternatives. Here is where the RSE guidance comes in.

This new legislation has been formed over two years by the government. The Church of England, as the biggest single education provider in the country, has been among the parties engaged in the consultation. We have been robust where necessary, and we feel both that the consultation has been genuine, and that the government deserves to be congratulated for the finished product.

First and foremost, the new guidance is about promoting healthy resilient relationships set in the context of character and virtue development. The focus is on respecting others, including the beliefs and practices of people with a specific faith commitment, as well as those from the many different types of families that make up our cultural context. It makes explicit a shared duty of care between parents and schools, and that what takes place in the classroom builds on what has been taught in the home.

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Schools Officer, Christian Character The Diocese of Canterbury

In the course of the consultation, we raised concerns about the problematisation of religion and faith; the final guidance asserts that all schools – not only those of a faith character – must teach about faith perspectives on these questions.

At the outset of the consultation, I said that this guidance would need to be carefully targeted and age-appropriate. It is pleasing to see a focus for primary school children on families of different types and healthy relationships, within the context of a set of shared values. Primary aged children will not – as has been suggested – be expected to learn about intimate sexual relationships, which rightly comes at the secondary stage.

The new guidance maintains the need for schools to consult their parental community in developing the curriculum, with parents ultimately having the right to excuse their children from sex education if they wish. Our hope is that they will not do so, but this must nonetheless remain an option in order to honour legitimately-held positions of concern.

While there should be no room for any form of discrimination, the mark of a genuinely plural society is respect for differing, sincerely-held views, whether about marriage or about other patterns of relationship which are societal norms today.

Schools will now have the option to adopt the new RSE guidance from the start of the next academic year, before it becomes a statutory requirement from September 2020.

I hope and pray that as they do so, schools, families and carers will work together to recognise the complementary contributions of each in enabling children to navigate safely growing up in the digital age, and ensuring they develop the skills they need to flourish in healthy relationships throughout their lives.

