

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, 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.

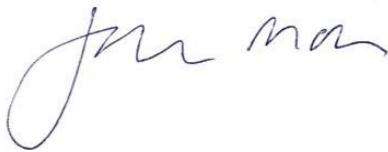
Children and young people need to be equipped with language and tools to develop healthy resilient relationships, in age-appropriate ways. This is especially vital in an internet age where they have far greater exposure to information than before, much of which reaches them from outside the safety of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

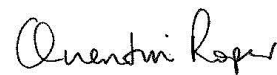
What schools should do next

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.