

# THE LIFE EDUCATION TRUST



## Mid-Essex Primary Schools' Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

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To be read in conjunction with the *LIFE Education Trust Relationships and Sex Education Policy*.

## **Introduction**

At the LIFE Mid-Essex Primary Schools, in LIFE Education Trust, we aim always to provide a caring environment where every child can thrive and is supported to achieve their unique potential as a child of God. We are proud of our Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Programme and see it as an important way of helping children to make sense of growing up as well as some of the bigger questions in life. We believe that our Relationships and Sex programme promotes pupils' self-esteem, emotional development and resourcefulness and helps children to form and maintain satisfying relationships.

This begins a lifelong process of relationships and feelings, acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex and sexuality. It should help young people to learn to respect themselves and others and to move with confidence from childhood, through adolescence and into adulthood.

Relationship and Sex education is learning about physical, moral, social and spiritual development and therefore helps pupils develop the skills and understanding they need to live confident, healthy and independent lives.

## **Main Elements of RSE**

At the LIFE Mid-Essex Primary Schools, there are three main elements to our Relationships and Sex Education Programme:

1. **Attitudes and Values** – These are based within the Christian context of our schools and include learning about love, respect and care in stable loving relationships as well as the value of family life and marriage within different family makeups for the nurture of children.
2. **Personal and Social Skills** – This includes: learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively; making choices and understanding differences without prejudice. It includes being aware of and recognising the dangers of child sexual exploitation and taking sensible and firm action to avoid this, i.e. following online safety rules, avoiding social media and chat rooms (especially when underage) and reporting intrusive responses both online and to an adult.
3. **Knowledge and Understanding** – This includes: learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages as well as understanding human sexuality and reproduction. This includes the contribution of Science whereby babies can be made in different ways such as IVF, sexual health, emotions and relationships.

Whilst some elements of the programme may be taught throughout the year as part of the Science curriculum (particularly Y2 & Y5 in the 'Animals Including Humans' and Y6 in their 'Evolution & Inheritance' topics) most of it will be taught during the Summer Term as part of our Personal, Social,

Health & Emotional (PSHE) curriculum. As part of this work, we cover the various 'life processes' for both animals & humans but will have a particular focus on relationships, healthy living & growing up.

At the LIFE Mid-Essex Schools, we believe that Effective Relationships and Sex Education should be:

- An integral part of the PSHE and Science curriculum and is delivered as part of the whole school curriculum.
- Provided early: before puberty, before feelings of sexual attraction and before young people develop sexual relationships.
- Taught together within class groups, although children may be separated as and when appropriate.
- The entitlement of each child in school.
- Covered with great sensitivity & provides opportunity for children to reflect, ask questions and to discuss their views on this vital aspect of life & learning.
- Expressed as a positive and open view of sex and sexuality and supports sexual self-acceptance.

We believe that our Relationships and Sex Education should be empowering for all pupils, regardless of gender, gender identity, sexuality, ethnicity, faith, ability and disability. It must also promote gender as well as LGBT equality; challenge all discrimination as well as ensure that our children understand that there are a variety of relationships and family patterns in the modern world.

## **Coverage**

The following will be taught in the specific year groups, as detailed below:

### **Reception to Year Two:**

- Developing the skills to have positive relationships with friends and family.
- An understanding of families/relationships set-ups.
- Exercise and personal hygiene.
- That animals including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce.
- To recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans.
- To recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others.
- To treat others with sensitivity.

### **Year Three:**

- Recognising that their actions affect themselves and others.
- Recognising and respond to a wider range of feelings in others.
- Recognising different types of relationship e.g. acquaintance, friend, relative, family.
- Understanding and developing 'healthy relationships'
- Recognising that relationships can be unhealthy and knowing who to turn to for support.
- Working collaboratively towards shared goals and managing disputes and conflict through negotiation and compromise.
- Understanding life-cycles in the animal kingdom.

- Recognising significant stages of the human life-cycle, including birth, adolescence, adulthood, parenthood, old age and death.

#### **Year Four:**

- Recognising that their actions affect themselves and others.
- Recognising acceptable and unacceptable physical contact.
- Understanding the concept of 'keeping something confidential or secret', when this should be agreed to and when it is right to break a confidence or share a secret.
- Listening to and responding respectfully towards a wide range of people, to feel confident to raise concerns and to recognise and care for other people's feelings.
- Knowing that civil partnerships and marriages are examples of stable, loving relationships. Understanding that marriage is a commitment freely entered into by both people and should not be forced.
- Working collaboratively towards shared goals and managing disputes and conflict through negotiation and compromise.

#### **Year Five:**

- Recognising that their actions affect themselves and others.
- Recognising and managing 'dares' Recognising and challenging stereotypes.
- Recognising that differences and similarities between people arise from a number of factors including family, cultural, ethnic, racial and religious diversity, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation and disability.
- Learning to try to see, respect and, if necessary, challenge another person's point of view.
- Realising the nature and consequences of discrimination: teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours including cyber bullying.
- As well as the use of prejudice-based language, how to respond to bullying and how to ask for help. Working collaboratively towards shared goals and managing disputes and conflict through negotiation and compromise.
- Knowing and using the correct biological terminology for the reproductive organs in the body. Understanding changes which occur during puberty, both physical and emotional.
- Understanding why women menstruate and the mechanics of menstruation.

#### **Year Six:**

- Recognising that their actions affect themselves and others.
- Working collaboratively towards shared goals and managing disputes and conflict through negotiation and compromise.
- Understanding physical attraction, sexual intercourse and making love.
- Recognising that conception takes place when a sperm fertilises an egg.
- Understanding family planning and responsible reproduction.
- Understanding orgasms / masturbation.
- Recognising the development of a baby through different stages of pregnancy (moved from Year 4).
- Messages of sexuality developed in the media.

## **Responsibilities**

- It is the responsibility of School Leaders and the Governing Body to ensure that RSE is taught within the parameters of the PHSE and Science curriculum and that it is an entitlement of every child.
- School Leaders will ensure that staff and parents are informed about the content and delivery of the curriculum. Parents of children in Years 5 & 6 will be given the opportunity to preview the resources used in the lessons.
- Parents are informed of their right to withdraw their child from part or the entire RSE programme except for those parts which fall within the statutory National Curriculum for Science.

The PSHE & RSE Leaders monitor and evaluate RSE teaching and learning, and review and update the RSE policy and resources regularly, with the School Leadership Teams.

## **Sensitive Issues**

From time to time, sensitive issues will be raised by pupils. It is important that all individuals concerned with the delivery of RSE in school are aware of the agreed values framework (see attitudes and values above). Parents and others should be reassured that the personal beliefs and attitudes of a teacher should not influence the teaching of RSE. The issues concerned may include contraception, abortion, safe sex, HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, sexual identity or orientation, homophobic bullying and different families. It is important to acknowledge that pupils may hear these terms through different sources such as the media, and need to feel able to ask for further information. The response from the member of staff will be appropriate to the child's age and maturity, and thought will be given to whether the response is appropriate in a class, small group or individual situation. The detailed lesson planning will clearly state the content that will be covered. Questions will always be treated with respect and with a caring response. Staff and other adults will always be sensitive to underlying problems which may be worrying a child. The main guidelines in this situation are:

- Be sensitive;
- Is the context appropriate?
- Is the question relevant to the content of the lesson?
- Is the group ready in terms of maturity?

In such instances, teachers may answer a question with the response "We are not learning about this in Year... You may ask your Parent/Carer when you get home. You will learn more about this in Year.." (if known). If staff have a concern, then parents may be contacted.

## **Confidentiality**

Staff should be clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities. They should be familiar with the procedures set out in the DfE document: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' as stated in regular Safeguarding Training. Teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. In certain circumstances, a child may wish to confide in a trusted member of staff. They should be made aware before any disclosure that information may have to be passed on to the

Designated Safeguarding Leader. If there is a concern about the child's safety, then teachers and the DSL should follow the guidelines in the SET Procedure Safeguarding Policies adopted by the school.

### **Right of Withdrawal**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of RSE sessions, except those elements taught as part of the National Curriculum for Science. Any parent wishing to discuss this aspect of the curriculum in more detail should contact the class teacher for more information.

## **Annex 1**

### **Regulations (Government guidance 202)**

#### **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education**

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 are made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, and provide that pupils receiving primary education must be taught Relationships Education, pupils receiving secondary education must be taught RSE and that all primary and secondary pupils must be taught Health Education. The new subjects of Relationships Education and RSE must be taught in all maintained schools, academies and independent schools. This includes pupil referral units, maintained special schools, special academies, and non-maintained special schools. All schools, except independent schools, must make provision for Health Education.

To give effect to the duty in section 34 of the 2017 Act and the power in section 35 of that Act, the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 amend existing provisions in the Education Act 1996 and the Education Act 2002 and insert new provisions into the Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactments) (England) Regulations 2007, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015. The new provisions include a requirement for the Secretary of State to publish guidance on Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education; require schools to have regard to that guidance; require schools to make a statement of policy on their provision of Relationships Education and RSE; and set out the circumstances in which a pupil is to be excused from RSE.

The regulations and guidance in relation to Health Education do not apply to independent schools – they will continue to make provision for the health education element of PSHE under the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

## Annex 2: Withdrawal Form

**Withdrawal from sex education elements within the RSE curriculum (withdrawal from relationships or science education is not permitted)**

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	