

Aims:

- To support schools in responding to statutory requirements in order that our children receive the best education for equipping them to be healthy, safe and to confidently build good, strong relationships.
- To support schools in confidently delivering quality Relationships and Sex Education, within a Christian ethos.
- To provide useful tools and sign post high quality resources for delivering and monitoring this important area of the curriculum.

Rationale:

In light of the new Government guidance on teaching RSE, schools will be mandated to address topics on relationships, covering other topics within the needs of their school community and according to the 'tenets of their faith', whilst still being consistent with the requirements of the Equality Act.

It is the intention of this guidance from the Diocese, that we support schools to achieve this, exercising their right to flexibility of **how** to teach this that allows delivery within the integrity of the Christian ethos and in such a way that the school community, especially the children, experience "life in all its fullness."

Initial responses to the Government initiatives to listen to the teacher voice have raised common concerns; 65% of Senior leaders said there is a requirement for suitable teaching materials and resources, 51% said there was a need for a CPD programme and examples of good practice. Time, funding and the desire for specialist teachers were all common concerns. The Diocese will seek to support these concerns through this guidance and the programme of training offered in the forthcoming year.

Parents & Carers:

Parents & carers must be given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of relationships education & RSE. Schools will continue to be required to publish policies on these subjects for parents and consult parents on these to feed in their views. These policies must contain the circumstances in which a child is to be excused from receiving specific elements of this education.

Parents will not be able to withdraw their children from mandatory Relationship Education in primary school, but only from classes that address sex education that sit outside of the science

Guidance Documents for Relationship and Sex Education

elements of the National Curriculum. At this stage, there is not intended to be any content relating to 'sex' in the primary curriculum, though the legislation does not specify what does and doesn't fall into these categories, (eg: naming body parts, preparation for puberty, talking about safe and unsafe touch.)

At secondary level, parents will be able to withdraw children from RSE lessons that sit outside of the science elements of the National Curriculum.

It is therefore necessary for schools to be able to identify on their curriculum planning what is relationships education and what is sex education.

The diocese suggests that, as in RE, this request needs to be made in writing so that schools can demonstrate to Ofsted and other regulatory agencies that they have met statutory requirements.

National surveys show that children want their parents to be their primary educators in this area, but in reality, many struggle to do that, (surveys show for only 3% of boys, fathers were the main source of information about sex.)

"Many parents want to take a more active role but say they need support to do so. When schools are providing good quality SRE they involve parents and this helps parents understand how they can play a part at home too." (Sex Education Forum)

Roles of Governors & Key Staff:

It is the role of the Head teacher to ensure that both staff and parents are informed about RSE policy and that it is implemented effectively. Guidance from the Church of England Education Office, in the appendix of their guidance document, Valuing All God's Children, states:

'Make it clear that relationships and sex education is designed to prepare all pupils for the future, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.'

RSE must promote gender equality and LGBT equality and it must challenge discrimination. RSE must take the needs and experiences of LGBT people into account and it should seek to develop understanding that there are a variety of relationships and family patterns in the modern world.'

Along with the Governors, the Head teacher will support the design of a programme of study which ensures that all areas of the Government guidance is covered and meets the needs of the individual children in their school, to monitor adherence to policy and audit practice within the school.

It is also the Head teacher's responsibility to ensure that staff are given sufficient training in order to teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity in line with the Church of England's Vision for Education and guidance in Valuing all God's Children.

Responsibility for Teaching:

All teachers need basic training in delivering RSE, with option to train a RSE / PSHE specialist teacher if it is to be considered equal to other subjects.

It is recommended that this is taught as a regularly timetabled lesson and not solely as a 'drop-down' session. Research suggests that children respond best when schools plan delivery for this subject to be undertaken by a consistent member of staff and not relying upon visitors.

However, other professionals, such as the following, may deliver supportive sessions:

- School Nurse Team
- Police Schools Liaison Officer
- Youth and Community workers
- Clergy or faith leaders

Appendix:

- Church of England Education Office response to RSE
- Resource List
- Auditing tools for schools
- Exemplar letters
- Love & Sex Matters Resource books