



Reviewed July 2024

ST BERTELINE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION CURRICULUM STATEMENT

Intent

At St Bertelina's School we consider relationship and sex education to be an important component of the personal, social and health education programme. (see also PSHE document) This relationship and sex education statement reflects the consensus of opinion of parents, the whole teaching staff and has the full agreement of the Governing Body and in response to changes in legislation for RSE (2019). The implementation of this is the responsibility of all teaching staff. It will be reviewed annually.

The broad aim of the Relationship and Sex Education Programme at St Bertelina's school is to inform the children about puberty, pregnancy, birth and growth, in an honest and positive manner. This needs to be in the context of our Christian mission, whilst preserving the excitement of the beginnings of a new life and emergence into adulthood. The broad scope of the Relationship, Health and Sex education programme permeates through the curriculum and community life of the school e.g. births, christenings, healthy eating menus at lunchtime. It builds on a skills base involving assertiveness and communication.

The education taught at St Bertelina's school takes place within a moral framework. The staff at St Bertelina's believe this education does involve the knowledge of how the human body functions, but it is also concerned with exploring relationships, feelings about the family, love and responsibilities towards oneself and others. In order to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, children need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships.

In school this education is viewed as a developmental process; the beginnings are pre-school - in the home e.g. care of teeth, clean hands etc. At St Bertelina's we aim to build on these experiences. From reception to Year 6 the children will be given the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills at levels appropriate to their age and ability. Whilst at school pupils are encouraged to examine their own and others attitudes and values and to make informed decisions, to know how and when to ask for support or help.

Relationship and Sex Education at St Bertelina's School is planned to support the general aims and philosophy of the school and is an entitlement of all children, fully complying with the The Equality Act 2010. Parents are made fully aware of this programme when signing the Home School Agreement upon starting school. They do have the right to withdraw their child from some or all of the sex education aspect of RSE (but not relationships education) but before this happens discussion between parents and school need to take place. The head teacher will meet with parents to discuss the benefits of receiving this

important education and the detrimental effects that withdrawal might have upon the child. Records of the discussions will be kept.

The programme is developmental, and appropriate to the age and stage of the child. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure the full accessibility of all children, including children with SEND. Common starting levels are not assumed. Factual knowledge and the exploration of facts, examining opinions, concepts and encouraging discussion is vital, using high quality, evidence based and age-appropriate teaching. It encourages the development of personal and inter-personal skills. It should encourage awareness, respect and responsibility for oneself and others. Concepts such as love, joy, anger, fear, hate, trust, respect are difficult to describe, but are explored carefully as part of RSE and PSHE. Teaching is sensitive and age appropriate.

A key notion of this education at St Berteline's School is that of self-esteem. If self-esteem is low, then it is less likely that decisions about behaviour will be well formulated and relationships healthy. A variety of factors may influence self-esteem - class, gender, race, and upbringing, for example. At school, education can explore these influences, and encourage pupils to be aware of the options open to them, and to take charge of decisions about their own behaviour. We aim to develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships.

Implementation

RSE will be taught both discretely and as a part of other curriculum lessons using the HeartSmart Scheme of Work (see HeartSmart progression plan).

When teaching RSE at St Berteline's School, the staff are aware it is of vital importance to match teaching to the maturity of the pupils. When children have a sound foundation of such concepts as living/non-living, that all things are born, and progress through a young stage to adult form, and that like produce like, then learning about birth and reproduction will be a natural progression.

Children work in their class group, their year group or small group as is deemed suitable by the teacher. This is especially useful if the children wish to raise issues important to them. The opportunity for children to discuss issues with a teacher of their own sex, parents, nurse etc. is encouraged.

At St Berteline's school the teacher - child relationship is all important when teaching sex education, as discussions may trigger frank questions and reveal a variety of attitudes. Before introducing the subject of sex education, teachers often introduce the subject through other areas of the school curriculum in order to boost confidence and establish a common starting point. Children are encouraged to discuss issues openly without feeling intimidated. Also, they have the opportunity to speak more privately to staff or visitors if the child wishes, managing difficult questions without going beyond the age-appropriate learning. Discussion around what is appropriate and inappropriate is part of staff training.

However, teachers cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. Any concerns regarding the welfare of any child will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and dealt with according to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. (see separate policy)

Parental Involvement

Parents are always kept fully informed of the sex education programme at school and we offer full support in talking to their children, linking with what is being taught in school. They are encouraged to come into school to view the various videos, books etc. that are used, perhaps borrowing copies of a book to continue discussion at home. Parents are made aware of how the subject is approached and followed up through school in parent's curriculum meetings.

Many children at school may have new brothers or sisters, babies and expectant mothers are frequently in the school. Teachers may invite the mothers into the classroom to stimulate discussion and learning. Mothers-to-be are used as visual aids and new babies and mums are always welcomed into school.

Impact

Children leave our school as happy, well balanced individuals. They feel loved, cared for, valued and well prepared for the next step in life. Ofsted quoted "Pupils at St Berteline's feel like part of a family. They are happy at school. There is genuine warmth among staff and pupils. Pupils feel cared for and well supported." Children flourish in extra curricular activities and residential visits, sports and drama. Children hold responsibilities throughout school and have created a happy, safe learning environment. They make decisions as members of the school council. Children regularly fundraise for charities that are meaningful to them, this is a key element of our courageous advocacy

The themes below are taught in every year and by the end of St Bert's the children will know:

<p>Families and people who care for me</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability. • the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives. • that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care. • that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up. • that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong. • how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.
<p>Caring friendships</p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends. • the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties. • that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. • that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right. • how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

<p>Respectful relationships</p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs. • practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • the conventions of courtesy and manners. • the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. • that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority. • about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help. • what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive. • the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.
<p>Online relationships</p>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not. • that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous. • the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them. • how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. • how information and data is shared and used online.

Being safe	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).• about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.• that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.• how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.• how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling uncomfortable about any adult.• how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.• how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.• where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.
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A diagram to illustrate the connection between personal, social, health, relationship and sex education within the context of a church school.

