



St Matthews C of E Primary School

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) including PSHE Policy

"Let your light shine"

1. Introduction

Our RSHE programme promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at St Matthew's Primary School, preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences they will encounter throughout their lives. It aims to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills and values they need to lead healthy, safe and fulfilling lives.

We have carefully tailored our programme of study to meet the specific needs of our pupils while also addressing the universal experiences and challenges that all children may face. Through this approach, pupils develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values and skills necessary to reach their full potential as individuals and as active members of their local and wider global community.

From September 2020, it became statutory for all maintained primary schools to provide Relationships Education and Health Education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017. At St Matthew's this is delivered to all pupils in Reception to Year 6 through our Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum.

In our school we deliver RSHE through our Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum, which includes Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. We use *Jigsaw*, *Difference*, *the mindful approach to PSHE*, alongside a range of other age-appropriate resources and support materials. Our approach promotes respect, inclusion and understanding of differences, helping pupils to value diversity and develop positive relationships with others.

'We undertake to follow the principles in the Church of England Charter for faith sensitive and inclusive relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (RSHE). This is underpinned by two key biblical passages:

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them. (Genesis 1:27, NRSV)

I have come in order that you might have life - life in all its fullness. (John 10:10, GNB)

Aims of Policy:

- Reflect the school's Church of England Status.
- Reflect and strengthen the school's Christian ethos and culture.
- Reflect the school vision and values
- Include the teachings of the Church of England on marriage and relationships.
- Take place within a school environment which enables children and adults to flourish.
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepare pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence, empathy and self-worth.
- Create a respectful culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

- Develop pupils age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships including respect and consent.
- Safeguard adults and children.
- Ensure RSHE meets the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice.

2. Key Principles

Relationships Education

At St Matthew's we believe that Relationships Education should:

- have a clear focus on developing positive, strong and healthy relationships
 - teach respect and inclusivity
 - reinforce our school's values
 - teach our pupils about 'Families and people who care for me', 'Caring friendships', 'Respectful relationships', 'Online relationships' and 'Being safe'
 - emphasise how pupils keep themselves safe both on and offline
 - 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 how to report concerns and abuse with links to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
 - provide our pupils with the vocabulary and confidence needed to speak up for themselves and their rights
 - promote equal, safe and enjoyable relationships, and be taught in a way which fosters LGBTQ and gender equality, in line with the Equalities Act 2010
 - link closely with other parts of our curriculum including Science, Religious Education, Computing and Sex Education.
- Parents will not be able to withdraw their child from this curriculum.

"If any school is not educating pupils to understand the rights of all people to live freely within their sexual orientation or gender identity without discrimination, they would be failing in their duty to prepare their pupils to live in modern Britain." (*Valuing All God's Children - Church of England 2018 p34*) *Note:* This is all covered in an age-appropriate way.

Health Education

At St Matthew's we believe that Health Education should:

- focus equally on physical, mental and emotional health
- provide our pupils with the skills and knowledge to care effectively for themselves
- provide our pupils with strategies for coping with their emotions to support their mental health
- teach our pupils and enable them to thrive
- teach our pupils about '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'.

The Healthy Me unit in Jigsaw covers most of the statutory Health Education although some of the outcomes are taught elsewhere. Emotional and mental health is nurtured every RSHE lesson through the Calm Me time, social skills are grown every lesson through the Connect Us activity and respect is enhanced through the use of the RSHE Charter and school values.

- Parents will not be able to withdraw their child from this curriculum.

Sex Education

The DfE Guidance 2019 (p.23) recommends that all primary schools 'have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. Although, Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools. (p. 23) at St Matthew's we have always followed a sex education programme within our curriculum and will continue to do so as we believe:

- effective RSE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain relationships
- RSE makes an important contribution to health and well-being by supporting children and young people's ability to learn, achieve and flourish
- our pupils should understand about how their bodies work and the correct terminology for their body parts
- children should understand the facts about human reproduction before they leave primary school, so we teach this as part of our Science Curriculum
- children and young people should be equipped to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being

"Schools are to determine the content of sex education at primary school. Sex education 'should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born". *DfE 2019*

At St Matthew's, puberty is taught as a statutory requirement of Health Education and taught through our Jigsaw PSHE Programme in the 'Changing Me' unit in Summer 2. From the DfE Guidance, we conclude that Sex Education refers to Human Reproduction. The Science National Curriculum requires children to know how mammals reproduce. In order to teach Sex Education in a scientific context, we have opted to teach this within our Science curriculum, as we believe this is most appropriate for our children.

- Therefore, the parental right to withdraw their child is not applicable. We are of course happy to discuss the content of the curriculum and invite you to contact the Headteacher in writing if you wish to do so.

Safeguarding

At St Matthew's we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (as defined in our Safeguarding Policy).

To achieve our commitment to this:

- our PSHE curriculum develops the children's knowledge and understanding of their right to be safe (*UNCRC article 19*)
- we provide children with the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about their own safety
- we promote children's understanding of safe and effective care of themselves
- we teach them the correct vocabulary to be able to communicate about their welfare and rights
- all content taught to our pupils, and resources used, are age appropriate starting in Reception, RSE lessons develop our pupils' confidence to safeguard themselves, teaching them about standing up for themselves, who they can trust, respecting their body, dealing with inappropriate touching, speaking up and being confident to say no (see appendix for lesson details)

- RSE lessons taught in Year 5 & 6 include specific discussions about child protection and safeguarding in which the issue of FGM is mentioned. These lessons cover issues designed to help children prepare themselves for the transition to secondary school and some will be taught in single sex groups. They are designed to help girls understand their right to be safe and be in control of their bodies.
- we encourage them to have confidence to speak up for themselves, for others and their rights
- we support children to feel safe and valued, and nurture them to thrive and achieve the best possible outcomes for their physical, mental and emotional wellbeing

In essence, teaching about safety and relationships as part of PSHE (and particularly RSE) contributes to how we approach the safeguarding of pupils. It helps our pupils to recognise when they and others are at risk and equips them with the skills, strategies and language they need to take appropriate action. This is crucial to fulfilling statutory duties in relation to safeguarding pupils, as well as to meeting Ofsted expectations.

If staff have a concern regarding a child's physical, mental or emotional wellbeing, they can refer to the Safeguarding Team through the Safeguard system we have in place at school. The team will then look at what support can be offered to the child. It is law that if you suspect or know a child has had or will have FGM performed on them, it is YOUR duty of care to report this to Social Services / to the police.

3. Intent

Every child is entitled to receive PSHE regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, age, cultural heritage, disability, sexuality, language needs or special educational needs. In line with the protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils are treated with respect and are provided with equal opportunities to access learning.

It is our intention to meet the statutory guidance by providing this opportunity equally to all children. Therefore, our school's overarching intent for our pupils is to deliver high-quality Personal, Social, Health Education (including Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education) using *Jigsaw: The Mindful Approach to PSHE* alongside other age-appropriate resources, ensuring that all pupils are provided with:

- accurate, balanced and relevant knowledge.
- opportunities to turn that knowledge into personal understanding.
- opportunities to explore, clarify and if necessary challenge, their own and others' values, attitudes, beliefs, rights and responsibilities.
- the skills, language and strategies they need in order to live healthy, safe, fulfilling responsible and balanced lives.
- opportunities to develop positive personal attributes such as resilience, self-confidence, self-esteem and empathy.
- accurate, balanced and relevant knowledge to enable them to appreciate what it means to be a positive, tolerant member of a diverse multicultural society.

4. Implementation

Our curriculum brings together RSHE Education, emotional literacy, social skills and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning, and is designed as a whole school approach, with all year groups from Reception to Year 6 working on the same theme at the same time. There are 6 themes, and each one has 2 learning intentions: one is based on specific PSHE learning, and the other based on emotional literacy and social skills development to enhance children's emotional and mental health. The 6 themes are explained in the table below:

Term	Unit Name	Content
Autumn 1	Being Me in My World	Includes understanding my place in the class, school and global community, as well as devising Learning Charters
Autumn 2	Celebrating Difference	Includes anti-bullying (cyber and homophobic bullying included) and diversity work
Spring 1	Dreams and Goals	Includes goal-setting, aspirations, working together to design and organise fund-raising events
Spring 2	Healthy Me	Includes drugs and alcohol education, self-esteem and confidence as well as healthy lifestyle choices
Summer 1	Relationships	Includes understanding friendship, family and other relationships, conflict resolution and communication skills in Relationship Education
Summer 2	Changing Me	Includes Relationships and Sex Education in the context of looking at change

Whilst PSHE education is split into the 6 themes, in reality there will always be overlap. Therefore, it is important to provide a spiral programme of knowledge, skills and development, where prior learning is revisited, reinforced and extended in age and key stage appropriate contexts.

Objectives/Pupil learning intentions

Pupils are encouraged to take part in a wide range of activities and experiences across and beyond the curriculum, contributing fully to the life of their school and communities. In doing so they learn to recognise their own worth, work well with others and become more responsible for their own learning. The RSHE curriculum will support the development of the skills, attitudes, values and behaviour, which enable pupils to:

- have a sense of purpose
- value self and others
- form relationships
- make and act on informed decisions
- communicate effectively
- work with others
- respond to challenge
- be an active partner in their own learning
- be active citizens within the local community
- explore issues related to living in a democratic society
- understand how to keep themselves safe
- become healthy and fulfilled individuals

Pupils will learn to understand and respect our common humanity, diversity and differences so that they can go on to form effective, fulfilling relationships that are an essential part of life and learning.

Our children will be taught in a safe and supportive learning environment. We will ensure that where a pupil indicates that they may be vulnerable and at risk, they will get appropriate support by staff members following the schools safeguarding/child protection policies.

EYFS knowledge beyond the scheme of work

The teaching of Relationships Education begins in Reception, as it is likely that some of the subject matter may arise in EYFS particularly in regards to different families. Whilst children will not be explicitly taught about different families as a unit of work, staff will acknowledge the existence of different families should it arise (e.g. a pupil identifies and talks about their family unit). This is done in line with the key principles of this policy (see part 3).

In the Foundation Stage, PSHE permeates all aspects of the curriculum covered during the year. We relate the PSHE aspects of the children's work to the areas of learning set out in the Foundation Stage guidance to develop a child's personal, emotional and social development. This is also supported through other areas of learning such as Knowledge and Understanding and Communication, Language and Literacy.

Organisation/provision

We teach Relationship and Sex Education through our RSHE curriculum and have dedicated weekly curriculum time/lessons. RSHE is also covered through other areas of the school's curriculum; e.g. Religious Education. In addition, RSHE is developed through whole-school activities and events:

- Our school council; the representatives from each class meet regularly to discuss school matters.
- We offer two residential visits in Key Stage 2 where pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 visit outdoor training centres, where there is a particular focus on developing pupils' self-esteem and independence, giving them opportunities to develop leadership skills and positive group work.
- Focus weeks; our children take part in themed weeks and whole school events.
- Visiting speakers.
- A variety of clubs.

We also ensure that we incorporate and respect all social, moral, spiritual and cultural issues, encouraging our children to think about their place within Britain as citizens. We include the five British Values (democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths/beliefs) within our teachings to establish an effective and safe school environment.

Teaching RSHE to children with special needs

All pupils, regardless of their needs must be part of RSHE lessons, as it is an important part of developing healthy relationships with their peers. We will respect pupils' unique starting points by providing learning opportunities that are matched to the individual needs of all children. When teaching RSHE, we consider the targets set for the children in their Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), some of which may be directly related to RSHE targets.

Where appropriate, we will provide additional opportunities to take responsibility, develop leadership skills, think creatively and use their talents for the good of the class or the wider community.

Equality and Diversity

At St Matthew's Primary School, RSHE Education is accessible to every pupil. Teaching will consider the ability, age, readiness, religious and cultural backgrounds of our young people and those with English as a second language to ensure that all can fully access our RSHE education provision, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 covers the way the curriculum is delivered, as schools and other education providers must ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Schools have a duty under the Equality Act to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Inclusive RSE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promote understanding and respect. The Department for Education has produced advice on The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE, 2014b).

Schools have a legal duty to promote equality (Equality Act, 2010) and to combat bullying (Education Act, 2006) (which includes homophobic, sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying) and Section 4.2 of the national curriculum (2014) states “Teachers should take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.”

LGBTQ (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning)

School (and wider society) is a place where all children should feel safe and respected. There are a variety of family situations in British society; some children will have parents who are separated, some may live with a mum and a dad, some may have step-parents, and some may be fostered or adopted. Some may have other family arrangements, and some will have LGBTQ parents or other LGBTQ family members. Any child who lives in a family that is different from the stereotypical household of mum, dad and children should not be made to feel less accepted, or that their family is any less loving and caring. Children who feel unaccepted or isolated are more vulnerable to the effects of mental and emotional stigma and potentially less able to apply themselves to learning.

St Matthew’s ethos and the Jigsaw philosophy values every child as a unique human being and does not discriminate but supports them all to achieve the best they can be. Jigsaw’s lessons help children explore why a loving and caring family is important. They have been written so that no child is made to feel inadequate or unaccepted, whatever their family background. (Please refer to appendix for further information and questions on this)

For further explanation as to how we approach LGBTQ relationships in the PSHE Programme please see: ‘Including and valuing all children. What does Jigsaw teach about LGBTQ relationships?’ (*In appendix*)

RSHE and Computing

Learning in RSHE will compliment learning in Computing, where the children will develop a sense of global citizenship by safe use of the internet. There is an online safety policy for all pupils, which aims to develop a set of safe and discriminating behaviours for pupils to adopt when using the internet and other technologies. Through discussion of safety and other issues related to electronic communication, the children develop their own view about the use and misuse of ICT, and they also gain an insight into the interdependence of ICT users around the world.

5. Resources

Resources used to support the teaching of our PSHE curriculum will include Jigsaw; NSPCC, Difference and other age-appropriate support materials. Resources for RSHE are kept in year group specific RSHE Boxes. The school is a member of the PSHE Association, an excellent website which is endorsed by the DfE and includes additional curriculum guidance and CPD training.

6. Assessment and recording

In RSHE there are two broad areas for assessment:

- Children's knowledge and understanding, such as their awareness of health, comprehension of rules, understanding of health and safety procedures, correct use of key terminology, and grasp of concepts including democracy.
- How well children can use their knowledge and understanding in developing skills and attitudes; for example, through participating in discussions, group tasks and activities, managing conflict, making decisions and promoting positive relationships.

Pupils work will be recorded in individual RSHE books throughout the year (minimum of 2 pieces per half term), as well as in Class RSHE books (minimum of 2 pieces per half term).

7. Informing our school community

The school will share a RSHE knowledge and progression overview for each unit/ half term available via Google Classroom. This will include the key aims, vocabulary and suggestions to support family learning. In line with our Education Visits policy, parents would also be made aware of any visitors to school in relation to a unit of work.

Every summer term, parents will be invited into school to view the year group resources used to teach 'Changing Me' and ask any questions they may have.

8. Responsibilities

The Governing body will approve the RHSE policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation. The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the policy is taught consistently across the school. The RSHE team will support the implementation of our new curriculum, monitoring across the school and providing relevant CPD.

The staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way, adhering to the policy and guidance
- Modelling positive attitudes to Relationships education
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSHE, and when discussing issues related to relationships, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

9. Safeguarding

Teachers need to be aware that sometimes disclosures may be made during these sessions; in which case safeguarding procedures must be followed immediately.

10. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE Education as part of continuous professional development. They will be guided and supported in how to respond to pupils where their understanding goes beyond that of the planned unit of work and how to deal with difficult questions.

11. Impact

The RSHE Lead and SLT are responsible for monitoring and reviewing the standards of children's work and the quality of teaching. This will be undertaken through a variety of ways, which may include learning walks, book looks etc. They will support colleagues in the teaching of RSHE, by giving them information about current developments in the subject. Progress will be evidenced through pupil books, class books and children's personal, social and emotional development.

12. Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff and governors and a consultation period with parents. The consultation and policy development process involves the following steps:

- a) Review – a working group collated together all applicable information including relevant national and local guidance
- b) Staff consultation – all school staff given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- c) Governor consultation – all Governors given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- d) Parent/Carer consultation – all parents given the opportunity to look at the policy and to complete a survey about the policy and the programme of study
- e) Pupils – we will listen and respond to the views of young people to ensure the scheme of work meets the needs of all pupils
- f) Ratification – following consultation amendments, this draft policy will be shared with governors and ratified

The policy was updated in the 2025/2026 academic year by the Headteacher and RSHE lead. It is up to date with current guidance from the Government and DfE.

Ratified by Governors: 19 March 2026

To be reviewed every year

RSHE (including PSHE & RSE) Policy Appendix

Appendix 1: Government Expectations

Relationship Education in Primary schools – what do we cover?

The focus in primary school should be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

The guidance states that, by the end of primary school, pupils should know about...

Families and people who care for me:

- 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 (Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious).
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.
- 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

These aspects are covered in lessons within the themes: Relationships, Changing Me, Celebrating Difference and Being Me in My World in weekly lessons.

Online Relationships:

- 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

These aspects are covered in lessons within the themes: Relationships, Changing Me & Celebrating Difference.

Being Safe:

- 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 bad 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.

These aspects are covered in lessons within the themes: Relationships, Healthy Me, Changing Me & Celebrating Difference.

In line with updated statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), the school will further develop its RSHE curriculum to reflect revised expectations.

The curriculum will include greater focus on mental health and wellbeing, including grief and bereavement, and will address emerging online risks such as online relationships, gaming and addictive behaviours. Teaching will also strengthen pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles, including balanced diets, meal preparation, sleep, screen use and oral hygiene. The drugs and alcohol unit will be expanded to include learning about vaping.

In addition, the curriculum will explicitly teach personal safety, including fire, road and water safety, ensuring pupils develop the knowledge and skills needed to keep themselves safe.

These new elements will be incorporated within the existing themes already delivered in the curriculum from September 2026.