Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Date: **September 2024**

Date of review: **Annually in September**

Rationale and Ethos:

We believe Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is part of a lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. At Alvechurch, RSE is centred on personal safety, caring for others and building strong relationships and ensuring that children are able to cherish themselves and others as unique and wonderfully made. This is coupled with teaching students about the human body and its changes during puberty, including information about reproduction, control of fertility and sexual health, sexuality and sexual relationships.

Effective relationship and sex education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives and to treat everyone with dignity as all people are made by God and loved by God.. We aim to inform pupils, presenting relevant facts in an objective, medically correct and balanced manner. Alvechurch will help young people learn to respect themselves and others, enabling them to move with confidence through childhood and the beginning stages of adolescence, empowering them with the knowledge and confidence to prepare them for their journey to adulthood.

Intended outcomes for RSE at Alvechurch will enable:

- Opportunities to clarify some of their attitudes towards friendships, sexuality and gender.
- Opportunities to discuss some moral issues – hearing the points of view of others and respecting other peoples' decisions, rights and bodies.
- A chance to explore ideas about family, parenting and the ways in which people care for each other.
- A safe environment for pupils to understand their bodies and bodily functions.
- Provide information which is realistic and relevant, and which reinforces positive social norms.
- Pupils to build resilience to help them form healthy, hopeful and aspirational relationships and to resist harmful influences.
- The promotion of positive mental wellbeing and self-perception.

In the PSHE programme we select activities and resources which are age, experience, and culturally appropriate. Objective discussion of diversity in sexual orientation will be addressed in order to meet the needs of all students.

Teaching will reflect the society that we now live in, including ensuring that RSE fosters gender equality and LGBT+ equality by teaching about LGBT+ people, relationships and families.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body will ensure that:

- The implementation of the RSE policy is monitored and a representative of the governing body is appointed who will be part of a working party that reviews the policy.
- The RSE policy is monitored on an annual basis and will give serious consideration to any comments from parents/carers about the RSE curriculum and keep a record of all such comments.
- The content, delivery and all materials related to RSE are in accordance with the school's ethos and enable the school to fulfil its legal obligation.

Headteacher/Head of School
The Headteacher/Head of School will ensure that:

- All staff and parents/carers are informed of the policy and that the policy is implemented effectively.
- Members of staff are given sufficient training so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.
- *The school is compliant with the Equality Act 2010, under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst protected characteristics.*
- *The teaching of LGBT+ is embedded within programmes of study and not delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson.*
- The teaching of RSE is monitored to ensure that it is delivered in ways that are accessible to **all** pupils.
- Liaison is made with all external agencies who work with pupils on the issues of RSE and ensure that they are aware of the school policy, and work within the framework.
- Clear information is available for parents/carers on the subject content.

PSHE Lead
The **PSHE Lead** will be ensure that:

- **All** planning for the RSE curriculum across all 4 year groups will be provided, along with appropriate resources to deliver the programme.
- All training required by teaching staff will be provided, either personally or through LA/PSHE association.
- The teaching of RSE is monitored to ensure that it is delivered according to the RSE curriculum and programme of study (implementation).
- The impact of the RSE curriculum enables all pupils to achieve expected outcomes.
- Liaison within BMSLP will be undertaken to ensure best practice across the partnership.

Staff
All **staff** will ensure that:

- Ground rules are negotiated with the group before embarking on lessons of a sensitive nature, so that both the staff and pupils can work together in a supportive atmosphere in which all members can speak with confidence and without fear of embarrassment, anxiety or lack of respect.
- All pupils are offered the opportunity to explore ideas, situations and feelings in an atmosphere of confidence, trust and support.
- All pupils understand the importance of equality, trust and respect.
- Their teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content.
- At all times, teaching will take place in the context of an explicit moral framework.
- All points of view they may express during the course of teaching RSE are unbiased and free from personal opinion.
- The teaching of RSE is delivered in ways that are accessible to **all** pupils.
- The emphasis of teaching RSE will always be the importance and understanding of personal relationships and the right of the individual to make informed choices.
- Issues of stereotyping, sexual equality, harassment, rights and legislation underpin the teaching of RSE.
- Where appropriate they direct pupils to seek advice and support from an appropriate agency or individual. It is inappropriate for staff to give pupils personal advice on matters of RSE.

- Where a pupil has made it known that they have embarked on a course of action likely to place them at risk, the member of staff will ensure that the pupil is aware of

the implications of their behaviour/disclosure. The member of staff should refer any potential concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- A level of mutual respect is upheld with pupils in regard to the personal, private lives and opinions of staff.

Parents/Carers
The School acknowledges the key role that parents/carers play in the development of their children's understanding about relationships. Parents/carers are the first educators of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

All **Parents/Carers** will be:
- Given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships and Sex Education.
- Able to discuss any concerns directly with the school.
- Encouraged to support the school in delivering this sensitive and statutory part of the curriculum and be open to discuss lesson content with their children.

Legislation
We are required to teach RSE as part of the introduction of compulsory relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education in schools from September 2020. The legislation introduces three new statutory subjects: Relationships Education for primary; Relationships and Sex Education for secondary; and, Health Education for both. These subjects will be part of the basic school curriculum not the National Curriculum and will be statutory in all schools. It is mandatory for all schools to have a written policy for Relationships Education and RSE. The policy must be made available to parents and others. Schools must provide a copy of the policy free of charge to anyone who asks for one and are required to publish the policy on the school website.
Documents that inform the school's RSE policy include:
- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010),
- Supplementary Guidance RSE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2016)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Church Of England Charter for Faith Sensitive and Inclusive Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

Parents will retain the right to withdraw their child from sex education at primary and secondary up until 3 terms before a child's 16th birthday when the child can choose to opt in. There will be no right to withdraw from Relationships Education.

As a C of E school, we are mindful of the church's faith sensitive and inclusive approach to RSE and RSHE as set out in the Charter.

Organisation of RSE within the PSHE Curriculum

Safe and Effective Practice

What kind of language will be considered acceptable and appropriate for use in RSE lessons? Staff will: • Use the correct terms for all body parts • Use clear, unequivocal language in an objective manner • Discuss what 'slang' words mean and say that some could be offensive. Staff will use their judgement in discussion depending on understanding and maturity level of learners.

Using the correct terminology will make it clear that everybody uses common words and avoids prejudiced or offensive language. Teachers are guided and supported with the appropriate terminology by the PSHE scheme. Lessons contain a variety of teaching methods and strategies that encourage interaction, involvement and questioning: working individually, in pairs and groups; discussions; role play; prioritising; quizzes; research; case studies; games; circle time; visiting speakers.

Boundaries for discussion and confidentiality are discussed before the lessons begin. Each class/group establishes ground rules, explaining how they would like everyone to behave in order to learn. Distancing techniques (e.g. role play, third person case studies and an anonymous question box) are used when teaching sensitive issues.

Inclusion:
All children and young people, whatever their experience, background or identity are entitled to good quality RSE that helps them build a positive sense of self. Respect for themselves and each other is central to all teaching. The RSE programme and approach is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief or any other life experience. RSE lessons help pupils to explore discrimination, prejudice, bullying; aggressive behaviour and other unhealthy relationships. Teachers of RSE agree to work within the school's framework for RSE as described in this policy. Teacher's personal beliefs, values and attitudes will not affect their teaching of RSE.

Things to consider:

- Staff approach RSE sensitively, as pupils are all different, with different types of family.
- Staff encourage boys and girls to explore topics from different gender viewpoints and never assume that intimate relationships are between opposite sexes.
- RSE caters for all pupils and teachers and teaching materials are respectful of the rights of pupils with disabilities and how pupils choose to identify themselves.
- Links between RSE and the school's inclusion policy.

Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality

The school recognises that at the heart of RSE, the focus is on keeping children safe, and acknowledges the significant role schools have in preventative education.
In our school, we will allow children an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports, as can effective RSE, which brings about an understanding of what is and is not appropriate in a relationship.
Children will be made aware of the processes to enable them to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This will also include processes when they have a concern about a peer or friend.
In line with the document "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (KCSIE 2019), all staff are aware of what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused or neglected and will follow the school's safeguarding procedures immediately. Staff are also aware of the need to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only

involving those that need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead. A member of staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this is not in the best interests of the child.
The involvement of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) will ensure that trusted, high quality local resources are engaged, links to the police and other agencies are utilised, and the knowledge of any particular local issues it may be appropriate to address in lessons are shared with the appropriate staff.
The school is aware that working with external agencies/partners will enhance the delivery of RSE and will support the school to bring in specialist knowledge and implement different ways of engaging with young people. The school will check the credentials of all visiting organisation and any visitors linked to the agency. The school will also ensure that the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with the planned programme and the published school policy. The school will work with agencies to ensure that the content delivered is age-appropriate and accessible to all pupils. Any material to be used as part of the delivery must be approved by the school in advance of the session. The school will also ensure that the visitor is aware of aspects of confidentiality and understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Engaging Stakeholders

Parents will be informed about the policy through written communication or e-mail home. The policy will be available to parents through the school website.
Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated 'sex education' lessons. They do not have a right to withdraw their children from those aspects of Relationships and Health education.
We will work in active partnership with parents/carers, value their views and keep them informed about out RSE provision. If a parent/carer has any concerns about the RSE provision, we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have. If any parents/carers decide to withdraw their child, we shall work with them and their child to explore possible alternative provision.
Governors will be informed of the RSE policy and curriculum through governor meetings.
Pupil voice will be used to review and tailor our RSE programme to match the different needs of pupils.

Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

RSE Policy Review Date

September 2024