

# Shustoke Church of England Primary School

## Relationships, Sex & Health Education (RSHE) Policy 2021

This policy covers our school's approach to Relationships, Sex and Health Education, not only in lessons but through the attitude of our staff and students alike, our ethos and approach and commitment to equality both within and outside of the classroom.

At Shustoke C of E Primary School we believe there is a need for all of our children to learn and grow safely within today's social environment. Our pupils come from a variety of social, family, religious and cultural backgrounds and this diversity is respected in the provision of our RSHE programme. Partnership with parents and carers is an integral part of the learning for pupils at our school and we believe that the ideal family life for children is one which provides unconditional love, commitment and security. This caring and supportive ethos is reinforced at school.

### What are the aims of RSHE?

There are four main aims for teaching RSHE within the context of Primary School PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education):

- To enable young people to understand and respect their bodies, and be able to cope with the changes puberty brings, without fear or confusion
- To help young people develop positive and healthy relationships appropriate to their age, development etc. (respect for self and others)
- To support young people to have positive self-esteem and body image, and to understand the influences and pressures around them
- To empower them to be safe and safeguarded

### Organisation and Content of the RSHE Programme

At Shustoke C of E Primary School, we meet the learning objectives as set out in the Relationships Education, Relationship & Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2020 for primary schools with a whole school approach. Across all year groups we deliver the *Protective Behaviours: Taking Care* Programme as recommended by Warwickshire's Safeguarding Children's board.

Protective Behaviours is a practical and down to earth approach to personal safety. It is a process which encourages self-empowerment and brings with it the skills to avoid being victimised. This is achieved by helping children recognise and trust their intuitive feelings (Early Warning Signs) and to develop strategies for self-protection. The Protective Behaviours Process encourages an adventurous approach to life which satisfies the need for fun and excitement without violence and fear.

Programme Content:

-Theme 1: We all have the right to feel safe all the time.

-Theme 2: we can talk with someone about anything, even if it feels awful or small.

Protective Behaviours using a Rights and Responsibility approach, and encourages children to recognise their Early Warning Signs (EWS) and develop their own support networks of safe adults who they can share their worries with.

In addition to this, we follow the Jigsaw PSHE programme. Jigsaw PSHE is a comprehensive scheme of work for the whole primary school, from Reception to Year 6. Created by Jan Lever (teacher and psychotherapist) and a dedicated team of experienced teachers, the Jigsaw teaching materials integrate PSHE, emotional literacy, social skills and spiritual development in a whole-school approach.

The scheme of work is split into six key themes, one for each half term.

Autumn 1-Being Me in my World

Autumn 2-Celebrating Difference

Spring 1- Healthy Me

Spring 2- Dreams and Goals

Summer 1- Relationships

Summer 2- Changing Me

The Jigsaw PSHE relationship and sex education units of work aim to give children their entitlement to information about relationships, puberty and human reproduction, appropriate to their ages and stages of development.

Some of the key aspects covered in the course of Key Stages 1 and 2 are:

- Life cycles
- My changing body
- Puberty
- Growing from young to old
- Becoming a teenager
- Assertiveness and self-respect
- Friendship and family life
- Safeguarding
- Family stereotypes
- Self and body image
- Relationship skills e.g. conflict resolution
- Accepting change
- Looking ahead
- Moving/transition to secondary school

### **Answering Children's Questions**

We are aware that children are likely to have questions that may occur at any time. Children tend to ask whatever is on their mind. We see this as a positive point and a sign that we have created a safe environment where children feel empowered to feed their natural curiosity and learn about themselves, their bodies and the world around them. However, we acknowledge that some parents may feel uncomfortable about how particular questions may be dealt with in class.

We believe children are better off receiving honest, open answers from safe adults in their lives, rather than it being left to the internet or older children with a smart phone. In the age of information, where children in primary have access to tablets, smart phones and the internet (often unsupervised) it is

essential that we help children to recognise they are able to ask questions without judgement rather than searching for answers on the internet.

Staff have received training as to how to deal with children's questions age appropriately. This will be done consistently across the school as follows:

- Children will be praised for asking questions. We wish to encourage children to seek answers from safe adults.
- If a question is relevant to the whole class, we will answer it to the whole group.
- However, as with any other subject, there may occasionally, be the need to differentiate depending on children's knowledge and experience. Some children may need additional information or support compared to others.
- If a child asks a question that is not necessarily suitable for the entire class, we will respond, by saying: *"that is fantastic question, hold that thought, I am going to set everyone some work and I will come and talk to you and answer your question in a minute when everyone else is working."*
- If the member of staff doesn't have an answer or doesn't know, they will say so. There is no shame in not knowing the answer but the member of staff should make an effort to help the child to find the answer later.
- If the member of staff is not sure how best to answer a particularly tricky question, our suggested response is: *"That is a brilliant question, I would like to give you an equally brilliant answer, so let me have a think about it and once I know the best way to explain it clearly I will come back to you"*
- This will allow teaching staff time to think, seek help, advice or support from colleagues, or to speak to senior management.
- If a child asks a question we know parents may be uncomfortable with, staff may choose to delay answering the question (as above) until they have spoken to the parent/carer if possible and talk through their response.
- Teachers will answer questions, openly, honestly, scientifically and factually without relying on their own personal beliefs. Teachers will not be expected to answer personal questions about themselves or to ask direct personal questions of their students that could make either parties vulnerable.

### **Parental Rights to Withdraw**

We believe that successful teaching around RSHE can only take place when parents and school work together. Especially, considering we both want children to grow up safe and happy in healthy relationships, with the ability to manage their emotions and speak up when they feel unsafe. Therefore, we are committed to working together with parents.

We endeavour to be transparent and give parents information about all the programmes and lessons we deliver around RSHE as we recognise it can be a sensitive subject for some families for a number of reasons. All new parents to our school will be given information about the RSHE programmes we run as part of their induction to the school, including information of how they can get a copy of this policy.

Should a parent decide that they do not wish their child to take part in any of these lessons, we would ask that they first speak to their classroom teacher to discuss their concerns. Our teachers will happily show parents all the teaching material and context of any of our lessons and explain the reasons why any material is included in the programme. We will also highlight that whilst parents have the right to withdraw their child from these lessons, they do not have the right to withdraw other children from receiving these lessons. We believe it is better for children to hear from safe adults than to hear second hand from their class-mates at break-time.

If parents do decide to withdraw their child, they should inform the head who will find other provision for the child to engage in during the lesson. Currently, head teachers must comply with requests to withdraw from any non-statutory lessons in the programme.

### **Safeguarding Children**

When teaching any sensitive topic, such as RSE which deals with family life, safe and appropriate touching, personal body parts and healthy relationships, we recognise the potential to uncover incidents of abuse through children's disclosures.

All members of staff who deliver any of our Relationship or Sex Education Programme, have statutory training around safeguarding children and are all aware of our school's safeguarding policy and procedures in the case of a disclosure or suspicion of a safeguarding concern.

We recognise that for children who may be vulnerable due to past or present abuse or changes in family situations, this type of work, whilst it may be sensitive, there may be needs to adapt the programme or offer additional support. It is also a protective factor in preventing further abuse, to help them make sense of their experiences and essential to help them develop skills and resilience to keep them safe in future.