

The Good Shepherd Trust

Relationships, Sex and Health Education Statement of Intent

Adopted by the Trust Board on the 29th January 2020.

Introduction

Jesus said:

"I have come that they may have life, and have it in all its fullness". John 10:10-11

The Church of England vision for education '[Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good](#)' identifies four elements which underpin the Church's commitment to education which include educating for:

- Hope & Aspiration
- Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills
- Community and Living Well together
- Dignity and Respect

It is within this framework and theological narrative, that The Good Shepherd Trust sets out its expectations for teaching of Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) in all its Church schools.

The Church of England fully supports new legislation that requires all schools to approach RSHE in a faith sensitive and inclusive way, seeking to explain fairly the beliefs and varying interpretations of religious communities on matters of sex and relationships, and to teach these viewpoints with respect.

Senior Leaders and Local Governing Committee members within The Good Shepherd Trust should also read the Church of England's guidance document '[Valuing all God's Children](#)' which sets out clear expectations for challenging, and protecting children and young people from, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in Church schools. In his introduction The Most Revd and Rt Hon Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury confirms that 'Every one of us is loved unconditionally by God. We must avoid, at all costs, diminishing the dignity of any individual to a stereotype or a problem.'

Context and vision:

As a family of schools, The Good Shepherd Trust our mission is to ensure the best possible outcomes for every pupil. We believe that every pupil has the right to a broad and rich education to be achieved within a distinctly Christian context, valuing each child as an individual and enabling them to flourish by discovering and developing their God given gifts.

A fundamental aspect of the quality of education our schools provide, is teaching our children and young people how to stay safe and healthy, including understanding about healthy and safe relationships. In our schools within The Good Shepherd Trust this is carried out within a distinctly Christian ethos, underpinned by our overarching Trust values of Trust, Love, Courage, Respect and Integrity.

In the Statutory Guidance published in July 2019, the Secretary of State outlined the rationale for new curriculum expectations for Relationships and Health Education for primary schools, and Relationships, Sex and Health Education for secondary schools:-

“Today’s children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way. This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools.

Our guiding principles have been that all of the compulsory subject content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.

In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. At secondary, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils’ understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex. Teaching about mental wellbeing is central to these subjects, especially as a priority for parents is their children’s happiness. We know that children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. The new subject content will give them the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise.”

The full statutory guidance can be found [here](#).

Defining Relationships and Sex Education:

The DFE defines RSHE as “lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage and family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care.”

The Good Shepherd Trust schools also acknowledge, respect and value nurturing families that take many forms and structures: Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures. RSHE is also about the age-appropriate teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health, the development of the pupil’s knowledge and understanding of herself or himself as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, living in healthy and safe relationships with themselves and others, and being enabled to make safe, respectful and moral decisions.

Main elements of RSHE

1. **Attitudes and values.** Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations. Learning the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children. Learning the value of respect, love and care. Exploring, considering and understanding of moral dilemmas. Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.

2. **Personal and social skills.** Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively. Developing self-respect and empathy for others. Learning to make choices based on an understanding of differences and with the absence of prejudice. Developing an appreciation of choices made. Managing conflict. Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.
3. **Knowledge and understanding.** Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages. Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships. At secondary school, learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services. Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay. The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

Relationships and RSE will be age-appropriate, building knowledge and life skills over time in a way that prepares pupils for issues they will soon face. They will likely focus on:

- Different types of relationships, including friendships, family relationships, dealing with strangers and, at secondary school, intimate relationships;
- How to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships, including self-respect and respect for others, commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent, and how to manage conflict, and also how to recognise unhealthy relationships;
- How relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health;
- healthy relationships and safety online
- Factual knowledge, at secondary school, around sex, sexual health and sexuality, set firmly within the context of relationships.

Equalities Obligations

The Good Shepherd Trust, and our Local Governing Committees in schools have wider responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that our schools provide the best possible provision for all of the pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy, maternity, sex, gender identity, religion or sexual orientation or whether they are children looked after by the Local Authority.

Confidentiality and Advice

All Trustees, all governors, all teachers, support staff, parents and pupils must be made aware of this policy, particularly as it relates to issues of advice and confidentiality. All lessons, especially those in the RSE programme, have the best interests of pupils at heart, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding of relationships and sex, developing appropriate personal and social skills and becoming appreciative of the values and attitudes, which underpin the Christian character of our schools. Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues which are discussed in school. Teachers will always help pupils facing personal difficulties, in line with the school's pastoral care policy, and ensure all children, including those with SEND are able to fully access the RSE curriculum.

Consultation on school policies

The Church of England Pastoral Advisory Group recognises that all church schools work closely with their parish church, and so will actively involve them as a key stakeholder in their consultation activities regarding RSHE. In the document [‘Pastoral Principles for Living Well Together’](#) (January 2019) they recognise that the quality of our relationships can be hindered by six challenges to our communities, and that schools and churches together play a powerful part in:

- acknowledging Prejudice
- speaking into Silence
- addressing Ignorance
- casting out Fear
- admitting Hypocrisy
- paying attention to Power

Taking pro-active action, through our carefully planned RHSE curriculum will address such challenges– which are applicable to all people – and aims to be transformative for our communities as a whole. In this way The Church of England calls us to ‘LOVE’:

- **Listen** attentively and openly
- **Open** our heart and mind without judgment
- **Value** everyone’s vulnerability and perspective
- **Express** concern and empathy.

The Church of England has also produced guidance to support schools with [consulting with parents](#) outlining the shared responsibilities between schools and families regarding education. This also provides a suggested format for consultations meetings.

All Church schools within the Diocese of Guildford should read and note the [Diocesan Board of Education’s \(DBE\) statement on RSHE](#)

All schools within The Good Shepherd Trust will consult fully on their own policy and curriculum intent for RSHE, to ensure it meets the needs of the context of the school and its local community.

The Trustees of The Good Shepherd Trust will consider the responses to all of the consultation activities across the Trust in order to ensure Trust and school policies address the needs of the local communities, that schools receive the support that they need, and that as a result, children and young people receive the highest quality of education, and the best knowledge, skills and understanding to keep themselves safe and healthy.

Timescales and milestones

GST Board approval of RSHE statement of intent	January 2020
School consultations on RSHE policies	Spring 2020
Policies adopted by LGCs	Spring 2020
Curriculum development and CPD	Spring and Summer 2020
Curriculum delivery	September 2020