

# RIPLEY ST THOMAS

A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY



## Relationship and Sex Education Policy

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Reviewed	October 2018
Next Review date	October 2020

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*Believe.....*

## Relationship and Sex Education Policy

As a worshipping community, witnessing to the Christian Faith in all the school's activities, we have a responsibility to ensure that whatever education pupils receive is set in the context of the Christian values and based on sound moral principles. It is within this context, therefore, that Relationship and Sex Education is provided for all pupils in a manner appropriate to their age and development. This is part of a wider programme that emphasises the importance of family life and personal relationships.

We believe that a positive understanding and attitude to the teaching of sex and relationship education within this framework can lead to a positive sense of self-esteem and self-worth. This, in turn, increases pupils' confidence in forming and maintaining relationships so that they develop a caring, considerate attitude to each other and to society.

It is important, however, that we take into account the world in which our pupils grow up. In society, sexual matters are explicitly discussed; our teaching therefore, should also aim to inform them so that they are better able to understand the consequences of their actions. In this, the school's role is to work in partnership with parents. Together with parents, our aim is to achieve a climate of healthy, moral and spiritual growth.

We recognise a real need for providing Relationship and Sex Education in a gradual and positive manner. To cater for this need, we will establish a co-ordinated programme, which has specific and regular stages that are established within the curriculum as a whole. The aim of this programme will be to help pupils to make the right judgements and to take the right actions in the many and varied situations in which they may find themselves.

### The Programme

Relationship and Sex Education at Ripley is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching.

It has three main elements:

#### 1. Attitudes and values

- respect for the dignity of every human being
- 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 moral dilemmas and,
- 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 difference and with an absence of prejudice

- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made
- managing conflict and,
- learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse

### **3. Knowledge and Understanding**

- learning and understanding physical development at appropriate key stages
- understanding human sexuality; reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- aware of sexual diversity and equality
- learning about contraception and the range of local and national health advice, contraception and support services
- learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay and,
- the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

## **Delivery of the Programme**

Relationship and Sex Education will be taught within the framework of Personal, Social, Health and Religious Education appropriate to the needs and maturity of the pupils in our care.

## **Wider Curriculum Links**

Relationship and Sex Education has links in a number of curriculum areas. In English, the way in which relationships between characters are discussed will be important, as will the way the human body is viewed and discussed in Art or Science.

## **Community and Other Agency Involvement**

Outside agencies are used to deliver aspects of the Relationship and Sex Programme. Progress Tutors are always available in the classroom. All visiting speakers will be aware of the school policy for sex education. In dealing with individuals who have specific needs for advice or questions and concerns beyond the knowledge or maturity level of their peers, individual counselling will be offered via the Vice Principal (Pastoral), Progress Leaders and the School Nurse and school Chaplain. In sessions with visiting speakers, Progress Tutors have the discretion to intervene to help individuals.

During and sometimes after sex education sessions individual pupils may speak in confidence to teachers or Health Service colleagues. The Health Service has a policy of confidentiality which the school respects. If matters of concern are mentioned, Health Service personnel will discuss these in the first instance with the Vice Principal (Pastoral). In all cases where a pupil is at risk of abuse the teacher/health service member will report directly to the Vice Principal (Pastoral) or designated person.

Discussion of issues related to health and sex education will be handled sensitively and all those involved are asked to follow the basic ground rules.

Where a pupil asks for, or is clearly in need of advice, staff should urge pupils to consult parents, to work with their clergy or youth club leader and to seek professional help from GP and local health services. It is appropriate to refer the pupil to the PCT school nurse and to give details of local services but staff cannot give individual advice.

## **Individual Needs**

Pupils with special needs will be taught alongside their peers either in mixed ability form groups or in their curriculum groupings. Progress Tutors will refer any pupil they feel is having difficulty with the basic understanding or with the social/moral aspects of sex education, to the Vice Principal (Pastoral) in the first instance.

Care must also be taken to recognise boys as young men and girls as young women and allow them opportunities for discussion when necessary in single sex groupings. This may be particularly important for pupils with different cultural backgrounds who attend Ripley.

## **Sensitive Topics**

The Governors support staff in presenting a range of views on sensitive issues such as divorce, abortion, homosexuality and teenage pregnancy whilst expecting that the importance of family life and personal relationships be always respected.

## **Parental Matters**

Parents are informed of the relationships and sex education programme through the school prospectus and of their right to withdraw their child.

Any parent wishing to exercise this right will be invited to discuss the matter with the Principal/Vice Principal (Pastoral). It will be made possible for children to be withdrawn for specific sections of the programme only. All relevant staff will be made aware when a child is withdrawn from sex education and a record kept on the child's personal file.

## **Summary**

As a Church school Ripley can make a distinctive and unique contribution to Sex and Relationship education by placing it within a Christian context of love, faithfulness and forgiveness. A programme of Relationship and Sex education allows pupils to explore an increasing awareness of their individual and social responsibility before God.

In this way they will become aware of their responsibility not only for themselves but also for those whom they love and the people with whom they live and work. They will become deeply aware of the importance of reconciliation and forgiveness in their own lives. Regardless of background, behaviour and sexual orientation, pupils are to be caringly accepted within the Church school.