



Blue Hills Federation



RELATIONSHIP & SEX EDUCATION POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2023

The Blue Hills Federation

The Blue Hills Federation is a collective of three primary schools – Clunbury CE Primary School, Newcastle CE Primary School and St Mary's Bucknell CE Primary School. All three schools share one Executive Headteacher and one Governing Body. When using the term 'Blue Hills Federation' within this policy, it is in reference to all three schools. When policy only applies to one school that school will be named specifically. Newcastle CE Primary School does not have a nursery or a preschool, therefore any references to nursery or pre-school do not apply to Newcastle CE Primary School.

Our Vision

Proverbs 22:6 - Good News Bible

'Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their lives.'

We are a caring Church Federation bringing together and serving many communities. We provide nurturing environments that facilitates learning for all. We encourage everybody to become confident, sociable and responsible citizens who achieve to the best of their ability in preparation for a fulfilling future.

Our Values

Trust and Truth; Joy and Happiness; Love and Respect; Thankfulness;
Friendship and Family; Perseverance and Resilience

Review Date: September 2026

INTRODUCTION

The Blue Hills Federation has based the school's Relationship and Sex Education Policy on the statutory guidance from DfE for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019).

DfE guidance (2019) states:

'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.'

Commitment Statement

We refer to Relationships and Sex Education as RSE. As part of our RSE provision, we place the emphasis upon relationships, supporting pupils understanding and skill in developing positive and healthy relationships. Our intention is to provide children with a foundation on which they can build to ensure positive physical, moral and emotional development. We wish for our children to understand the importance of stable and loving relationships which are based on respect, love, care and the importance of marriage.

Our policy and practice is based upon national guidance and good practice, consistent with Shropshire Council recommendations. This policy is cross-referenced and consistent with other policies such as Safeguarding, Bullying, Equal Opportunities etc. (amend and include as appropriate reference to other policies).

We are committed to ensuring our programme is age appropriate. We take advice and are updated on a regular basis by our Shropshire Public Health Curriculum Advisor on local contextual safeguarding issues, national trends and data.

We follow good practice recommendations and use additional resources from reliable and authoritative experts such as the PSHE Association, the Sex Education Forum, Public Health England and CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection).

Aims for RSE

- As part of the Personal Social and Health Education curriculum, RSE in our school will be integrate within the wider school curriculum and will compliment and overlap with the general ethos and life of the school.
- Pupils will be informed on matters of personal hygiene and related health issues. We will encourage exploration of values and moral issues taking into account physical and moral risks associated with certain behaviour, educate against discrimination and prejudice and help prepare children to make informed choices about relationships.
- We will provide pupils with an opportunity for pupils to express themselves within a trusted and safe environment. We will ensure that central to our PSHE programme is the development of pupils' self-esteem. We believe that if young people feel positive and good about themselves, they are more likely to take care of themselves, think positively of other people, and therefore develop non-exploitative, caring relationships. They are also less likely to be exploited by others.

SECTION 1: RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION (DfE 2019)

The following paragraphs are taken from the DfE 2019 guidance:

54. 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.
55. This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. From the beginning of primary school, building on early education, pupils should be taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact – these are the forerunners of teaching about consent, which takes place at secondary.
56. Respect for others should be taught in an age-appropriate way, in terms of understanding one's own and others' boundaries in play, in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources and soon.
57. From the beginning, teachers should talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of contexts should enable pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This will also help them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them.
58. The principles of positive relationships also apply online especially as, by the end of primary school, many children will already be using the internet. When teaching relationships content, teachers should address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. Teachers should include content on how information and data is shared and used in all contexts, including online; for example, sharing pictures, understanding that many websites are businesses and how sites may use information provided by users in ways they might not expect.
59. Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures.) Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; e.g. looked after children or young carers.
60. A growing ability to form strong and positive relationships with others depends on the deliberate cultivation of character traits and positive personal attributes, (sometimes referred to as 'virtues') in the individual. In a school wide context which encourages the development and practice of resilience and other attributes, this includes character traits such as helping pupils to believe they can achieve, persevere with tasks, work towards long-term rewards and continue despite setbacks. Alongside understanding the importance of self-respect and self-worth, pupils should develop personal attributes including honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice. This can be achieved in a variety of ways including by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.
61. Relationships Education also creates an opportunity to enable pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing.
62. Through Relationships Education (and RSE), schools should teach pupils the knowledge

they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. In primary schools, this can be delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This should also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online. Pupils should know how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages it will be important to balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement Health Education and as part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge can support safeguarding of children.'

Delivery of Relationship Education

Children from Reception to year 6 have weekly PSHE lessons through which the RSE curriculum is taught. We follow the Shropshire RSE programme of study which sets out the areas to be covered and we ensure that the content and delivery is appropriately matched to the age / stage / maturity and ability of the children. Relationships Education is also taught as part of the wider curriculum such as Science, PE and Computing (E-Safety). This work is supported by E-safety work in computing.

We use elements of The Shropshire Respect Yourself: Eat Better, Move More, RSE programme which is a spiral curriculum from year 1 to year 11. This resource contains age appropriate lessons and resources for each year group and key stage. It is important to note that in line with the Shropshire RSE curriculum, children are taught the correct anatomical names for body parts from the beginning of the programme which is year 1.

We recognise that the early years curriculum provides many opportunities to develop age appropriate knowledge and understanding of this area as exemplified in the EYFS curriculum and Early Learning goals. Practitioners ensure that activities are carefully planned to allow pupils to practise and develop important skills throughout their learning.

Relationships and Sex Education has three main elements:

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 and the nurture of children
- learning the value of respect, love and care
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- developing critical thinking as part of decision-making

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 consequence of choices made
- managing conflict
- learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse

Knowledge and Understanding

- learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages
- understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships.

In consultation with stakeholders the Federation has made the decision to follow the Shropshire RSE programme of study.

SECTION 2: SEX EDUCATION

Definition of Sex Education (DfE 2019)

Following the guidance set out in the DfE document 2019 paragraph 66 which states:

'It will be for primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education to meet the needs of their pupils. Many primary schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so, although it is not a requirement.'

In accordance with this guidance, the federation will follow the programme of study set out in the Shropshire RSE scheme of work for relationships education and will introduce elements of the relationships and sex education in year 5 and 6.

The Shropshire programme puts the R before the S. We refer to RSE (Relationship and Sex Education); we place the emphasis on relationships, supporting pupils' understanding and skill in developing positive and healthy relationships. Our definition is based on the Ofsted 2002 recommendations; "A caring and developmental RSE programme needs to be more than just biology and the fundamentals of reproduction. Children and young people want reassurance about how their body image, behaviour, feelings, and relationships. They also need knowledge and skills appropriate to their levels of maturity and developmental need."

The resources address the issues highlighted in the Supplementary Guidance to DfE 'RSE for 21st century'.

'RSE is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationship, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. We believe the Shropshire programme fulfils the criteria for a comprehensive programme as it provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex and sexual health. It gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and off line'.

Managing Difficult Questions

The DfE document also states in paragraph 63 that:

'Primary-age pupils will often ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond what is set out for Relationships Education.'

To support children, we adopt a graduated age / stage / maturity appropriate programme of relationships education. We recognise that children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages leading to different types of questions and behaviours. Teaching methods take account of these differences (including when they are due to specific educational needs or disabilities) and the potential for discussion on a one to one basis or in small groups. The federation carefully considers what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting and if staff are unsure they know to consult with senior leaders before engaging in discussion. This does not mean we will dismiss any questions but will take advice on how to deal with it appropriately.

Right to be Excused From Sex Education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw)

The following paragraphs are taken from the DfE 2019 guidance:

45. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Before granting any such request it would be good practice for the head teacher to discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Schools will want to document this process to ensure a record is kept.

46. Good practice is also likely to include the head teacher discussing with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being

excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although the detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead).

49. Head teachers will automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education delivered in primary schools, other than as part of the science curriculum.

50. If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.'

A letter will be sent to Year 6 parents prior to the unit of work (containing elements of sex education) being taught. The letter will give information about the planned lessons and when they will take place. The letter will contain detail about the areas covered in each lesson. Parents will also be informed of their right to withdraw their child from sex education. As stated above, parents have no right to withdraw children from relationships education, science or health education. If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from the sex education lessons, they should inform the headteacher in writing before the lessons commence.

SECTION 3: CONCLUDING SECTIONS (RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION)

Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is, and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issues.

Safeguarding procedures, as specified by Keeping Children Safe in Education are followed. All referrals, whatever their origin are taken seriously and considered with an open mind, which does not pre-judge the situation. The procedures adopted for handling cases of neglect, physical, emotional, sexual abuse and failure to thrive involving children and young persons, are based on the principle that the interests and welfare of the child or young person are of paramount importance.

Confidentiality

All staff working in this area are aware of the school's Child Protection Policy and will work within it at all times. Teachers cannot offer or guarantee pupils unconditional confidentiality.

The Social, Ethnic and Religious Mix of the School

We aim to fulfil the educational needs of the children who are represented in our local community. The children come from a varied cross section of our local community and represent different social, ethnic and religious values, beliefs and customs.

Send

It is recognised that SEND pupils may require additional support with the RSE curriculum and can be at increased risk of exploitation. Individual support may be considered where appropriate. Parents and pupils will be involved and consulted.

Home/School Partnership

We believe that parents have the primary role in delivering relationship and sex education. We aim to provide a programme as part of our home/school partnership, ensuring all pupils receive high quality provision in line with national good practice recommendations, statutory and legal requirements related to equality and safeguarding.

It is hoped that the school curriculum and the ethos of the school complements and enhances home teaching and values, giving due regard to the value of family life, loving and stable relationships.

Children are exposed to information and messages from T.V, Internet, film, music videos, books and

magazines. They are influenced by family, friends and significant adults. Part of our role is to ensure that children are able to understand and interpret the information they receive.

Roles and Responsibilities

This policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher who works closely with the PSHE subject leader.

Staff Training and Development

The subject leader will continue to receive external CPD through courses and where appropriate consultants visiting schools. All staff will receive training through 'in house' CPD in this area.

Consultation

This policy underwent a process of consultation with parents and staff prior to final approval by the governing body in April 2021.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Policy

This area will be monitored and reviewed over time. A key source of evidence will be the biennial parent survey, feedback from staff and informal feedback from children and parents. Any additional feedback from parents and children will be used in ongoing reviews of this area.

Equal Opportunities

All children are entitled to an appropriate and meaningful RSE curriculum regardless of race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment.

Our RSE programme and delivery fosters gender and LGBT+ equality and challenges all forms of discrimination and bullying.