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Headteacher: Mrs J Narraway

5<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear parent/carer,

As a part of your child's educational experience at Newchurch Primary School, we aim to promote personal wellbeing and development through a comprehensive taught programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education that gives children and young people the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live healthy, safe, productive and fulfilled lives, both now and in the future.

The Department for Education has made changes to relationships and sex education following nationwide consultation and all schools are required to comply with the updated requirements. The statutory guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

The guidance focuses on healthy relationships and keeping children safe in the modern world. It also covers a wide range of topics relating to physical and mental health, wellbeing, safeguarding and healthy relationships.

Learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up will give children and young people the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships and help them take responsibility for their own well-being.

Consequently, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), along with Health Education, is statutory and forms part of the National Curriculum.

We have recently reviewed our RSHE curriculum and policy so we can be sure our RSHE provision is appropriate for our pupils based on their:

- Age
- Physical and emotional maturity
- Religious and cultural backgrounds



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- Special educational needs and disabilities

At Newchurch, we believe relationships and sex education is important for our pupils and our school because:

- It is giving children the knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships
- It is about giving children the opportunity to put knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts.
- It is the recognition that everyone faces difficult situations in their lives and how relationship and sex education can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support

Following consultation with the Parent Board, staff and governors last year, the school would like to consult further with you as parents to inform our school's decisions on when and how certain content is covered. What is taught, and how, is ultimately a decision for the school and consultation does not provide a parental veto on curriculum content as schools are legally required to teach the National Curriculum. The right to withdraw children from some lessons is explained in the FAQs below.

We view the partnership of home and school as vital in providing the context to both complement and reinforce what pupils learn at home about healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online, as well as how to be healthy. Below, we have explained some of the common questions around these subjects.

### So why now?

The Equality Act came into force in 2010. The Equality Act 2010 states that it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex/gender
- Sexual orientation (Government, 2010, p1)

The public sector Equality Duty came into force on 5th April 2011 and requires that public bodies (including schools):

- Have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination
  - Advance equality of opportunity
  - Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.
- (Government Equalities Office 2013, p1)

This makes it clear that promoting some of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act while ignoring others is against UK law.



## What is teaching about equality?

It is teaching about:

- Difference
- Acceptance
- Tolerance
- Diversity
- How to challenge discrimination

Teaching about equality helps our children to prepare for the next stages in their lives and to fulfil our mission statement of enabling our Newchurch robins to make a positive contribution to society.

## Will my child be taught sex education at primary school? Is this too young?

Sex education at primary school is not compulsory. However, compulsory Relationships Education was introduced in primary schools from September 2020, to put in place the building blocks needed for positive and safe relationships of all kinds. This will start with family and friends, how to treat each other with kindness, and recognising the difference between online and offline friendships.

At Newchurch Community Primary School we have always taught sex education to children in all year groups which is age appropriate and goes beyond the existing national curriculum for science. Before these lessons take place, the school gives parents the opportunity to understand what will be taught and how it will be approached, and view any materials so that you understand what we propose to teach and how. The school has purchased the resources from the Christopher Wright Project which is known for its quality planning and resources for primary school sex education. Please see the unit of work uploaded onto the school website which shares the sex education each year group will be taught: [https://newchurch-primary.eschools.co.uk/website/relationships\\_and\\_sex\\_education\\_rse/501507](https://newchurch-primary.eschools.co.uk/website/relationships_and_sex_education_rse/501507)

If you continue to have concerns, you have the right to withdraw from any sex education lessons that go beyond that of the science national curriculum. You will need to do this in writing. We will continue to teach sex education (which focuses on puberty and reproduction). This is only part of the science National Curriculum for Y5 and Y6. As it is part of the science national curriculum it is compulsory. You have the right to withdraw from any sex education lessons that go beyond that of the science national curriculum.

## Is school the best place for discussions about Sex and Relationships?

If the children do not get the correct and accurate information about sex and relationships from a reliable source, they will find the information from other sources (friends, older siblings, website, tv) which may not be true or age appropriate. The information gathered during the Government consultation found that most children wanted this information and discussion to be provided in school with their teachers so that they could ask their questions in a safe space, and have them answered in an age appropriate way.

## Does the new Relationships Education and RSE curriculum take account of my child's faith?

The RSE curriculum is designed to help children from all backgrounds build positive and safe relationships, and to thrive in modern Britain.



## Do I have a right to withdraw my child from Relationships and Sex Education?

In a primary school, you have the right to withdraw from any sex education lessons **that go beyond that of the science national curriculum**. There is no right to withdraw from relationships education at primary or secondary school as the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught.

**Has the government listened to the views of my community in introducing these subjects?** The Government undertook a wide public consultation which involved discussions with over 90 organisations, as well as the public consultation on the draft regulations and guidance. This has informed the key decisions on these subjects.

## Will these subjects promote LGBT relationships?

No, these subjects do not ‘promote’ anything, they educate. We are teaching about equality. One of our core values is RESPECT - we are respectful of everyone. We value ourselves and all others: This means that if someone is black, they are welcome in our school; if someone uses a wheelchair, they are welcome in our school; if someone is gay they are welcome in our school.

Our Newchurch robins should be taught about the society in which they are growing up. These subjects are designed to foster respect for others and for difference, and educate pupils about healthy relationships. RSE should meet the needs of all pupils, whatever their developing sexuality or identity – this should include age-appropriate teaching about different types of relationships in the context of the law.

At Newchurch, the teaching of LGBT will be delivered through teaching about different types of family, including those with same sex parents. All our planned learning will be taught in an age appropriate way using children’s picture books. The texts are as follows:

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
						
Can I recognise and celebrate differences between myself and others?	Can I understand that families come in all different shapes and sizes, but they are all special?	Can I recognise how families are different but the love is still the same?	Can I challenge gender stereotyping?	Can I challenge homophobic language?	Can I explore human diversity and equality?	Can I understand the history behind the Rainbow Flag and the Pride Parade?

Following consultation, the children will explore these books in their learning.

## Are primary children too young to be taught about gay or lesbian people?

Some children grow up in families with gay or lesbian people. We cannot say to a child who has two dads, ‘You can’t talk about your family!’ We want all of our Newchurch robins to know that their family is normal and accepted in school.

Our children will interact with people from different backgrounds and we want them to treat all members of the community with the same respect. Just like racism, school has a duty of care to





challenge any language that may cause offence to others, whether used intentionally or not. Phrases such as “that’s so gay” or “that’s a girl’s/boy’s toy” when used in a negative manner may unintentionally cause offence to a child or adult. School will challenge this language if it is used by children, parents or visitors as we want everyone to feel welcome. We want our Newchurch robins to grow up respectful and tolerant members of our community. As they grow up, make more friends, watch TV, or go to different places, they will meet people who are gay or transgender. We want them to understand that this is okay and show respect. We do not want children growing up thinking something is wrong with them or with people they recognise who are gay or transgender.

### **You are confusing my child because at home they are learning that being gay is wrong but at school you are telling them that being gay is OK.**

As a parent it is your right to talk to your child about religious beliefs. In school we build our curriculum around UK law. We are teaching children that all people and relationships are equal. We are teaching children that all families are different and your child, as they grow up, are going to meet people who live in different families. It is important that children learn about people who are different. They need to learn to be tolerant and respectful of people with different views. When they grow up they can make up their own minds about what is right and wrong.

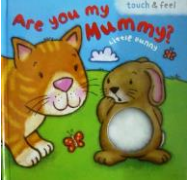
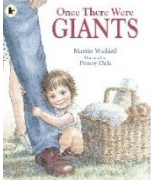
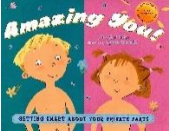
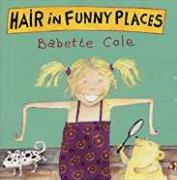


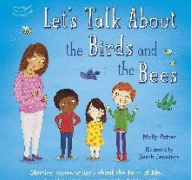
### **What are the topics covered in RSE?**

In school, RSE topics will taught within our Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum. Our PSHE curriculum is split into three categories:

- Relationships
- Living in the wider world
- Physical and mental wellbeing

### **How will we know what is being taught so I can talk to my child about it at home?**

Share in our learning documents will be shared with parents ahead of the next half term. If you need to discuss this further, teachers will be happy to discuss the content with you or signpost other resources that can be use at home to support discussions. To support you with speaking with your children about sex education, the following books are recommended:

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
						
To explore animal babies.	To learn about the process of growing from young to old and how people's needs change. To learn about growing and changing and new opportunities and responsibilities that increasing independence may bring	To know the names for the main parts of the body (including external genitalia) and the bodily similarities between boys and girls	To understand how their body will, and their emotions may, change as they approach and move through puberty	To understand how their body will, and their emotions may, change as they approach and move through puberty		To learn about human reproduction



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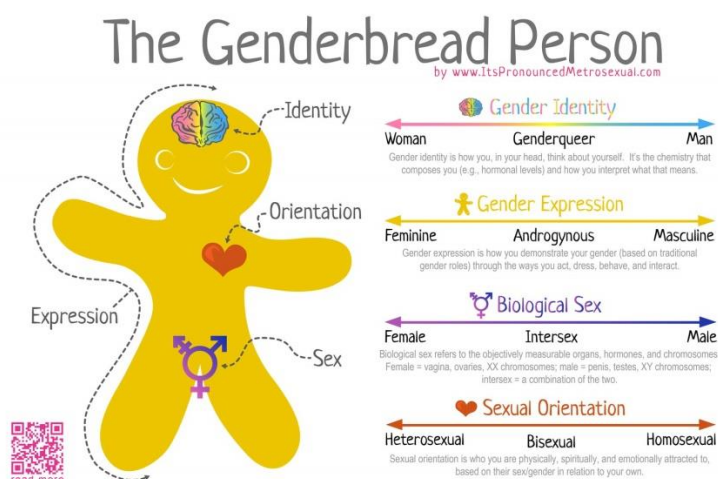


## Will this work prompt my children to ask challenging questions?

Possibly, your child or children trust you and will be likely to ask you questions to test your beliefs and opinions. Please do not avoid them, talk openly about diversity and equality. If you need any guidance, please come and ask us.

## How do I explain what 'gay' means to my child?

'Gay' is when a man loves a man. 'Lesbian' is when two women love each other. 'Bi sexual' is when a person can love both men and women. 'Transgender' is when a person feels different about the body they were born into; we are all assigned a gender at birth and sometimes when we get older we may feel differently about this. Some people say there are 'boy' things or 'girl things' but we say this is not the case and boys and girls can do the same sort of things if they want. To help the children understand this, we use the 'Genderbread Person'.



## But brothers love brothers and sisters love sisters and fathers love sons. Does that make them gay?

When two brothers or sisters love each other, it does not mean they are gay. This is different kind of love. We may love our mum but we do not want to marry them. Some people grow up and fall in love with a person of the same gender.

## What do I say when my child comes home and asks, 'How can two men love each other?'

Everyone is different. Some men do love other men. In the UK two men or women can get married in the same way that a man can marry a woman.

## What do I say if my child comes home and asks, 'how can two men/women have a baby?'

Lots of people have children in different ways, like fostering, adoption or step families. These are all families. They look after one another and love one another so they are the same in many ways. Some families have a mum and dad. Some families have a mum and a mum. Some families have two dads. Some families have one mum or dad or one grandparent. All families are different and that is okay. At Newchurch, we have the following poster displayed around school and the children identify with their family which is celebrated.





The curriculum has been written by myself as the PSHE lead for the school and makes use of the PSHE Association guidance as well as the leading consultants in this area of the curriculum.

In order to capture your views and opinions, please could we ask that you complete the following anonymous google form with any comments you would like to make:

<https://forms.gle/erBs9ddQHwFARi3W9> The form will close on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 10am.

On the school website [https://newchurch-primary.eschools.co.uk/website/personal social health education pshe/501502](https://newchurch-primary.eschools.co.uk/website/personal_social_health_education_pshe/501502) you will be able to see the progression document and this link [https://newchurch-primary.eschools.co.uk/website/relationships and sex education rse/501507](https://newchurch-primary.eschools.co.uk/website/relationships_and_sex_education_rse/501507) to access the RSHE policy.

This consultation will enable us to reach a general consensus and make any minor adjustments to our policy and curriculum based on your feedback.

Kind regards,

Mrs Jayne Narraway

Headteacher



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