



EMMANUEL SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

Relationships and Sex Education Policy



Part A

Last review: March 2022
Trust Approved: March 2022
Next review: March 2023

Part B

Last Review: March 2022
LGB Approved:
Next Review:

RSE Policy Summary

Part A (Emmanuel Schools Foundation Generic explanation)

RSE is a vital part of the education of character underpinned by our Christian ethos. We want our students to practice the greatest virtue by loving one's neighbour as oneself¹. We consult with parents and carers to ensure this RSE policy meets the needs of children and parents and reflects the community served by your child's school. Teaching in RSE reflects the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider implications of decisions they may make. In the primary years, we provide 'Relationships Education' and also 'Sex Education'. In the secondary years, we provide 'Relationships and Sex Education'. *Our RSE programme will be:*

1. **Age appropriate** We protect children's innocence without compromise to clarity.
2. **In partnership with parents/carers** We support parents discussing issues with their children.
3. **Pastorally sensitive** We are aware of the diversity of views on moral issues.
4. **Consistent with our ethos** We treat all of our students with care and compassion.
5. **Well planned and expertly delivered** We communicate the facts clearly.

Part B: *Students will constantly be reminded about pastoral/welfare support available.*

Early Years:

- People and communities, making relationships and managing feelings.

Primary Years:

Year 1: How do we treat people in our class? How can we 'be kind'? How do we keep safe? How do we ask for help if we are worried? What makes us and our families special? How to search safely online.

Year 2: What makes a good friendship? What is bullying, including online bullying? How can we help to keep ourselves and others safe including online? What is the same and different about us?

Year 3: How can we describe our feelings? What can we do about bullying, including cyberbullying? What are the rules that keep us safe? What are our responsibilities?

Year 4: How can we be a good friend as we grow and change? Puberty. What is diversity? How can we keep safe and avoid negative pressures, including on the internet? What are families and how are they important?

Year 5: What does discrimination mean? How can we be safe online and using social media, and developing healthy online relationships? What is community?

Year 6: What makes a healthy and happy relationship, including online? How can we manage risk? What makes a healthy and happy family? Understanding peer and media pressure.

Throughout students are encouraged to have confidence to seek support and express concerns.

¹ Matthew 22:37-40: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (New International Version)

Secondary Years: Students will constantly be reminded about pastoral/welfare support available.

Year 7: Friendship and self-esteem, positive and healthy relationships, managing conflict, human reproduction, identity (infinitely precious), family and friends, reconciliation and forgiveness. Safety online and cyber-bullying. Puberty.

Year 8: Character development, wisdom and integrity. Love, Drugs and Conflict, Marriage and the family, LGBTQ+, helping and respecting others, an introduction to adult relationships, wise ways to be courageous citizens, internet safety, non-tolerance of bullying, globalisation.

Year 9: Health and sexual relationships, contraception, modern world pressures (pornography and online safety), marriage and commitment. Peer pressure and respecting others, sexual health, abortion, injustice and regard for the poor. The Holocaust, dignity and respect. Selfishness, greed and extreme behaviours. Women in society and civil rights. Cyber-bullying and online-safety.

Year 10: Reproductive Health and Sexuality, Contraception and Abortion, Positive Relationships and Sexting, Caring for others, Charity, the Family. LGBTQ+, Ethics and Conflict.

Year 11: Friendship and Love, Supporting others – sick, poor and vulnerable. Marriage, Sex and the Law, Abuse, Internet safety.

Sixth Form: Democracy, Freedom of Speech, Tolerance and Intolerance, Cohabitation and Marriage, Dignity and Human Value, Love versus Lust, Pornography and Healthy Relationships.

Fully RSE Policy - Introduction

Part A is common to all schools within ESF; Part B provides more detail concerning where and when particular topics are taught at your child's school.

Welcome

We want every child, whatever their background, to feel loved, valued and welcomed in their school. We see RSE as a vital part of the education of character and seek to live out our ESF Core Values (honourable purpose, humility, compassion, integrity, accountability, courage and determination) in all we do. At Emmanuel Schools Foundation (ESF), we provide an education of character that is underpinned by our Christian ethos. Our students learn to practise mutual respect and tolerance and we encourage them to go further and to practice the greatest virtue by loving one's neighbour as oneself². We believe that human beings are uniquely made in the image of God and therefore relationships are of central importance for us. At the heart of the Gospel lies the possibility of a restored relationship with God; alongside this comes an emphasis on positive, healthy relationships between human beings. We take positive action to build a healthy culture characterised by respectful relationships with discrimination, of any kind, not tolerated.

Respecting Parents and Children

We believe in the importance of families and respect parents as the 'first educators' of their children and encourage parents to teach their children about relationships and sex before they learn about it at school, or from any other source. We invite parents to discuss what will be taught and to support parents in managing conversations with their children on these issues. We will consult with parents locally to ensure this RSE policy meets the needs of children and parents and reflects the community served by your child's school. Teaching in RSE reflects the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider implications of decisions they may make. In the primary years, we provide 'Relationships Education' and also 'Sex Education'. In the secondary years, we provide 'Relationships and Sex Education'. School principals will automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any Sex Education delivered in primary schools, except where it is part of the science curriculum. In Sex Education, we consult parents before the final year of primary school about the detailed content of what will be taught. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of 'Sex Education' and the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child up to and until three terms before the child turns 16, after which, if the child wishes to receive sex education, rather than be withdrawn, we will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

Preparing for Life in Modern Britain

Our country comprises people with diverse worldviews and identities – sexual, political, ethnic, cultural and religious – and widely varying practices. Students learn to respect and live peaceably with those who hold different, even mutually exclusive, views and orientations. We ensure there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and reflect sensitively that stable, caring relationships, may be of different types. As a Trust with a Christian ethos we affirm the value and importance of Christian marriage. In British law marriage is between two consenting adults but many Christian churches understand the Bible to teach that marriage is the union of one man and one woman for life. As well as this being the position of the Church of England³ and the Roman Catholic Church, it is also the teaching of other faiths. We comply with the Equality Act 2010, under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics. Throughout RSE, we explore the healthy features of all relationships (such as mutual respect, trust, honesty, support, fairness, having one's own identity, good communication and enjoyment). We seek to help young people to think through the choices they face in the realm of their relationships. We want them to consider the differing perspectives about what is the best and the right way to live and we emphasise the importance of character⁴ and the need to take responsibility for others as well as ourselves.

² Matthew 22:37–40: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (New International Version)

³ <https://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/structure/churchlawlegis/canons/section-b.aspx> Canons of the Church of England Section B: 30 *Of Holy Matrimony* 1. The Church of England affirms, according to our Lord's teaching, that marriage is in its nature a union permanent and lifelong, for better for worse, till death them do part, of one man with one woman, to the exclusion of all others on either side...

⁴ Pike, M.A. (2017) British values and virtues: schooling in Christianity and character, *British Journal of Religious Education* (published online 3 Aug 2017).

DOI: [10.1080/01416200.2017.1352485](https://doi.org/10.1080/01416200.2017.1352485)

Intimate Relationships

In the secondary years, in addition to developing the knowledge specified in DFE Guidance for primary years, RSE lessons cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). We teach the values of families and what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. In ESF schools we describe the advantages of abstinence and self-control. Our students will understand that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others; that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex. Drawing upon a Christian sexual ethic, we express good reasons to say no to sex, but also a vision of the ideal context for saying yes to sex. We teach our students the facts and perspectives about sexual orientation and gender identity in an age appropriate and inclusive way. We teach the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available; the legal choices permitted and moral perspectives in relation to pregnancy with medically and legally accurate information and moral perspectives on these. With regard to sexual health our students will know how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced; and how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to harm. They will also know to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment. We teach our students that the principles of healthy relationships also apply online. Living in a digital world requires wisdom to navigate social media and also face-to-face relationships⁵. Our students are taught how to keep safe online which includes how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and to whom to report issues. Students learn about cyberbullying and understand the impact of viewing harmful content and sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours and can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others. Students are clearly taught that the sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail. Our students are taught how to keep safe online which includes how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and to whom to report issues

Aims and Principles

We nurture: 1. *Knowledgeable* students who have a sound knowledge of physiological and biological aspects of sex and reproduction 2. *Thoughtful* students who reflect with maturity on the differing perspectives on relationships and sexual ethics 3. *Discerning* students who are empowered to make wise choices in life relating to relationships, sex and sexuality 4. *Confident* students who have an appreciation of their own self-worth and know where they can turn for help and advice 5. *Selfless* students who put the interests of others before their own.

Our RSE programme will be:

- 1) ***Age appropriate*** We seek to ensure that our delivery will be structured so as to protect children's innocence without compromise to clarity.⁶
- 2) ***In partnership with parents/carers*** Our relationships and sex education will be significantly more effective as parents also spend time discussing the issues with their children.
- 3) ***Pastorally sensitive*** We are fully aware also of the diversity of views on moral issues that exists in the modern world and our aim is to be entirely sensitive in areas where there is disagreement.
- 4) ***Consistent with our ethos*** We affirm the value, worth and dignity of all, regardless of their views or their moral decisions; as such, we will treat all of our students with care and compassion.⁷
- 5) ***Well planned and expertly delivered*** We seek to ensure that experts deliver our relationships and sex education, and we prize a delivery that communicates the facts clearly.

⁵ Sherry Turkle *Alone Together* pp.11-12, Basic Books, 2001 'We build a following on Facebook or MySpace and wonder to what degree our followers are friends...suddenly, in the half-light of virtual community, we may feel utterly alone... Sometimes people experience no sense of having communicated after hours of connection...'

⁶ In its March 2017 policy statement the Government expressed its commitment 'to ensuring that the education provided to pupils in Relationships Education and RSE is appropriate to the age of pupils and their religious background'.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/595828/170301_Policy_statement_PSHEv2.pdf (p.4)

⁷ See t British Values Policy: LINK NEEDED

Part B - Bede Academy Programme:

This section outlines where and how RSE content is included in the curriculum at Bede Academy. Bede Academy is an all through school and this policy refers to both Bede South and Bede North, the Primary and Secondary schools respectively. Where there are topics that are not covered through the curriculum (primarily in Science, Child Development, PTE, Tutor Reflections and Assemblies) whole year-group sessions are arranged, as part of a Personal Development curriculum and delivered by a team of internal staff at Bede North and by class teachers at Bede South. The staff delivering the sessions will do so from a Christian faith perspective, but also respectfully acknowledging other perspectives and views. Students are taught the facts and law about relationships and sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive manner that enables them to make their own knowledgeable and educated choices with regards to friendships, relationships and sex. Our aim is to present facts and promote wisdom that encourages students to understand the benefits of healthy relationships, recognise unhealthy ones and appreciate the value of waiting. We also welcome the 'Lovewise' team and the 'Respect ME' team from the Message Trust who deliver one session per year group (Year 6+) during arranged drop-down RSE days each year. 'Lovewise' and 'Respect ME' are charities that serve young people in a variety of church, community, and educational settings and who seek to promote an education that allows children and young people to live out Jesus' promise of life in all its fullness.^[1]

Through our Personal Development programme, which includes weekly lessons at primary and whole year group lectures at secondary, we deliberately cultivate an education of character that is underpinned by our Christian ethos. At the heart of our ethos is the concept of 'imago dei', with the view that all are 'infinitely precious, gifted for a purpose and morally responsible. The Personal Development curriculum, through which RSE is partly delivered, is, therefore, a crucial part of the overall education of character through which we seek to develop wisdom, resilience, self-control and the ability to resist peer pressure. We seek to instill in all our students how to make their own, well-informed choices with wisdom. We determine wisdom as the sensible and mature application of factual knowledge, in order that maximum benefit to mental, physical and spiritual health can be accomplished. We deliver the RSE programme in a non judgemental, factual way that allows scope for students to ask questions regarding relationships and sex education in a safe, respectful environment. Our students are taught the applicable law on a range of topics so that they are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child be excused/withdrawn from some or all of sex education (but not Relationships and Health Education) delivered as part of statutory RSE. Any requests can be made up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, we would seek to arrange to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. Parental requests to withdraw their child from sex education must be made in writing to the Principal. This request will then be discussed with the parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. This process is the same for pupils with SEND.

^[1] [Respect ME policy](#)

Bede South

In the Early Years and Primary Years, students learn about character and building positive relationships through the academy values: *'be good'*, *'be humble'*, *'be kind'* and *'be honest'*, *'be responsible'*, *'be brave'* and *'be determined'*. Students learn that they are made in the image of God and that they and their peers and family members are infinitely precious and should be treated as such. Through the academy's character programme students learn about the importance of transforming their community through using their gifts for a purpose and being morally responsible. There is a specific focus on friendships and relationships, staying safe, differences and similarities and responsibilities within a community.

Early Years:

People and communities, making relationships and managing feelings.

Students will study 'people and communities' and have a sense of immediate family and relations. They will celebrate family customs. Students will begin to 'make relationships' and have their own friends and begin to recognise similarities and difference between them and their friends. Students will begin to 'manage their own feelings and behaviour' and will demonstrate friendly behaviour and initiate good friendships. With support they will take steps to resolve conflicts and learn the importance of 'being kind' and 'being honest'. Their individual worth, and the value of others is engendered by the school vision that all are 'infinitely precious' being made in the image of God - 'imago dei'.

Primary Years:

Year 1:

How do we treat people in our class? How can we 'be kind'?

We want every child, whatever their background, to feel loved, valued and welcomed in class. Students will explore what makes a healthy friendship and how to be welcoming to others, and not make them feel lonely or excluded. Students will discuss how they can show our academy values and 'be kind' to people in their class and they will learn how to say sorry if they have upset someone. Students will explore how to show friendship to others and learn that God wants to be their friend.

How do we keep safe? How do we ask for help if we are worried?

Students will look at the importance of not keeping secrets that make them feel worried/afraid/uncomfortable. Students will begin to recognise who they can and cannot trust. Students will learn about appropriate and inappropriate touch and contact and begin to learn how to search safely online.

What makes us and our families special?

Students will learn the academy core belief that we are all made in the image of God and are all 'infinitely precious'. Students will learn about what makes a healthy family life and the importance of respecting the differences and similarities between people and families. Families can look different. God loves everyone.

Year 2:

What makes a good friendship? What is bullying?

Building on the learning in Year 1, students learn about the characteristics of a good friendship. They learn to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable. Students learn how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed. They learn about managing conflict and showing forgiveness to others and they learn about forgiveness from the example of Jesus. Students learn the definition of bullying and different types of bullying are studied (including cyberbullying) and the impact of such bullying. Students build on the academy belief that we are all 'morally responsible' and have responsibilities as bystanders of bullying (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help. Students learn the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise online bullying and other risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them. Through the teaching of character, students learn that in the academy and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others and not bullied. They should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.

How can we help to keep ourselves and others safe?

Students will learn about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults. Students will learn about appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact. Students will learn about the importance of 'being honest' to keep themselves and others safe and how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others. Students will grow in confidence, able to report concerns or abuse, and develop the vocabulary needed to do so. They will learn where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources and how to 'be brave' and make a call to the emergency services if necessary. Students will learn about online safety and about not opening emails and games to unknown people and the safe use of photos and information online.

What is the same and different about us?

Students develop an appreciation of self-worth and begin to identify their gifts and how these can be used for a purpose and they begin to understand that everyone has different gifts, and this should be celebrated. Students will learn about simple differences between boys and girls and they will learn about the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them or they make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs. God is an example of being friends with everyone, including the poor and friendless.

Year 3:

How can we describe our feelings? What can we do about bullying?

Students are reminded about the academy aim for 'excellence in the community' and that they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority. Students learn about a wider range of feelings, both good and not so good and about their ability to recognise and talk about their emotions and the emotions of others. Students develop a greater understanding of different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders and how to get help. They learn that some bullying comes from stereotypes and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive. Students learn further about what they can do to 'be brave and responsible' in these situations. They are reminded that all people are made in the image of God and are infinitely precious, so bullying will not be tolerated.

What are the rules that keep us safe?

Building on prior knowledge, students will continue to think about the concept of privacy and learn that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. Students will develop self-worth and learn that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact. They will have the confidence to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. Students will develop wisdom to make the right choices and learn more about the importance of reporting concerns or abuse. Students learn about the rules and principles for keeping safe online: recognising risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report concerns. Students will develop a greater understanding of how information and data is shared and used online and the positives and negatives around this.

What are our responsibilities?

Students will learn about 'being responsible' and about their responsibilities in their home, school and community. They will learn about how their actions can positively or negatively influence their community and that they are responsible for displaying respectful behaviour and keeping information private. They will learn the conventions of courtesy and manners and the importance of self-respect and how it links to their own contentment. Students will also learn about the responsibilities they have for the environment and the world they live. God loves the world he has made including humans. God wants humans to be responsible and look after his world including each other. Jesus' message is one of love. We should love one another.

Year 4:

How can we be a good friend as we grow and change? What is diversity?

Students learn the value of friendships in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends. Students explore further the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties. Students learn about puberty and become more confident in describing the range of feelings towards

others and manage more complex emotions. They explore the importance of forgiveness in friendships and in the Christian life. Jesus sets the example of putting others first and forgiving. Jesus challenges those who pretend to be good and loves and forgives the most unlikely. Students learn the meaning of diversity. Students build on previous learning and develop a deeper understanding about how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive, the impact of this and how this deeper understanding can apply to their own actions towards others.

How can we keep safe and avoid negative pressures?

Students continue to learn about keeping safe in their local area. They begin to understand the feeling of negative pressure from people in their community and how to manage this pressure with wisdom. They continue to learn more about who they can trust to help keep them safe as life begins to get more complex. Students begin to appreciate how their actions can have a negative impact on others, including actions on the internet. Students learn what they can do to avoid negative pressures and avoid negative actions towards others. Students develop selflessness as they reflect on putting the needs of others before their own temptations.

What are families and how are they important?

Students learn that families are important for them growing up because they can give love, security and stability. Students learn and reflect on the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives. Students learn that others' families, either in the academy or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care. Students learn that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.

Year 5:

What does discrimination mean?

Students build on their understanding of diversity and explore further different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders and how to get help. Students further explore stereotypes. They learn the meaning of the word 'discrimination' and about teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviour and its effect on others. Students learn about how to be confident people who recognise and challenge stereotypes both in the community and online. Students learn that the right response to God is to live a life that pleases him and does not discriminate.

How can we be safe online and using social media?

Students will learn that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not. Students will learn the importance of appropriate boundaries in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context). They will also learn how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know. They will learn how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult. They will learn how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met and the risk of 'habit' when it comes to online use. Students will appreciate how information and data is shared and used online and the risks that are involved.

What is community?

Students build on the academy aim for 'excellence in the community' and they reflect further about what it means to be a part of a community. Students reflect thoughtfully about different groups and individuals that support the local community and what they can do to contribute to their community with their gifts. They build on the character programme considering what role they can play. They have greater appreciation for the customs of people in their community locally, nationally and internationally and learn to live at peace with people who hold different views to their own. Students begin to learn how a family is developed through the human life cycle.

Year 6:

What makes a healthy and happy relationship?

Students learn how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends. They build on previous learning about the characteristics of friendships and how to recognise when a friendship is not positive and how to confidently manage these situations and seek help or advice from others, if needed. Students learn that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online and how to report concerns. Students learn that in society there are different types of relationships (friends, families, couples, marriage, civil partnership) and they reflect on what constitutes a positive, healthy relationship and about the wisdom and skills to maintain positive relationships. Students learn about the common things in all positive relationships such as commitment and love. Students learn about the characteristics of a healthy marriage from a Christian perspective and they learn about human reproduction. Students learn about the right they have to protect their body and that relationships should not harm our bodies. They learn that it is sometimes necessary to break confidence in a relationship to keep yourself and others safe.

How can we manage risk?

Students become more thoughtful, understanding that they have increased responsibility for keeping themselves and others safe. They learn strategies for managing risk. They become more confident in identifying different influences on behaviour, including peer pressure and media influence and how to resist unhelpful pressure and ask for help. Students will be challenged about what to consider before sharing pictures of themselves and others online and how anti-social behaviours can affect wellbeing of themselves and others. Students will learn that every person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact. They will develop confidence and learn how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know. They will recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult. They will ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and keep trying until they are heard.

What makes a healthy and happy family?

Students explore the importance of families for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability. Students explore the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives. Students will recognise that others' families, either in the academy or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care. Stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up. Students will learn that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong and they will explore what the Bible teaches about such a relationship. Students will develop maturity and confidence to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Bede North : Secondary Years:

Year 7:

In year 7 students consider what human beings are and the influences on us as we grow up, how to appreciate, establish and build healthy relationships in all areas of life. There is a focus on building and maintaining healthy relationships and the impact of breakdown in relationships. Be the 'best you can be', linked to the core values provide a significant character challenge, complemented by strong encouragement to participate in a significant range of character broadening activities such as team sports, house competitions, educational visits; helping develop team spirit, care for one another, and a servant hearted focus based on the school vision that everyone is 'infinitely-precious.' There is also a strong emphasis on charitable giving, and putting others before oneself, providing foundational principles for positive relationships, where there is an emphasis on empathy.

In the **RSE** strand of **Personal Development** students consider **friendships and self-esteem in two whole year group sessions. In friendships workshop** students explore features of healthy relationships, growing healthy relationships with our friends, recognising characteristics of unhealthy relationships and identifying when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed. The topics of peer pressure, communicating with strangers/grooming and the concept of self-generated images is also covered.

In **Self Esteem workshop** (delivered by Respect Me) students explore the meaning of self-esteem and the variety of types, discuss the influence of surroundings, family, friends and the media on our self-esteem. They take an in-depth analysis of airbrushing and its effect on body image, explore statistics, facts and personal stories on eating disorders. They also look at what the Bible teaches us about self-esteem, reflect upon students' own achievements and ambitions, examine the uniqueness of the human body, explore the change of the ideal body image in the media over time and evaluate how Christians find their sense of value and self-esteem through what the Bible teaches.

In **ICT** students explore the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships, in all contexts including online, such as: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict. Students consider cyberbullying and e-safety including learning about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying, and how and where to get help

In **Science** students study the topic: **human reproduction**. Students gain a knowledge of the biological mechanism of sexual reproduction in humans and the physical changes that take place during puberty. Curriculum subject matter includes gametes and fertilisation; the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems; the menstrual cycle (without details of hormones); gestation and birth, to include the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta.

In **PTE** students study Identity and the Image of God (Imago Dei). Students gain knowledge of the Christian belief that all humans are created in the image of God and no human is created without the hand and purpose of God. This then impacts on belief about self and belief about others. Teaching reflects the Academy's vision and core values in relation to intrinsic human worth and the idea of being 'infinitely precious (imago dei). This provides consideration towards how we should regard others. Students evaluate the differences this can make when we form relationships: families, friendships and even the relationship with our enemies. Students will explore companionship, family and breakdown in relationship (through Adam & Eve); reconciliation and blessing others (through the life of Abraham); issues of family and justice (through Moses; the nature or relationship, forgiveness and atonement (through Jesus, Judaism, the temple and salvation).

In **History** students consider the impact of historical events within the context of family. In a unit of work studying the Norman Conquest and Medieval Britain students reflect on conflict within family units. In a unit of work exploring Anglo-Saxon life students consider the impact of this on family life and in exploration of Kings and Barons students explore the feudal system and Magna Carta and the impact of this on understanding individual rights and liberties.

In **MFL** students learn how to describe themselves and their own personality traits. This is extended to include discussion about the character traits which student's value and explore the basis of good character and friendship

Year 8:

In Year 8 students build upon the principles learnt in Year 7 and **develop application** of these principles in their lives and relationships. The focus contributes to the Character Curriculum in terms of wisdom and integrity, allowing students to explore the character attributes needed to apply these principles to their lives and how to make wise decisions in the future, concerning ethical decisions around sex and relationships.

In **PTE** students study Love, Drugs and War. Building on the understanding of Imago Dei developed in Year 7, students consider marriage and sex from a Christian viewpoint. Students explore the Biblical foundation for marriage as well as alternative views and relationship types including cohabitation, and civil partnerships. They also look at Motherhood and Fatherhood and reflect on their own family situation, discussing and exploring the many different models of family.

Students also explore relationships in terms of how to improve the lives of others (through exploring their own purpose), family loyalty and adoptive relationships (through Esther), friendship, marriage and infidelity (through the history of King David). The impact of drugs and alcohol on individual and family relationships is also explored.

In the **RSE Personal Development (RSE)** curriculum students there is:

An introduction to adult relationships through:

- Exploration of beauty and the challenge of singleness.
- Understanding of the importance of commitment in intimate relationships.
- Discussion of the seriousness of engaging in sexual activity, the benefits of wise decisions and the application of integrity.
- Looking at the nuclear family and Christian marriage and considering alternative relationships to heterosexual marriage, including same-sex marriage, civil partnerships and LGBTQ+.
- Understanding human sexuality and the reasons and benefits of delaying sexual activity until marriage as well as an understanding of consent (including the age of consent) in order to ensure a safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships.
- Peer and media pressure: are we always being told the truth or is there, at times, some kind of distortion? How can we view these media sources and apply it to become wise and integrous?
- Examination of the importance of the way we speak about other people (when they are present and when they are absent), particularly building on skills of integrity and accountability.
- Finding wise ways to deal with and be a courageous citizen and not a passive bystander when the casual use of sexualised terms, homophobic comments, or other forms of bullying are witnessed. Attention is given to the zero-tolerance approach towards bullying at Bede, the importance of boundaries and advice on what to do if something is concerning us (personally or in relation to a friend), with signposting of outside agencies included.

In **Internet Safety workshop** issues surrounding pornography online are considered (this topic is discussed in more depth in year 9). Students consider the dangers of addiction, unrealistic expectations, unnatural desires and abusive relationships. They also consider Sexting - what it is, the consequences and the legalities of it, Revenge pornography and blackmail.

In **Bullying workshop** (delivered by Respect Me) students explore bullying and the many different forms of bullying. This features discussions on why people may become a victim of bullying or a become a bully, statistics and information on psychological research on both bullies and their victims and analysis of the long-term effects of bullying for both bullies and their victims. The workshop goes on to explore cyberbullying including statistics on cyber bullying, personal stories on being a victim of bullying, exploration of internet trolling and what the Bible teaches us about bullying.

In **History** students consider the impact of divorce whilst exploring the life of Henry VIII. Issues of equality and identity are explored in a unit of work built around the slave trade. This includes the impact of families being separated. Students go on to explore how the roles of men and women changed during the first World War.

In **Geography** students consider the impact of globalisation Brazil through the lens of equality.

In **years 9, 10 and 11** students consider the issues relating to sexual relationships in greater depth, including: the facts concerning reproductive health, sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS, and we signpost students to where they can access confidential help and advice. Students learn about contraceptive choices and the issues relating to the nature of sex. We help students to understand the reasons and benefits of delaying sexual activity until marriage and support them regarding having safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships at the appropriate time, including an understanding of the age of consent. Students consider how to live well considering the pressures of the modern world, including pornography and online safety. We affirm the value and importance of Christian marriage (as defined in Part A) as the right context for sexual relationships. Within our curriculum we will acknowledge the importance of balanced debate between a range of views held by Christians as well as those expressed within our increasingly secular society. This occurs within our curriculum where a range of different views are respectfully considered.

Year 9:

In the **Personal Development RSE** curriculum students explore Sex and Relationships and Internet Safety in more depth than in year 8 covering:

Pornography: dangers and decisions:

- Exploration of the commodification of sex and the objectification of others.
- Explanation of what pornography is and how it is harmful, the physical and emotional effects on the body and mind.
- The law around pornography.
- Understanding of why someone might take a naked selfie, why it might get shared, and what impact and consequences this could have for them, in order to help them make mature and safe choices in future.
- Understanding of the issues around sharing intimate pictures online; including trust, privacy and responsibility.
- Explanation of the law on sending and sharing sexual images and the criminal charges and severe penalties that these offenses carry.
- An exploration of how to think about and respond to the sexualisation of society (and the increased sexualisation of children).
- Explanation of how human trafficking links to the pornography industry.
- Dealing with misconceptions of what sex is and how it is sometimes portrayed through the media and internet.
- What is the law in the UK about sexual activity?
- What is the meaning of consent and the law surrounding this?

In **RSE workshop (delivered by the 'Respect Me' team)**, students explore influences and pressures from peers and partners. They ask questions such as "Do we respect ourselves and ask others to respect our choices? ". The workshop continues with an exploration of how the media and the internet portray sex and relationships and how this compares with real life. Students explore what the Bible teaches us about sex and committed relationships and how to make healthy and positive choices about sex and relationships. Students will explore the benefits of delaying sex, statistics on teenage pregnancy, STIs and abortion and finally how we can find a sense of value and great self-esteem through what the Bible teaches.

In **PTE** in Year 9 students begin looking outwards and explore how they can stand up for the poor and speak out against injustice. This includes exploring care for others, and responses to bullying and fraud (through Amos). Students spend time considering the causes of the Holocaust and again the emphasis is on the need to treat one another with dignity and respect. This leads on to the exploration of war and terrorism, linking extreme behaviours to relationship, selfishness and greed,

In **ICT** students revisit cyberbullying and in doing so they consider their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online. They explore online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. Students learn not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them and how what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.

In **History** students explore the role of women through society, looking closely at the suffragette movement and the role of women inside and outside the family. Continued exploration of the Second World War explores tension in the relationships between countries and the effects of this on family life. The latter part of the year is spent studying civil rights and then exploring the Holocaust, both with a strong emphasis on equality.

In **Geography** students explore the impact of China's one child policy and reflect on this in relation to their own expectations of family life and the impact this might have.

¹ [Respect Me RSE Health Education Requirements Policy](#)

Year 10:

In **Biology** students study the topics of infection and response and homeostasis. The infection and response topic introduce students to concepts relating to communicable disease; this includes the transmission, prevention and treatment of the sexually transmitted infections HIV and Gonorrhoea. In the homeostasis topic students study the role of the female reproductive hormones, including their use in both fertility treatment and contraception. Students would also be required to develop skill in evaluating associated personal and social implications, making decisions based on the evaluation of evidence and arguments.

In **Personal Development RSE** students consider:

Reproductive Health and Sexuality:

- Discussion of the importance of respect and equality regarding different sexual orientations and gender identity.
- Understanding of the facts, perspectives and diversity of different expressions of sexuality, including LGBTQ+
- Facts about reproductive health, including fertility.
- Potential impact lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.
- Facts around pregnancy and information on the choices available in relation to pregnancy, including miscarriage.
- What are sexually transmitted infections (including HIV/AIDS) and how they are transmitted
- The prevalence of some STIs, the impact that they can have on those who contract them and the key facts about treatment.
- Importance of and facts about testing for STIs and how to get further confidential advice.

Contraception and Abortion:

- Describe the advantages of abstinence and self-control. Discussion of a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.
- Explanation of what contraception is and what different methods are there and what different ideas exist about when it is right to use it?
- Types of contraception: artificial contraception, emergency contraception, natural family planning or natural contraception and their efficacy.
- Arguments about the use of contraception; to understand conception and the early formation/development of a foetus
- What is abortion? What methods are used?
- What are the different views on abortion?
- What is the morning after-pill; how does it work? What are the moral issues surrounding it?

Positive Relationships and Sexting: (delivered by Respect Me team): 1

- An exploration of positive relationships including the examination of what values are expected in platonic and romantic relationships
- A discussion on what each student would do in several scenarios relating to the topic matter
- An analysis of what psychologists say we all need to feel secure
- The exploration of the definition of love
- The examination of the effects of the media in our romantic relationships
- Statistics and facts on self-esteem
- An exploration and discussion of the definitions of sexting
- An analysis on the dangers of sexting
- Statistics and facts on sexting
- An exploration of the media regarding sexting
- What the Bible says regarding sexting

The GCSE Religious Studies begins at the end of Year 9 and continues through to Year 11. Relevant topics covered throughout the course are:

Islam:

- Five Pillars
- Prayer with consideration given to Community
- Charity – Care for others – Family/friends/neighbours/strangers
- Fasting – corporate nature of sharing/encouraging friends/family - abstinence from sex – self-control.
- Islam Festivals are discussed with a focus on the corporate nature of sharing with family/friends/neighbours/strangers.

Christianity:

- Trinity- Relationship/Community/Parenthood. Crucifixion- Love- relationships- fault and responsibility.
- Salvation- relationship- forgiveness and atonement. Worship/Prayer/Pilgrimage/Festivals/Church in Community/Persecution/Poverty - encouragement/support of friends/family/neighbour/stranger.
- Ethics and Life- Value of Life - Abortion- sex/friendship/family – impacts on self/friends/family. Euthanasia- friendship/family – impacts on self/friends/family
- Ethics and Conflict/Peace- Relationships - Forgiveness/Reconciliation
- Ethics and Conflict/Peace- Conflict – causes – greed/self-defence/defence of others
- Ethics and Conflict/Peace- Pacifism – care for others – violence and impact
- Ethics and Conflict/Peace- Care for victims – care for others – violence and impact

Year 11:

PTE

Mark's Gospel:

- Jesus Relationship with others- sick/poor/vulnerable
- Friendship – Disciples and Discipleship
- Love – Jesus crucifixion – example love for God and others
- Friendship – forgiveness - Jesus atonement & reconciliation – Peter's forgiveness

In **Personal Development RSE** considers:

Marriage, Sex and the Law:

- Understanding of what marriage is, the nature of it and the legal rights and responsibilities it carries in England, including facts about marriage and civil partnership for same-sex couples.
- The importance of marriage for society and how the law applies to other long-term relationships (eg. cohabitation).
- Understanding of the importance of Christian marriage as the right context for sexual relationships.
- What *is* sexual consent and what is *not*.
- Explanation of the law about the age of sexual consent, the fact that it applies regardless of sexual orientation or gender.
- The definition of sex in law and recognition of rape, sexual harassment and assault.
- Definition of sexual exploitation and example news stories/case studies.
- Female genital mutilation (FGM) and the law surrounding this.
- The emotional and physical impact of FGM and what to do if you suspect this is happening.
- Laws surrounding the sharing of pictures, videos and other material using technology.

Abuse: (delivered by the 'Respect me' team) ¹

- An exploration of abuse and the many different forms including emotional abuse, self-harm, alcohol abuse and eating disorders
- Discussions on what influences our behaviour and why people may become a victim of abuse
- Statistics and information on relating subjects
- Analysis of the long-term effects of abuse
- Examination of its dangers and effects
- Personal stories on being a victim of emotional abuse, suicide and alcohol abuse
- What the Bible teaches us about abuse
- Evaluation on how Christians find their comfort, self-esteem and value from what the Bible teach

MFL GCSE - friendship, family and relationship is a unit. Included in the this is whether they plan to get married and what their views are, so we discuss the pros and cons. The students also have to discuss what family life is like, and who they get on with. They also say what they would look for in a future partner

Internet Safety workshops focus on: self-baiting (when people actively seek to be abused online), Online dating and the dangers surrounding it, Catfishing and Grooming and inappropriate/abusive relationships.

¹ [Respect Me RSE Health Education Requirements Policy](#)

Sixth Form:

PTE

All Sixth Form students are provided with a core Philosophy, Theology and Ethics course covering the following topics:

- Democracy
- Freedom of Speech
- Tolerance and intolerance
- My Sister's Keeper – Family
- Cohabitation and Marriage
- Dignity and Human Value

In **Personal Development RSE** students will consider the following in a day conference with the Respect Me team:

Love vs. Lust (delivered by the 'Respect Me' team). The Sixth Form will receive a day conference with the Respect Me team. Their sessions will cover a range of pertinent issues covering relationships, including lust, pornography and healthy relationships. 1

- An exploration of the meaning of love and lust
- What does the Bible teach us about love?
- Discussions on the influence of the media
- A look at the ratings of movies and how we can become desensitised
- Exploration of the effects of the book Fifty Shades of Grey
- Statistics, facts and personal stories on consent
- Evaluation on how Christians find their sense of value and self-esteem through what the Bible teaches

A Level History - the social history of families through the 20th/21st century, and how women's role has changed, what forms families can now take, the rate of divorce.

Whole School:

In addition to the specific RSE teaching, there is a host of whole School Initiatives that support positive relationships. The culture of Bede Academy is that of an all through school, which takes a holistic view of education from the age of 3 through to 18. There is a clear underlying vision that every child is 'infinitely precious', 'gifted for a purpose' and 'morally responsible'. This is played out effectively the day to day life of the school as evidenced by the Section 48 report (see link below).

Year 7-13 Assembly Programme and Tutor Reflection Programme

In assembly, tutor groups choose to present on one of several selected themes. With the support of tutors, students research their assembly, discuss and agree key messages (the list below being a relevant sample of what students are encouraged to consider and then present to their house.)

Theme	Title
Self-worth	Beautiful inside out
Self-worth	Why does no-one understand me?
Contentment	I can't get no satisfaction!
Friendship	What makes a good friend?

True Friends	Good friends are hard to find!
Identity	Who am I?
Frivolous	Is there more to life than sex, drugs and rock and roll?
Cheating	Cheating isn't that bad!

The following also highlight the holistic approach towards supporting student development in terms of positive relationships, with a constant reminder to students of support provided and how to access that support:

- School Vision and Core Values – with a range of relevant themes related to relationships, self-worth, identity, respecting others. ([Section 48 Report](#))
- House events, Sports Teams, the DofE award and a plethora of Educational visits along with a careers programme, PIXL Edge and a Sixth Form servant leadership programme promote personal development that is supportive of the community and positive relationships.
- Student Support Groups and Student Voice – student council, Rock Solid, Girls’ Network ([See report](#)) provide individual support, complementing the support given by tutors, the pastoral and the welfare teams.
- Pupil Premium – support initiatives – peer mentoring Franklin Scholars
- Pastoral Care and Welfare support Anti-Bullying policy, Behaviour and Discipline Policy, Rewards and Awards PREVENT, Equality support
- Beyond School Support – Community and Church Links, with many outside speakers broadening the impact of the key messages regarding the importance of healthy and positive relationships.
- Charity Focus – understanding other cultures
- Holocaust Day
- External Student Support (North)
- Family Gateway – Family in-home support to meet basic needs and increase engagement in education
- Early Help Team – Threshold based assessment of families at high risk requiring multi-agency support.
- NECOP – Universities partnership to increase access to higher education and raise aspiration
- Princes Trust – Aspiration building programme designed to increase engagement in education
- Children’s University – Broadening access to extra-curricular opportunities
- Junction 42 Co-authoring bespoke programme to address self-identity to increase engagement in education
- NEYFC – Excel course to address self-identity and increase engagement in education
- SORTED – Local Authority run support for students with drug or alcohol involvement
- Girls’ Network – Mentoring programme to raise aspiration and provide mentoring support for girls in years 9 and 10
- Boys’ Network - Mentoring programme to raise aspiration and provide mentoring support for boys in years 9 and 10
- Mosaic – Therapeutic specialist support for victims of sexual assault

¹ [Respect Me RSE Health Education Requirements Policy](#)

The Emmanuel Schools Foundation's sex education policy was approved by ESF directors in July 2017. The following guidance was consulted in devising the policy:

Improving the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils: supplementary information Departmental advice for independent schools, academies and free schools, Department for Education, Nov 2014
http://c4m.org.uk/downloads/DfE_EducationRegulations_IndependentSchoolsGuidance_HIGHLIGHTED.pdf.

The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013: The Equality and Human Rights Implications for the Provision of School Education, Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2014:
https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/gd.13.103-4_schools_24-03-14.pdf.

Sex and Relationship Education Guidance, DfEE, Jul 2000:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/283599/sex_and_relationship_education_guidance.pdf

The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities, Department for Education, May 2014:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf

Key Points

1. Obligations upon all maintained schools

"The governing body and head teacher shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that where sex education is given to any registered pupils at a maintained school, it is given in such a manner as to encourage those pupils to have due regard to moral considerations and the value of family life.

"The Secretary of State must issue guidance designed to secure that when sex education is given to registered pupils at maintained schools—

*(a) they learn the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and the bringing up of children, and
(b) they are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate having regard to the age and the religious and cultural background of the pupils concerned."*⁸

2. Obligations upon schools with a religious character

*"Schools with a religious character can continue to deliver sex and relationship education in accordance with their particular religious doctrines or ethos. They must do so in a sensitive, reasonable, respectful and balanced way."*⁹

"No school, or individual teacher, is under a duty to support, promote or endorse marriage of same sex couples. Teaching should be based on facts and should enable pupils to develop an understanding of how the law applies to different relationships. Teachers must have regard to statutory guidance on sex and relationship education, and to meet duties under equality and human rights law.

⁸ Section 403, **Education Act 1996**: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/403>

⁹ **The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013: The Equality and Human Rights Implications for the Provision of School Education**, Equality and Human Rights Commission Guidance, 2014, p.5
https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/gd.13.103-4_schools_24-03-14.pdf

Subject to the above, nothing in the Act affects the rights of schools with a religious character to continue to teach about marriage according to their religious doctrines or ethos. Any views expressed about marriage of same sex couples, by governors, teachers, other school staff, parents and pupils, may reflect the religious ethos of the school.

Governors, teachers and non-teaching staff in schools, parents and pupils, are free to hold their own religious or philosophical beliefs about marriage of same sex couples.”¹⁰

“ Parents will continue to have a right to withdraw their children from sex education. Schools will have flexibility over how they deliver these subjects, so they can develop an integrated approach that is sensitive to the needs of the local community; and, as now, faith schools will continue to be able to teach in accordance with the tenets of their faith.”¹¹

“38% of teenage pregnancies ended in abortion in 1998 – almost 39,000 abortions. There are strongly held views and religious beliefs about abortion and some schools will apply a particular religious ethos through their sex and relationship education policy to the issue which will enable pupils to consider the moral and personal dilemmas involved. The religious convictions of pupils and their parents should be respected.”¹²

The standard does not mean, for example, that schools must promote alternative lifestyles or same sex marriage. Rather, it requires respect for other people, even if they choose to follow a lifestyle that one would not choose to follow oneself.¹³

3. Obligations upon individual teachers

“Teachers, other school staff, governors, parents and pupils are all free to hold whatever personal views they choose on marriage of same sex couples, including a view that marriage should only be between a man and a woman. The Government recognises that the belief that marriage can only be between a man and a woman is a belief worthy of respect in a democratic society.

Individuals are free to express positive or negative views about marriage of same sex couples, depending on the form of words used and the particular context in which they are used. This applies to all forms of communication in public and in the workplace. Individuals who express support for, or opposition to, marriage of same sex couples, in public or in work, should do so in reasonable and moderate terms, to ensure they are mindful of and do not breach the rights and freedoms of others.

Where relevant, teachers need to teach the facts about the legal meaning of marriage in England and Wales in a sensitive, reasonable and appropriate way to comply with professional and legal obligations, and school policies and practices. This will include providing accurate factual information about the law when delivering lessons.

... Freedom of expression is explicitly protected under the Public Order Act 1986 (POA) provisions concerning the offences of inciting hatred on the grounds of religion or sexual orientation (see Part 3A and sections 29J and 29JA POA). Under the Act, Parliament has further protected the rights of individuals to express their views on marriage of same sex couples through discussion or criticism without facing any criminal sanction under the POA, by inserting a new sub-section into section 29JA. In order to guarantee that simply giving a view on marriage of same sex couples is not caught by the offences of threatening behaviour and hate speech on the grounds of sexual orientation, the new Section 29JA (2) of the POA specifies that: ‘any

¹⁰ **The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013: The Equality and Human Rights Implications for the Provision of School Education**, Op.Cit., p.2,3

¹¹ **Justine Greening**, Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities, Sex and Relationships Education:Written statement - HCWS509, 1 Mar 2017: <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2017-03-01/HCWS509/>

¹² **Sex and Relationship Education Guidance**, DfEE, Jul 2000, p.16

¹³ **Improving the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils**: supplementary information Departmental advice for independent schools, academies and free schools November 2014, http://c4m.org.uk/downloads/DfE_EducationRegulations_IndependentSchoolsGuidance_HIGHLIGHTED.pdf p.10

discussion or criticism of marriage which concerns the sex of the parties to marriage shall not be taken of itself to be threatening or intended to stir up hatred.”¹⁴

“It is not necessary for schools or individuals to ‘promote’ teachings, beliefs or opinions that conflict with their own, but nor is it acceptable for schools to promote discrimination against people or groups on the basis of their belief, opinion or background.”¹⁵

“Many people’s views on sexual orientation/sexual activity are themselves grounded in religious belief. Some schools with a religious character have concerns that they may be prevented from teaching in line with their religious ethos. Teachers have expressed concerns that they may be subject to legal action if they do not voice positive views on same sex relationships, whether or not this view accords with their faith. There are also concerns that schools with a religious character may teach and act in ways unacceptable to lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils and parents when same sex relationships are discussed because there are no express provisions to prevent this occurring.

Schools with a religious character, like all schools, have a responsibility for the welfare of the children in their care and to adhere to curriculum guidance. It is not the intention of the Equality Act to undermine their position as long as they continue to uphold their responsibilities in these areas. If their beliefs are explained in an appropriate way in an educational context that takes into account existing guidance on the delivery of Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) and Religious Education (RE), then schools should not be acting unlawfully. However, if a school conveyed its belief in a way that involved haranguing, harassing or berating a particular pupil or group of pupils then this would be unacceptable in any circumstances and is likely to constitute unlawful discrimination.

Where individual teachers are concerned, having a view about something does not amount to discrimination. So it should not be unlawful for a teacher in any school to express personal views on sexual orientation provided that it is done in an appropriate manner and context (for example when responding to questions from pupils, or in an RE or Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) lesson). However, it should be remembered that school teachers are in a very influential position and their actions and responsibilities are bound by much wider duties than this legislation. A teacher’s ability to express his or her views should not extend to allowing them to discriminate against others.”¹⁶

¹⁴ **The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013: The Equality and Human Rights Implications for the Provision of School Education**, Op.Cit., p.6,7

¹⁵ **Improving the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils**, Op.Cit. p.7

¹⁶ **The Equality Act 2010 and schools**: Departmental advice for school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and local authorities, Department for Education, May 2014, p.22,23:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf

