



Blackwater Community
Primary School

Friday 25th June 2021

Relationships and Health Education

Dear Parent/Carer,

Department for Education (DfE) statutory requirements for Relationships and Health Education

From September 2020, schools will have to teach Relationships and Health Education.

You can read about these changes in this DfE guide for parents < here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-sex-and-health-education-guides-for-schools> The DfE also strongly encourages primary schools to deliver sex education to help prepare children for their transition to secondary school.

Most schools are already delivering very effective Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and the new guidance is simply about ensuring that **all** children get the information they need and want. The lessons will help children to learn about their bodies including the changes that take place at puberty, and will help keep them safe, so they can form healthy relationships (friendships) with others, now and in the future.

At our school we are using the leading children's health and wellbeing charity, Coram Life Education (CLE) to support us in meeting these legal requirements. We do this in a two ways:

- A visit from a trained educator who will deliver aspects of the Relationships Education and Health Education programme
- Using Coram Life Education's online SCARF teaching resources.

More information about Coram Life Education and SCARF can be found on their website:

www.coramlifeeducation.org.uk

Research shows that not delivering this vital education put our children at greater risk of poor mental health. We know this because every year, around 25% of girls start their periods learning about them at school. This can result in them agonising over why they are bleeding and how serious the cause might be. Similarly, 38% of boys experience wet dreams before having learnt about them, leaving them open to shame and stigma over a natural bodily function; this can lead to problems later in life. Current government Sex and Relationships Education guidance states that children should learn about puberty before they experience it, but clearly this isn't happening in some schools – one of the reasons why making this subject statutory in all schools is so important.

We also know that RSE has a protective factor when it comes to safeguarding children. 1 in 20 children are sexually abused and 1 in 3 of these not report this to an adult. Sexual abuse can happen to any child; the best way to safeguard children is to ensure that they receive information on naming parts of their body, knowing the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch, and having the skills and confidence to find and talk to a trusted adult to

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report any abuse.

Research now shows that children with better health (including mental health) and wellbeing are likely to achieve better academically. By learning about positive relationships, respect for themselves and others, and behaving appropriately and safely online, they are better able to enjoy their friendships and therefore focus more at school.

There is sometimes concern that RSE in school might promote sexual experimentation or cause confusion about an individual's sexuality. Research on quality Relationships and Sex education in the UK by the National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles team consistently shows that men and women who reported that *lessons at school were their main source of information about sex* were more likely to have started having sex at a **later age** than those for whom parents or other sources were their main source.

As a happy school community, we are committed to working in partnership with the parents in all aspects of your child/children's schooling; therefore, we will be starting an RSE consultation process from Friday 25th June to Friday 9th July.

As part of this, we invite you to:

1. Read through our new PSHE Policy:

<http://www.blackwater.cornwall.sch.uk/web/pshe/563451>

2. Give your thoughts and opinions, by answering questions in the online questionnaire below:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=dsqIDtuTC0OEJWmG50QVbf17WDcw2DtKicckjTxB_6JUM1NPSE0xRkJJRFdIREUwVTNUNjIwUDY5MS4u

After the consultation period has closed, we will respond in writing to your comments and feedback and make any potential changes to the policy, if and where appropriate. There will also be the option of speaking to an employee from SCARF if you would like more validation on our practices.

We recognise that parents play a vital part in their child's RSE, and we encourage you to discuss these themes with your child at home as well. please don't hesitate to speak to your child's class teacher or the Head teacher.

Yours sincerely

Mrs. Evison

Mrs. Evison
Headteacher and SENCo

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