

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.

### **Q: What is teaching about equality?**

A: Teaching about equality helps our children to prepare for the next stages in their lives.

It is teaching about:

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

### **Q: Will my child be taught sex education at Primary School? Is this too young?**

A: We have always taught children at Meldreth Primary School about Relationships and Sex Education. However, the Government have now made this a compulsory 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.

We will always pre warn you before we teach your child Relationships and Sex Education and give you the opportunity to understand what will be taught, how it will be approached, and view any materials so that you understand what we propose to teach and how.

### **Q: Can I withdraw my child from these lessons?**

A: We are required to teach sex education which focuses on puberty and reproduction as this is part of the Science National Curriculum for Y5 & 6. As it is part of the science national curriculum, it is compulsory. You do have the right to withdraw from any sex education lessons that go beyond that of the science national curriculum.

**Q: Is school the best place for discussions about Sex and Relationships?**

A: We know from surveys of children, that if they 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.

**Q: Does the new Relationships Education and RSE curriculum take account of my faith?**

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

**Q: Has the government listened to the views of my community in introducing these subjects?**

A: 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.

**Q: Will these subjects promote LGBT relationships?**

A: No, our teaching will never 'promote' anything, we educate. We are teaching about equality. Our school ethos says that we are respectful of everyone. We value all others and ourselves: this means that anyone is welcome in our school.

Pupils should be taught about the society in which they are growing up. Our PHSE curriculum has been 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.

In our school, 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. You will be informed about all learning that is taking place.

**Q: Are primary children too young to be taught about gay or lesbian people?**

A: Our children will interact with people from different backgrounds 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 girls/boys toy" when used in a negative manner may unintentionally cause offence to a child or adult. School will challenge this language if children, parents or visitors use it, as we want everyone to feel welcome.

**Q: Why are you teaching about different sexuality choices?**

A: We are teaching about equality. We understand and respect all faiths. We recognise the tension that it can present. We are teaching children not to be afraid of difference but to celebrate difference. Any discussion or resources used will be to help your child be respectful and tolerant towards others. We are preparing the children for life in Britain. Britain is diverse and they are going to meet people who are different to them as they grow up.

**Q: Will this work prompt my children to ask challenging questions?**

A: Possibly, your child or children trust you and will be likely to ask you questions to test your beliefs and opinions. Please don't avoid them, talk openly about diversity and equality.