



23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020

### Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Dear Parents/Carers

You will be aware that, as a part of your child’s educational experience at Commonswood School, we aim to promote personal wellbeing and development through a comprehensive taught programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education. This gives our young people the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live healthy, safe, productive and fulfilled lives, both now and in the future.

From September 2020 the Department for Education made Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education compulsory in all schools. The new 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, it will give young people the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships and will help them take responsibility for their own well-being. This guidance forms part of our school’s PSHE education programme which is taught throughout the school in every year group and is monitored and reviewed regularly by the staff and Governing Body. All learning is designed to be age-appropriate and to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. The guidance has not resulted in any changes to the curriculum that we already teach at Commonswood.

Now that the children have had time to build relationships with their teachers, **the missed content** due to lockdown **from last year’s RSE curriculum** is going to be taught in the next half term. This year’s content will then be taught in the second half of the summer term. For example: the current Year 4 children will be taught the Year 3 curriculum ‘Changing me’ in the next half term and the Year 4 ‘changing me’ curriculum in the summer term. This will ensure that there are no gaps in the children’s education.

RSE lessons are taught from Year 1 up to Year 6 at an age appropriate level. There will be a sequence of at least 5 lessons, delivered by the class teacher, that allow children to work in mixed groups, or single-gendered groups for the older children where appropriate. There will be appropriate strategies and techniques used by the teacher to approach and deal with sensitive issues. This includes assessing children’s knowledge prior to the lesson, creating a safe and comfortable learning environment, having a question box for questions that are unable to be answered during the lesson.

When referring to the body parts during these sessions, the correct terminology will be used by the teacher. This isn’t to say that the names you use at home are to stop being used, but do expect children to come home and know the biological name for their body parts.



It is essential that we teach about this important subject throughout your child's school life, including teaching about keeping themselves safe. The learning and discussion that will take place in these lessons will not only give your child the facts rather than hearsay off the playground, but also allow them to ask questions that may have been troubling them, discover more about themselves and help them keep safe.

Under the Education Act 1993 pupils can be withdrawn by their parents from any part of sex/puberty and relationships education that is outside the compulsory elements of sex education contained in the National Curriculum. This was discussed at the parent/carer forum when parents were consulted about the 2020 changes. Notes of this meeting are published on our school's website. It was agreed at this forum that we would:

- Notify parents when we are teaching lessons where parents have the right to withdraw their children
- Provide information about these lessons eg the level of detail and the vocabulary used to enable parents to support their children and answer questions at home.

Details of lessons can be found on the school's website under the 'curriculum' tab. Please be aware that the lessons which children can be withdrawn from are noted on the RSE content overview. This includes just a few lessons. As agreed at the parent forum, details of these lessons and those that build towards the knowledge can be found on the school's website.

If you wish to withdraw your child from any of the non-compulsory lessons, please contact the school to discuss this with the class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs GD Seymour  
Headteacher

