

**Key Points in relation to our teaching about LGBTQ as part of our new Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy**

This is a summary document to help parents and carers at our school understand the key information about our proposed RSHE curriculum as part of our parental consultation process.

**Why include teaching about LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning) issues as part of our RSHE curriculum at Uplands Manor Primary School?**

**1. Ensuring all children feel included**

School (and wider society) is a place where all children should feel safe and respected. There are a variety of family situations in British society. Any child who lives in a family that is different from the stereotypical household of mum, dad, and children should not be made to feel less accepted, or that their family is any less loving and caring. Children who feel unaccepted or isolated are more vulnerable to the effects of mental and emotional stigma and potentially less able to apply themselves to learning.

**2. Children may already be aware that some people are LGBTQ, or could be using vocabulary such as 'gay' to insult others.**

Children will have heard, or will come to hear, some words such as 'gay' or 'transgender'. They may know some LGBTQ people, or have seen them portrayed in movies, television programmes, TV adverts and on social media. As a result, children may have questions or have misunderstandings about what these terms mean. Jigsaw lessons help by giving age-appropriate information, or assisting teachers to clarify children's questions age-appropriately.

Jigsaw also teaches children that any word used as an insult is hurtful and unkind. Within some of these lessons, children may raise homophobic or transphobic words they know or have used themselves. This gives teachers an opportunity to explain that using these words, in this way, is unacceptable. We are teaching children that respect and kindness are important values.

**3. Teaching children to accept difference and to foster good relationships with others**

Jigsaw does not 'promote' LGBTQ lifestyles. However, it does raise children's awareness that some people in society are LGBTQ. This is not done in isolation. When discussing similarity and difference in Jigsaw lessons, children learn about a whole range of differences, such as difference in physical appearance and personality, likes and dislikes, and that people can have differences of opinion. This helps them to understand that we are all unique human beings.

When discussing any differences between people, Jigsaw helps teach children to form opinions about others based on whether they are kind, law-abiding, respectful, trustworthy, and responsible people, rather than judging them on appearance or whether a particular aspect of their lifestyle is different to their own. Children also learn about discrimination and prejudice including racism, sexism, and ageism.

**4. Schools have a legal obligation to safeguard their pupils**

In England, new legally-binding safeguarding guidance was released to schools in September 2018. This establishes that schools must protect all children from physical and emotional abuse including bullying on and off line and abuse that could happen from an adult or from other children.

Teaching children to accept there are a whole range of differences in people, helps combat stigma, discrimination and bullying. Children also need to be taught about a wide range of reasons why some people are bullied, or become bullies, and this includes some discussion around name-calling which includes the inappropriate use of words such as 'gay' and 'lesbian' as an insult towards another person. Anti-bullying guidance issued to schools in 2016 makes it clear

that any bullying work should include teaching children why inappropriate use of these words is wrong and homophobic.

## 5. Statutory Relationships and Health Education in England

The Department for Education has already passed legislation to include mandatory Relationships and Health Education in the National Curriculum for primary schools from September 2020 which sets out what we are expected to teach.

Primary children will learn that not all families are the same and to respect these differences. They will also learn about bullying and how to treat others with respect, whether this is within their immediate relationships, or in the wider community. The guidance also states that when learning about different families, care should be taken to avoid stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances. It also reaffirms the duty for schools to comply with the Equality Act, where sexual orientation and gender-reassignment are two of the nine protected characteristics.

### What does our RSHE curriculum teach about LGBTQ?

- teaches children to be kind, understanding and respectful of others even if they are perceived as different
- teaches children that people have rights but there are also responsibilities that go with these
- teaches children that there are laws to protect them and others from being hurt or abused and helps protect them from bullying
- helps clarify (age-appropriately) questions that children may have about the world

### What our RSHE curriculum does not do:

- does not teach or encourage children to be LGBTQ
- does not teach what LGBTQ people do sexually or how their relationships function
- does not promote LGBTQ lifestyles as a preferential way of living
- our advice about answering children's questions age-appropriately does not sexualise children, destroy their innocence, or encourage them to experiment.
- the Jigsaw materials we use do not undermine 'family values.'

### Teaching about people being transgender

Most people are not transgender. A transgender person doesn't feel their body matches with their gender. The Jigsaw curriculum that we use includes a lesson within the Year 6 (Age 10 -11) materials so children understand what being transgender means, in line with the Equality Act.

This lesson does not promote transgenderism as a preferred lifestyle. It simply explains what being transgender is, and how some people who are transgender face unfair prejudice and discrimination, in the same way that other people do e.g. through racism, ageism, sexism and prejudice against people who are disabled.

### Do parents have a right to withdraw their children from lessons where LGBTQ will be discussed?

The parental right to withdraw their children from these lessons changed in September 2020. Parents cannot withdraw children from any lessons that form part of our Relationships and Health Education. This includes lessons on puberty, prejudice and discrimination, bullying, difference and diversity and different families, including the content discussed in this document.