Online Relationships and **Internet Safety and Harms**

Children and young people today experience a fast moving and complex world, not seeing a divide between their on and off line lives. This presents positive opportunities but also challenges and risks. The RSE curriculum emphasises the importance of respectful online relationships which empower and support their own and others' mental wellbeing. This requires strength of character, a moral compass and confident decision making.

The online world enables pupils to reach out beyond the school gates and learn about different ways of life in the community and the wider world. We want to support children in this exploration. However, the internet can be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, harassment and bullying takes place, which has a detrimental impact on mental heal

Pupils need to build the skills to critically assess online content and develop the confidence to challenge and question what they see and read. It is important they develop critical awareness and informed thinking about relationships with both friends and people they have never met in the real world. Essential in this is that pupils know that online relationships can sometimes lead to grooming and exploitation. Pupils should know how to report adverse experiences and where to go for help.

Internet communities can distort reality, presenting extreme views, behaviours and experiences as the norm.

Pupils should be able to recognise and resist pressure from peers and the media. The knowledge that everyone is made in God's image emphasises that everyone is unique and deserves respect.

"The curriculum should offer opportunities for pupils to learn to value themselves and their bodies."

(Valuing All God's Children, Church of England 2017)

Educating for life in all its fullness' must also encompass life online. The curriculum we provide will need to be informed by pupils' actual experiences and the risks they are exposed to.