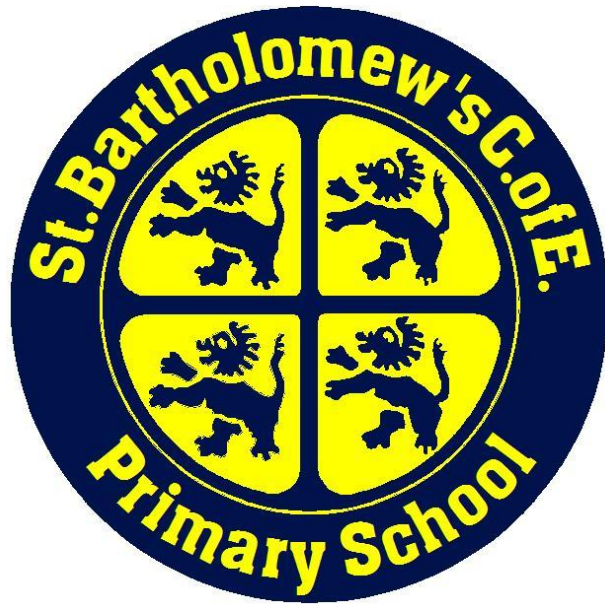


**St Bartholomew's**  
Church of England  
Primary School



**Relationships, Sex and  
Health Education Policy**

*July 2023*

## Rationale

As a Church of England school, St Bartholomew's upholds the Biblical, inherent dignity of all people, without exception. As people, created in the image of God, we are all in need of love, understanding, compassion and nurture in order to live fulfilling lives in community with others.

We acknowledge that, as a school community, we will have differing backgrounds, views and opinions. In the spirit of true tolerance, we must learn to live peaceably with one another, resolving differences where possible, forgiving hurts when necessary and accepting our diversity where apparent. We must be fully inclusive, open to all, yet clear regarding the basis for our underpinning values and beliefs.

As law-abiding citizens, we will work hard to eliminate fear, anxiety, bullying and discrimination from our school, and take these principles into our wider society.

Our aim is to prepare our children for the next stage in their lives. This involves developing a curriculum that meets the needs of the children as soon as they arrive in our school and develops as they move towards the end of their time with us. We have decided that, by the time the children complete Year 6, they will have learned about body changes and puberty, and will be sensitively introduced to human sexual reproduction. We will do so in a way that supports parents and carers in their vital role in sharing this sensitive and important part of life. Parents know their children best and are able to recognise the best approach for their children. We will make time and resources available for families to explore "the facts of life" with the children in the familiar comfort and safety of their own homes, before it is discussed in our school setting. School will not presumptuously assume the responsibility to teach these things, but we will also encourage families in the responsibility to prepare their children for adult life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Our school will always work in partnership with parents and, although we do not wish that any pupil will be excluded from such sessions, the Headteacher will respect any written applications from parents and carers to withdraw their child from aspects deemed to be sex education. This should only occur following discussion with the Headteacher, so that a family's wishes are fully understood and there has been the opportunity to consider all elements of the lesson content.

At St. Bartholomew's, we also recognise the difference between teaching basic facts and a moral context within which these facts can be explored and applied. We aim to show wisdom and discernment as we share our curriculum with the children. We are also realistic in that, within the nature of teaching, issues may be raised by the children themselves - that we will sensitively and objectively address - that were not part of our intended curriculum. In most of these cases, we will value the children's contribution, answer honestly and sensitively, and then defer to the children's families if we believe that to be the most appropriate next response.

## Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

The Equality Act (2010) ([www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents)) is clear in the way we should treat each other. Whilst it does not cover the content of the curriculum, it does however cover our attitudes and actions towards one another. Certain groups, rightly, require protection and, whilst there is no hierarchy within and between these protected characteristics, we acknowledge that there can be occasional perceived tension. Our aim will always be to minimise such tension if it were ever to arise.

Our wider safeguarding and behaviour policies should be considered alongside this policy. These can be found on our school website.

At St. Bartholomew's, we will seek to provide Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) which enables *all* pupils to flourish.

### **Our commitment:**

- **To work in partnership with parents and carers.** This will involve dialogue with parents and carers through all stages of policy development as well as discussing the resources used to teach their children and how they can contribute at home. It must, however, be recognised that the law specifies that what is taught, and how it is taught is ultimately a decision for the school.
- **That RSHE will be delivered professionally and as an identifiable part of PSHE.** It will be led, resourced and reported to parents in the same way as any other subject. There will be a planned programme delivered in a carefully sequenced way. Staff will receive regular training in RSHE and PSHE. Any expert visitors or trainers invited into the school to enhance and supplement the programme will be expected to respect the school's ethos and published policy for RSHE.
- **That RSHE will be delivered in a way that affords dignity and shows respect to all who make up our diverse community.** It will not discriminate against any of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act and will be sensitive to the faith and beliefs of those in the wider school community. RSHE will seek to explain fairly the tenets and varying interpretations of religious communities on matters of sex and relationships and teach these viewpoints with respect. It will value the importance of faithfulness as the underpinning and backdrop for relationships. It will encourage pupils to develop the skills needed to disagree without being disagreeable, to appreciate the lived experience of other people and to live well together.
- **That RSHE will seek to build resilience in our pupils to help them form healthy relationships, to keep themselves safe and resist the harmful influence of pornography in all its forms.** It will give pupils opportunities to reflect on values and influences, including their peers, the media, the internet, faith and culture that may have shaped their attitudes to gender, relationships and sex. It will promote the development of the wisdom and skills our pupils need to make their own informed decisions.

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- **That RSHE will promote healthy resilient relationships set in the context of character and virtue development.** It will reflect the ethos, vision and associated values of our school, promote reverence for the gift of human sexuality and encourage relationships that are hopeful and aspirational. Based on the school's values, it will seek to develop character within a moral framework based on virtues such as honesty, integrity, self-control, courage, humility, kindness, forgiveness, generosity and a sense of justice, but does not seek to teach only one moral position.
- **That RSHE will be based on honest and medically accurate information, from reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights.** It will distinguish between different types of knowledge and opinions so that pupils can learn about their bodies and health as appropriate to their age and maturity.
- **To take a particular care to meet the individual needs of all pupils including those with special needs and disabilities.** It will ensure that lessons and any resources used will be accessible and sensitive to the learning needs of the individual child. We acknowledge the potential vulnerability of pupils who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and recognise the rights of SEND pupils to access high quality Relationships, Sex and Health Education.
- **To seek pupils' views about RSHE so that the teaching can be made relevant to their lives.** It will discuss real life issues relating to the age and stage of pupils, including friendships, families, faith, consent, relationship abuse, exploitation and safe relationships online. This will be carefully targeted and age appropriate, based on a teacher judgment about pupil readiness for this information, in consultation with parents and carers.

*(Taken from the Church of England Charter for faith-sensitive and inclusive relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (RSHE).*

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-11///RSHE%20Charter.docx>)

## Our Curriculum

The purpose of Relationships, Sex and Health Education at St. Bartholomew's is to assist our pupils to prepare for the next step towards adult life by supporting them through physical, emotional and moral development.

Our teaching, and the information shared, is underpinned by our Christian ethos and values, taking great care when answering questions or discussing any issues raised. We aim to celebrate childhood as a vital, developmental part of growing up in God's world and emphasise the importance of families as stable, caring, responsible and loving relationships.

A caring and developmental programme needs to be more than just the discussion of biological facts and the fundamentals of reproduction. Children need reassurance about their identity, including body image, behaviour, feelings and relationships. They need the knowledge and skills appropriate to their individual level of maturity and developmental needs.

In planning and presenting our programme, we will give our pupils the opportunity to express themselves within a trusted and safe environment. They will have the opportunity to articulate their thoughts, questions, doubts and anxieties in order to develop the skills needed to make responsible decisions, communicate effectively and develop healthy and appropriate relationships.

Central to our programme is for the children to have secure confidence in who they are and for them to take personal responsibility for themselves and their actions.

Some curriculum aspects form part of the National Curriculum Programme of Study in Science. Other aspects are also taught through Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Religious Education.

Our curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships.
- are able to name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work.
- can protect themselves and ask for help and support.
- are prepared for puberty.

In Years 5 and 6, lessons are given on puberty, adolescence and body changes. Year 6 will also include an introduction to human sexual reproduction. This is a distinct part of the curriculum, delivered by school staff who have a very good relationship with the children and carefully scripted. The pupils have the opportunity to ask questions about the material they are shown, and parents will always be informed before the sessions and given the opportunity to discuss the material and lesson content with school staff.

We recognise that some aspects of this curriculum can be sensitive in nature and, in order to work alongside our families, we will aim to share new inquiry questions and key concepts with parents and carers in advance, in a timely manner, so that home and school can be prepared for the children's responses.

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The following statements are part of the National Curriculum for Science.

During Year 1, pupils should be taught to:

- identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense

During Year 2, pupils should be taught to:

- notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults

During Year 5, pupils should be taught to:

- describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals
- describe the changes as humans develop to old age

Further RSHE-specific curriculum content includes:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe
- Mental wellbeing
- Physical health and fitness
- Internet safety and harms
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

### **Parental Support**

We understand that some parents would like advice and support in sharing the “facts of life” with their children. School is happy to suggest various resources that families may find useful and information about these is available within school.

### **Difficult questions - and our answers**

Many families worry about how school staff will answer their children’s questions. This is understandable and we would want to underline the principle that we act in loco parentis – “in the place of” and on behalf of parents. This is especially important with sensitive issues such as these. The vast majority of questions that may be seen as difficult will be listened to and valued by our teachers, but often referred back to parents for an answer with a phrase such as, “That’s a good and important question but we aren’t discussing that in this lesson. Please make sure that you ask your parents.” Where a child’s safety is at risk, clear answers will be given. Experience tells us that these types of questions are rare, but it is always our aim to handle them respectfully and sensitively.

### ***Families and people who care for me***

Pupils should know:

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
- that there are different family models
- that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
- that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.
- that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

### ***Caring friendships***

Pupils should know:

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.
- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

### ***Respectful relationships***

Pupils should know:

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.

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- the conventions of courtesy and manners.
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the
- impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

### ***Online relationships***

Pupils should know:

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous.
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- how information and data is shared and used online.

### ***Being safe***

Pupils should know:

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.
- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
- where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.



### ***Mental wellbeing***

Pupils should know:

- that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.
- that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.
- how to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a
- varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.
- how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
- the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.
- simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests.
- isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.
- that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.
- where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
- it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.

Pupils need to be equipped and supported in making wise choices that will lead to better mental health. They need understanding of how their thoughts affect their feeling, their feeling affect their bodies and subsequent behaviours, and how their behaviours also lead to further thoughts. This can be either a positive or negative cycle for themselves and their peers. Using the "We Eat Elephants" resources throughout the school ([www.weeatelephants.com](http://www.weeatelephants.com)), and regularly applying the helpful principles that underpin them, will aid our children to develop positive, realistic thinking habits that should stand them in good stead for solving issues, now and in the future.

### ***Physical health and fitness***

Pupils should know:

- the characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
- the importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise.
- the risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity).

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- how and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

Linked to mental wellbeing, physical health is also vital for our children. Through our PE curriculum, the children will be active and focused throughout the week, both in lessons and extra-curricular activities. We will encourage all of our children to engage with these. Using our marked "Daily Mile" route and extensive school grounds, all of our children will take part in activities that develop their physical health and fitness, so improving their mental health.

Our curriculum will often address healthy eating choices and the importance of good sleep hygiene. Activity engaging in focused and directed physical exercise will also develop the children's self-control and self-regulation, two important aspects of healthy lifestyles.

The interests and hobbies of the children will be celebrated in weekly assemblies, and the opportunities to achieve in sports and the arts will be built into the school year.

### ***Internet safety and harms***

Pupils should know:

- that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.
- about the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
- how to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private.
- why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted.
- that the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.
- how to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.
- where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

### ***Healthy eating***

Pupils should know:

- what constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
- the principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
- the characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).

### ***Drugs, alcohol and tobacco***

Pupils should know:

- the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.

### ***Health and prevention***

Pupils should know:

- how to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.
- about safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
- the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
- about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist.
- about personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.
- the facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination.

### ***Basic first aid***

Pupils should know:

- how to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary.
- concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.

### ***Changing adolescent body***

Pupils should know:

- key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.
- about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.

### ***Our approach***

Throughout the school, key concepts will be covered through a set of inquiry questions that are designed to open discussion, promote critical thinking and support learning. Carefully chosen materials and resources will be used to support the teaching of each key concept. These will reflect the age and maturity of the children, each year.

## **Inquiry Questions & Key Concepts: Lower School**

### **Families and people who care for me**

- What a family is?
- How do families show love and care for each other?
- Why is it important to spend time together as a family?

*Key concept: That families support and care for one another, and that caring and nurturing in families is born out of love for one another.*

- How do families support and care for one another?
- What is the role of parents?

*Key concept: Families should support and care for one another, with parents (and those acting in the place of parents) nurturing and caring for the children in the family.*

- What is marriage?
- What happens in a typical wedding?

*Key concept: To understand what marriage is; that marriage involves a couple making promises of lifelong commitment that are recognised in law.*

### **Caring friendships**

- What are the different characteristics of friendships?
- What are good friendship qualities?

*Key concept: Understanding the characteristics of good friendships.*

- When do friendships have their ups and downs?
- How can we sort out differences with our friends?

*Key concept: That friendships have ups and downs but can be repaired and strengthened.*

- When can friendships can make us feel uncomfortable?
- How do we get help?

*Key concept: How to get help when friendships are in trouble; to talk to a trusted adult*

### **Respectful relationships**

- What are courtesy and good manners?
- Why are courtesy and good manners important?
- How can we show these qualities?

*Key concept: courtesy and good manners are important to all relationships.*

- What is bullying?
- When is something not bullying?
- How do you get help if you, or others, are being bullied?

*Key concept: The nature and impact of bullying and how to get help.*

- How do we show respect to others?
- What does 'being in authority' mean?
- How should people 'in authority' behave?

*Key concept: Understanding respect and how it is shown, especially to those in positions of authority.*

### **Online relationships**

- What does 'online' mean?
- What are good rules to follow to stay safe online?

*Key concept: The importance of staying safe online and how to achieve this.*

### **Being safe**

- What makes you unique?
- Did you know that your body belong to you?
- Why should we keep healthy and safe?
- How and where should you get help if you feel unsure or unsafe (about anything)
- Who are your trusted adults?

*Key concept: How to keep healthy and safe and how to get help if children feel unsafe*

## **Inquiry Questions & Key Concepts: Upper School**

### **Families and people who care for me**

- What is a healthy family?
- Why are families so important?
- What different family models are there?

*Key concept: That a healthy family is a crucial building block to a healthy society.*

- Why should we respect our parents (or carers)?

*Key concept: That our parents and carers have a very important role in bring up children.*

- Why do people get married?
- What are the marriage vows?
- What does lifelong commitment mean?
- What other relationships can demonstrate lifelong commitment?

*Key concept: To understand the promises, meaning and challenge of marriage.*

### **Caring friendships**

- What are the different characteristics of friendships?
- What makes a good friend?
- How can you become a good friend?
- How can friends support us through problems and difficulties?
- How do shared interests and experiences build strong friendships?
- What are the positives of having good friendships?

*Key concept: Good friendships are specific, care for each other and should be nurtured and sought after.*

- What is the difference between being self-centred and other-person centred?
- What makes for a healthy friendship?
- What do we mean by loneliness and exclusion?
- What could cause someone to feel lonely or excluded?
- How does considering the feelings of others help us avoid making others feel lonely or excluded?

*Key concept: Empathy and inclusion help develop a positive community.*

- When can a friendship make us feel uncomfortable?
- How do we recognise when friendships are unhealthy?
- How can we resolve our difficulties?

*Key concept: Recognising unhealthy friendships, managing conflict and how to ask for help.*

### **Respectful relationships**

- What could courtesy look like in different contexts and settings?
- How do our actions impact on others?
- How does self-respect link to our own happiness?

*Key concept: The importance of self-respect, courtesy and respect for others.*

- What do we mean by prejudice or discrimination?
- Why is it important to respect others without prejudice or discrimination?
- What is a stereotype? How can we avoid them?

*Key concept: Further understand different forms of bullying (including harassment), identifying how to avoid it and where to seek help and support.*

- What does it mean to respect others in school and in wider society?
- Who are the people in authority?
- Why and how should we respect those in authority?

*Key concept: Understand authority and why we should respect those in positions of authority*

### **Online relationships**

- How can we stay safe online?

*Key concept: Recognise the risks, harmful content and contact online including how to report them.*

### **Being safe**

- What are the different types of contact we make with others?
- What kinds are safe, unsafe and unwanted?
- How do we seek help and ask for advice for ourselves and others?

*Key concept: Understanding safe and unsafe contact and how to get help if needed.*

- What makes something private?
- What are the good and bad things about secrets?
- When could holding a secret be unsafe?

*Key concept: Some things are not safe to keep a secret and must be shared.*

**References to further resources:**

"Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education" DfE (2019)

Church of England Vision for Education:  
"Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good"

"Valuing All God's Children" Church of England Education Office

Expect Respect toolkit (contributes to learning related to child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse)

Operation Encompass the Next Steps: Domestic Abuse Awareness programme.

"Making Sense of Relationships" NSPCC

Underwear rule: NSPCC

Rights of the Child: UNICEF

Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) resource

Childline

Lovewise – selections from "Growing Up, Growing Wise"

All Together: Promoting diversity and equality in the Primary classroom. Cardiff against Bullying

AGENDA: A young people's guide to making positive relationships matter

PSHE Association guidance on teaching about mental health

RSE Day: Activities for primary schools

e-Bug

Red Cross: First Aid

We Eat Elephants

Thinkuknow: to empower children to identify the risks they may face online and know where they can go for support

Laying the Foundations: Sex and Relationships Education in Primary Schools, Anna Martinez & Vanessa Cooper, NCB, 2006

Health for life. Noreen Wetton and Trefor Williams, Nelson Thornes

"My Underpants Rule" book by Kate and Rod Power