

Relationships & Sex Education

POLICY STATEMENT

- At our School, we hold the view that Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is vital for the personal, social, and emotional development of our pupils. It equips children and young people with the information, skills, and values they need to have safe, respectful, and enjoyable relationships and empowers them to take responsibility for their sexual health and wellbeing.
- All pupils have a right to holistic, inclusive, and needs led RSE and through providing high quality RSE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school and its commitment to equality and celebration of difference.
- UNCRC Article 28 – Every child has the right to an education.

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1. Rationale

1.1 Scope

- 1.1.1 We believe that effective Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is essential to our Pupil's personal development and will help them make responsible and well-informed decisions. It contributes to promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, emotional, mental, and physical development of our Pupils, preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life.
- 1.1.2 We believe RSE should not be delivered in isolation but be firmly rooted in our Personal, Social and Health Education, and Computing, during oral interaction as part of one-to-one sessions and embedded in the wider curriculum. We seek to enable our Pupils to feel positive about themselves, to manage relationships and to access the infrastructure of support available to them.
- 1.1.3 This policy sets out the framework for RSE at our School, providing clarity on how the curriculum is informed, organised, and delivered.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

- 1.2.1 We aim to provide our Pupils with an age appropriate RSE programme that is tailored to their physical and emotional maturity. It should enable them to make positive choices about their sexual and emotional health, both now and in the future.
- 1.2.2 The aims of RSE at our School are to:
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
 - Prepare Pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
 - Help Pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence, and empathy.
 - Create a positive culture around issues of gender, sexuality, and relationships.
 - Teach Pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- 1.2.3 We aim to achieve this by having three main elements to our programme:

1. Attitudes and Values

- Learning to care about other people and being sensitive towards their needs and views.
- Learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral considerations.
- Accepting the difference between people and learning not to exploit them.
- Learning the value of family life, committed relationships. marriage and the importance of stable, loving and caring relationships for the nurture of children.
- Learning the importance and responsibilities of the family unit for all its members.

- Learning to respect oneself and others and being honest, loyal, and trustworthy in relationships.
- Learning to take responsibility for one's actions in all situations.
- Exploring, considering, and understanding moral dilemmas, and developing critical thinking as part of decision-making

2. Personal & Social Skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice.
- Learning how to make well informed and responsible decisions about their lives and developing an appreciation of the consequences of the choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

3. Knowledge & Understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions, and relationships.
- Learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services.
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such a delay.
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

1.2.4 By delivering much of the RSE programme through informal discussion, we feel that Pupils will feel safe, relaxed, and have confidence and trust in the knowledge, ability, and skills of our Team Members.

2. Moral Framework

2.1.1 Pupils will be taught RSE within a framework which models and encourages the following values:

- Being honest with themselves and others.
- Tolerance, respect and understanding of the rule of law.
- Developing a critical awareness of themselves and others.
- Learning to show tolerance, understanding, respect and care for others.
- Acknowledging the rights, duties and responsibilities involved in sexual relationships.
- Developing an awareness and belief in one's own identity.
- Having a positive attitude towards the value of stable relationships for the upbringing of children.
- Acknowledging and understanding diversity with regard to religion, culture, and sexual orientation.
- Having self-discipline regarding their sexuality.
- Understanding of self-protection and risk evaluation.

3. Working with Parents, Carers and External Agencies

- 3.1.1 Our Schools are committed to working in close partnership with Parents and Carers who are the key people in teaching their children about sex and relationships.
- 3.1.2 We continue to be committed to liaising with Parents and Carers about all aspects of their child's education. As such, we understand the importance of the role of Parents and Carers in the development of their child's understanding about relationships, sex, and health. The law requires Schools to consult with Parents and Carers on their RSE policy. Consultation is carried out when the policy is updated.
- 3.1.3 We will provide a window of opportunity for all Parents and Carers to respond with their views following any update to the policy. The final version of the policy will then be available on the School website for reference. We provide opportunities for Parents and Carers to ask questions about the delivery and content of the RSE curriculum, including any updates to this policy.
- 3.1.4 Parents and Carers of new Pupils will be provided with all the above information at the point of admission, regardless of the time of year they join the School. We understand that Parents and Carers may have concerns about some aspects of RSE and all views will be listened to and carefully considered. However, the School will ultimately make the final decision about what is to be taught and when. This will be informed by our statutory obligations as well as the needs of our Pupils. Parents and Carers will be provided with opportunities to find out about the progress of their children in RSE related topics; for example, as part of Annual Reviews of EHCPs, during Parents' Evenings and within termly progress reports.

4. Right to Withdraw

- 4.1.1 Parents of both primary and secondary-aged Pupils are not able to withdraw their children from any aspect of Relationships Education or Health Education, which includes learning about the changing adolescent body and puberty.
- 4.1.2 Parents of both primary and secondary-aged Pupils will not be able to withdraw their child from any aspect of the National Curriculum for Science. This includes subject content for Primary Pupils such as: the names of external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age, and reproduction/offspring in some plants and animals. For secondary: reproduction in humans and plants, hormones in reproduction, hormone and non-hormone methods of contraception communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in humans.
- 4.1.3 Following discussion with the school and providing notification to the Headteacher in writing, Parents will be able to withdraw their child from any or all aspects of Sex Education other than those as listed above up to and until three terms before the age of 16. In line with the statutory guidance, where Pupils are withdrawn from Sex Education, we will keep a record of this (including discussions and requests from Parents and Carers), and we will ensure that the Pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.
- 4.1.4 Bespoke programmes of education can be provided to tackle specific issues or concerns raised by Parent, Carers, or external agencies.

5. Implementation (Organisation and Delivery)

5.1.1 At our school, RSE is carefully planned and delivered primarily through our PSHE curriculum which includes links to SMSC. Some aspects of RSE feature across several topics, yet discrete RSE topics are also planned and delivered, considering the timing of this as related to the age and emotional maturity of our Pupils. Additional teaching may also take place within Science lessons, RE lessons, Literacy lessons and other areas of the curriculum; these will be part of our carefully planned approach to RSE and not simply an 'add-on'.

5.1.2 Through effective organisation and delivery of RSE, we ensure that:

- RSE is delivered in a non-judgemental, age-appropriate, factual, and inclusive way that allows Pupils to ask questions in a safe environment. Pupil focussed approaches will allow Pupils to raise issues or ask questions which they may find embarrassing.
- Team Members will ensure that Pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Ground rules will be developed and shared with Pupils as part of best practice. Ground rules help to ensure discussions and personal questions and comments are managed appropriately and sensitively, along with those questions which are more challenging.
- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of a manageable size.
- Taught content provides opportunities to revisit previous content and allows clear progression. Topics and lessons are carefully sequenced within a planned scheme of work.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for Pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations. Groupings will be carefully considered by Team Members and Senior Leaders, with some classes being taught in gender specific groups, on a 1:1 basis or within a whole class setting, dependent on the nature of the topic being delivered at the time, the cultural, religious, or personal background of Pupils, their age and SEND.
- All resources will be selected carefully. Inappropriate and illegal images and videos will not be used in any circumstances and all related school policies will be followed.
- Care will be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of any Pupil based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some Pupils may have a different structure of support around them, e.g., children in care or young carers.
- There is an awareness that some Pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and appropriate actions will be taken to mitigate this.

- There is a balance between teaching Pupils about making sensible decisions to stay safe, including online safety, whilst being clear it is never the fault of any child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong.
- It must be recognised that Pupils may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity and all Pupils should feel that the content is relevant to them, explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive, and respectful manner.
- Content related to LGBT+ is fully integrated into a range of topics, rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson.
- There is a focus on challenging perceived derogatory views about the legally protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, and sexual orientation, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.
- Steps will be taken to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on Pupils based on their gender or any other protected characteristic.
- There is awareness of issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia, gender stereotypes, sexual violence, and harassment, with positive action taken to build a school culture within which these are not tolerated.
- Awareness of the issues of sexting and youth produced sexual imagery are not taught in isolation and instead are taught as part of a developmental PSHE programme.
- Support and guidance will be provided by the Integrated Therapies Team.

6. Specific Issues

6.1 Personal Beliefs

6.1.1 The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence their teaching of RSE.

6.2 Language and Ground Rules in Lessons

6.2.1 All Team Members teaching RSE will set group rules for their classes. For example:

- No-one (Team Member or Pupil) will have to answer a personal question.
- No-one will be forced to take part in a discussion.
- The only language used will be easily understood and acceptable to everyone in the class.
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

6.2.2 Pupils will be involved in the negotiation and setting of these rules. Distancing techniques will also help to avoid the inappropriate disclosure of information. These may include case studies, role-play and speaking in the third person.

6.3 Dealing with Difficult Questions

6.3.1 If a question is too explicit or is inappropriate, the teacher will attend to it later on an individual basis and a decision will be taken whether to inform the Pupil's Parents or Carers.

6.3.2 If a Pupil makes a disclosure that causes the teacher concern, they will refer this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity within that school day and the Pupil will be appropriately supported.

7. Impact and Assessment

- 7.1.1 The school has the same high expectations of the quality of Pupils' work in RSE as for other curriculum areas. Our curriculum builds on the knowledge Pupils have previously acquired, including in other subjects, with regular feedback provided on Pupil progress. Learning is assessed and assessments are used to identify where Pupils need extra support, intervention, or additional challenge.
- 7.1.2 Progress is monitored through BSquared (Connecting Steps) as well as using Motional to monitor well-being.

8. Confidentiality

- 8.1.1 Parents and Carers are informed of the school's Confidentiality Policy. The school will be acting in loco parentis (in the place of a Parent or Carer). Whenever a Pupil makes a disclosure, they will be encouraged to talk to their Parents or Carers, as appropriate. Safeguarding issues will be addressed as necessary; but if not necessary, the wishes of the Pupil will be considered.
- 8.1.2 Information about local advice and support is available to Pupils.
- 8.1.3 All Team Members and visitors must follow safeguarding guidelines. Team Members must support Pupils in how to seek help or advice about contraception. It is also appropriate to remind Pupils of information about access to support that is available in the school or had been outlined in lessons. These actions do not involve a requirement to inform Parents and Carers. Similarly, as Pupils under 16 can access doctors or clinics for contraceptive advice, where a Team Member advises Pupils to seek medical advice at a GP's surgery or clinic there is not a requirement to inform Parents and Carers. However, Pupils will always be encouraged to talk to their Parent or Carer and will be supported in so doing. In each circumstance, the best interests of the Pupil will be seen as paramount.
- 8.1.4 Advice for Pupils regarding sexual health, orientation and contraception is available in public areas in the school main building.

9. Legislative Framework

9.1.1 This policy was and developed in response to the following guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, 2024
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE, 2019)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2018)
- Preventing and tackling bullying (DfE, 2017)
- Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (UKCCIS, 2016)
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE, 2015)
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (DfE, 2014)
- National Curriculum in England – Key Stages 1-4 (DfE, 2014) This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Therapeutic Approaches Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- PSHE and Citizenship Policy
- Science Policy
- RE Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use of Technology and Social Media Policy
- SMSC and British Values Policy