



## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Relationships and Sex Education Policy</b>
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## Why Do We Teach Relationships and Sex Education?

This school policy is in line with current regulations from the Department of Education (DfE) on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (July 2019).

Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education are taught in this school as statutory subjects. Through an integrated PSHE programme of work.

Relationships and Sex Education make a significant contribution to the school's legal duties to

- prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life , and
- promote the spiritual, moral, social cultural mental and physical development of students

It is taught in the context of the following aspects of our school values

Relationships and Sex Education is defined by the PSHE Association as 'learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health'. This content is delivered in an age appropriate way in our school with regard to the age and stage of students.

The aim of Relationships and Sex Education in our school is to equip children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, fulfilling and enjoyable relationships and take responsibility for their physical, sexual and emotional health and wellbeing.

We recognise the central importance of relationships in supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, academic achievement and future success.

Our programme also aims to support students in their personal development with regard to attributes such as respect, integrity, compassion and honesty. These approaches support our wider work of building resilience in our students.

We focus on attitudes and values, skills and as well as knowledge and understanding. This will include developing self-esteem, the skills to manage relationships and most importantly keep themselves safe in all their relationships.

Research has shown that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about relationships and sex, are more likely to be discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and to have fulfilling relationships.

As a school we recognise the impact of social media, the media and the digital world on our children and young people. We aim to deliver an RSE programme that

recognises and addresses this to ensure that students know how to keep themselves and their personal information safe.

## **Curriculum Content**

The DfE recognises 5 elements to Relationships and Sex Education. These are

- Families
- Respectful relationships including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship.

We will also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help students understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed. Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective RSE also supports people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

Knowledge about safer sex and sexual health remains important to ensure that young people are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life. This should be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment. Many teachers use approaches such as distancing techniques, setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion and using question boxes to allow students to raise issues anonymously.

RSE should provide clear progression from what is taught in primary school in Relationships Education. Teachers should build on the foundation of Relationships Education and, as students grow up, at the appropriate time extend teaching to include intimate relationships. Alongside being taught about intimate relationships, students should also be taught about family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult. This teaching should enable students to distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful. Students should understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their

mental wellbeing and self-respect. Through gaining the knowledge of what a healthy relationship is like, they can be empowered to identify when relationships are unhealthy. They should be taught that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing. As in primary, secondary Relationships Education can be underpinned by a wider, deliberate cultivation and practice of resilience and character in the individual. These should include character traits such as belief in achieving goals and persevering with tasks, as well as personal attributes such as honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice, underpinned by an understanding of the importance of self-respect and self-worth. There are many ways in which secondary schools should support the development of these attributes, for example by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely. Students should be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. All students should feel that the content is relevant to them and their developing sexuality. Sexual orientation and gender identity should be explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner. When teaching about these topics, it must be recognised that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity. There should be an equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same sex relationships. This should be integrated appropriately into the RSE programme, rather than addressed separately or in only one lesson. It is recognised that there will be a range of opinions regarding RSE. The starting principle when teaching each of these must be that the applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that students are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

Some elements of sex education are statutory.

Learning about 'the changing adolescent body' is part of statutory Health Education.

National Curriculum Science is also statutory.

At key stage 3 and 4 this includes teaching about reproduction in humans, for example the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycles, gametes, fertilisation, gestation, birth and HIV/AIDS.

## **Equality**

This school delivers RSE with regards to the Equality Act 2010 and observance of the protected characteristics of age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership and sexual orientation. We recognise that children have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. The school believes that all people should have access to RSE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this, the school's approach to RSE will take account of:

- We will consider the particular needs of our students and use approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism,

misogyny, sexualised behaviour and sexist bullying. We will foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls.

- Some students may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties, or special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) that result in particular RSE needs at times which we will support. We will ensure that RSE is accessible to all students through high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised. We will also be mindful of preparing for adulthood outcomes as set out in the SEND code of practice when teaching these subjects to those with SEND.
- Different ethnic cultural and religious groups may have different attitudes and beliefs with regard to RSE. The school will consult students and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for and understanding of the views of different ethnic, cultural and religious groups in line with safeguarding and school's statutory duty to keep students safe and deliver certain elements of the statutory RSE curriculum.
- Some of our students will go on to define themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Trans (LGBT). Some students may have LGBT parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our students will meet and work with LGBT people both now and in the future. Our approach to RSE will reflect this and teaching will be sensitive and age appropriate both in content and approach. This content will be integrated into the programme rather than as a stand-alone lesson or unit. We actively tackle homophobic bullying.
- We recognise that our students may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We will take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and deliver the curriculum sensitively and inclusively.

## **Provision**

1. This school has a caring ethos that models and supports positive relationships between all members of the school community.
2. Within the taught, age-appropriate, spiral RSE programme
3. Within Science as stipulated by the national curriculum and/or as negotiated with the RSE lead.
4. Through other curriculum areas for example PE, Drama, English, IT etc.
5. Through assemblies.
6. Through Meeting Time discussions
7. Through pastoral support.
8. By the provision of appropriate leaflets and other information sources.
9. Via targeted intervention, where appropriate, with vulnerable individuals.
10. Delivery in response to incidents.

## **Teaching Methods, Resources, Training and Monitoring**

All the following elements of teaching methods, resources, training and monitoring are essential elements in providing quality RSE.

## **A Safe Learning Environment**

In order for RSE to be conducted safely the following will be in place:

- Group agreements or ground rules are negotiated, explained, displayed and referred to wherever appropriate. (When receiving external visitors, they will have sight of and understanding of the ground rules/group agreement.)
- No one in the classroom will be expected to answer a personal question.
- Distancing techniques such as the use of scenarios, will be used to help to keep students safe. There will be no need for anyone to discuss their own personal issues.
- Confidentiality will be clearly explained. Students will understand how disclosures will be handled.
- Students will be expected to engage and listen during lessons, however it is accepted that sometimes it is inappropriate for them to be expected to take part in the discussion.
- In most cases, the correct names for body parts will be used.
- The meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.
- Care will be taken not to use materials or approaches that may trigger trauma or distress. Students at risk will be identified and arrangements made for them to access the learning in a comfortable way.
- Signposting to sources of support when dealing with sensitive issues

## **Teaching and Learning Methods**

Teaching and learning best practice will be applied. Active learning methods that support participation and encourage reflection will be used including group work, talking, negotiation and using thinking skills.

## **Asking and Answering Questions**

We recognise that where young people's questions go unanswered they may turn to inappropriate sources of information, Therefore teachers will attempt to answer student's questions and concerns in a sensitive, age and development appropriate manner.

Individual teachers will use their skill and discretion in these situations, and if necessary, refer to the RSE Lead for advice and support.

Teachers will apply the following principles:

1. Clear guidance will be established about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting-group agreement/ground rules will help to achieve this.
2. If a student's question is inappropriate to address the whole class, the teacher will acknowledge the question and attend to it later on an individual basis.
3. Personal questions should be referred to the ground rules/group agreement.
4. Teachers will set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that student's discuss issues in a way which encourages thoughtful participation.
5. If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk in any way, including sexual abuse or exploitation, the usual safeguarding procedures will be followed.

## **Groupings**

RSE takes place within mixed gender classes or single gender groups as deemed appropriate and relevant with the student's usual teacher. There may be times when choosing particular mixes of genders may be useful. It is important to note that although separated genders may have different activities on occasions the messages and information they receive will be consistent. It will be left to the teacher's discretion to make these decisions.

## **Visitors**

A visitor can enrich, but not replace, the RSE curriculum. Care is taken to ensure that the visitor's contribution fits with our planned programme of work and policy, and that the content is age appropriate and accessible for the students. It is particularly useful when visitors have expertise and/or provide a service to students.

## **Resources**

Teaching resources will be selected on the basis of their appropriateness to students and their impact. Care will be taken not to use materials or have discussions that could be 'instructional' e.g. regarding self-harm.

## **Continuity, Progression and Assessment**

Our school has the same high standards of the quality of students learning in RSE as in other curriculum areas. RSE is delivered through a sequenced planned programme of work. Continuity and progression is generated through the adoption of a whole school approach to the planning and delivery of outcomes covering knowledge, skills and understanding. The curriculum is informed by needs assessment of students existing knowledge, experience and understanding.

The elements of RSE that form part of the Science curriculum are assessed in accordance with the requirements of the national curriculum. Learning from other elements of RSE is assessed as part of the PSHE provision and builds on existing school systems. Baseline, formative and summative assessments will contribute to the effective delivery of RSE

## **Personnel and Training**

There is a RSE coordinator who is regularly updated in this fast moving subject area. They are responsible for:

RSE is delivered baa dedicated team. The school is committed to ensuring that everyone involved with teaching, or supporting the teaching of RSE receives appropriate and ongoing professional development in order to maintain a whole school consistency and high standards for the children/young people in our care.

All new staff will receive a copy of the RSE policy.

## **Parental engagement in RSE and right to withdrawal**

We recognise the prime role of parents/carers in the development of their child's understanding about relationships and sex. We work in active partnership with parents/carers in the development and review of RSE.

The school ensure that parents/carers are: made aware of the school's approach and rationale for RSE through the policy; involved in the review of the RSE policy; made aware of the school's RSE curriculum; and encourage them to support their child is learning at home through shared learning activities, if appropriate.

Resources are available for parents/ carers to borrow to reinforce learning at home and support them in managing conversations with their children on these issues.

Parents/carers have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated sex education lessons delivered outside the science curriculum. They do not have a right to withdraw their children from those aspects of RSE that are taught in national curriculum Science.

If a parent/carer has any concerns about the RSE provision, we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have. If parents/carers decide to withdraw their child, we shall work with them and their child to explore possible alternative provision. In the event of a request to withdraw we will document this process and ensure a record is kept.

Once a student is three terms away from their sixteenth birthday they have a right to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn. Where this is the case we will make arrangements to provide them with sex education during one of those terms.

## **Impact**

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The programme is regularly monitored and evaluated by the RSE coordinator and SLT line manger to ensure impact. This takes place through a variety of methods, including learning walks, observation, scrutiny of annotated lesson plans, and student feedback. The views of the students and teachers who deliver the programme, will be used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an ongoing basis. The needs assessment is built into the lessons and will also inform any changes to the curriculum.

RSE staff receive the same teaching and learning monitoring and support as other subjects. The RSE lead receives time in order to carry out this process.



## **Consultation, Policy Development and Review**

In order for everyone to be consulted effectively, it may be necessary to ensure that governors and parents receive awareness training and/or information about RSE on occasions.

This policy document was produced in consultation with the entire school community, including students, parents, school staff, governors and any other appropriate stakeholders. This policy has been approved by governors. This document is freely available to the entire school community. It has also been made available in the school website.

It will be reviewed on an annual basis.

## RSHE coverage

Families	<p>Students should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.</li> <li>• how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.</li> <li>• what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.</li> <li>• why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.</li> <li>• the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.</li> <li>• the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.</li> <li>• how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.</li> </ul>
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<p>Students should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.</li> <li>• practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.</li> <li>• how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might</li> </ul>

	<p>normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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 people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.</li> <li>• about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.</li> <li>• that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.</li> <li>• what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.</li> <li>• the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.</li> </ul>
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<p>Students should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.</li> <li>• that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.</li> <li>• that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.</li> <li>• that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.</li> <li>• the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.</li> <li>• that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).</li> <li>• how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.</li> <li>• about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.</li> <li>• how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.</li> <li>• how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.</li> </ul>
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It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions.

Students should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs

- extremism/radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

The aim of teaching students about physical health and mental wellbeing is to give them the information that they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing. It should enable them to recognise what is normal and what is an issue in themselves and others and, when issues arise, know how to seek support as early as possible from appropriate sources. Physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked, and it is important that students understand that good physical health contributes to good mental wellbeing, and vice versa. It is important for schools to promote students' self-control and ability to self-regulate, and strategies for doing so. This will enable them to become confident in their ability to achieve well and persevere even when they encounter setbacks or when their goals are distant, and to respond calmly and rationally to setbacks and challenges. This integrated, whole-school approach to the teaching and promotion of health and wellbeing has a potential positive impact on behaviour and attainment. Effective teaching should aim to reduce stigma attached to health issues, in particular those to do with mental wellbeing. Schools should engender an atmosphere that encourages openness. This will mean that students feel they can check their understanding and seek any necessary help and advice as they gain knowledge about how to promote good health and wellbeing.

Puberty including menstruation should be covered in Health Education and should, as far as possible, be addressed before onset. This should ensure male and female students are prepared for changes they and their peers will experience.

#### Menstruation

The onset of menstruation can be confusing or even alarming for girls if they are not prepared. Students should be taught key facts about the menstrual cycle including what is an average period, range of menstrual products and the implications for emotional and physical health. In addition to curriculum content, schools should also make adequate and sensitive arrangements to help girls prepare for and manage menstruation including with requests for menstrual products.

